

Ventura Surf Club  
PO Box 6305  
Ventura CA 93006



November/December 2009



*The Ventura Surf Club exists to preserve,  
promote and perpetuate the values,  
beliefs and essence of surfing.*

## Presidents Message

Is it really November already?! Do you know what that means? Yep, it's LUAU time! You can find the luau form within your newsletter and also on the web site. Please sign up early and help us get a good head count! This year's luau will be held at Yolie's Mex Grill and feature a Mexican food buffet. It should be a great party! Fun raffle prizes, trophies, live music, surfing slide show! Please come and help us celebrate another year of the Ventura Surf Club.

I am very happy to announce that member Ken McAlpine has signed up to help with the newsletter. As some of you know, the newsletter is back on my list of responsibilities, which currently includes membership, shirts, web site, and club president.. (Are you feeling like you could help out? Please let me know, we (I) could use the help!) I am especially excited about Ken's help, since he is a "real" writer! Ken has written several books and contributes stories to several magazines. He is also a great surf buddy – one of the most positive persons I know! Thanks Ken!

This will be the last newsletter of 2009, so we will try to make it a good one! Thank you also to members Marvin Lee and Leslie Broude for both writing and submitting stories for our newsletter. I hope the group effort shows through in this issue!

I hope to see everyone at the luau!

Michael Mariani



Time for a nap?  
Photo: Jeanette Ramieri



### Intra-Club Events

| Date     | Day | Event                                  | Host / Location                    |
|----------|-----|--|------------------------------------|
| 11/08/09 | Sun | Final Intra-Club Contest for 2009      | Solimar                            |
| 11/22/09 | Sun | End Of The Year Luau (3 p.m. - 8 p.m.) | Yolie's Mex Grill 26 Garden Street |

Intra-club contests start at 7 a.m. - Please arrive 30 minutes early.

Intra-club contests are open to all current members. Entrant fee: \$5.  
Points earned accumulate towards members annual totals for trophies.

For the most up to date calendar information, visit [www.venturasurfclub.org](http://www.venturasurfclub.org)  
Coalition events require sign-up and prepayment. Contact Jimmy Gray, VSC away contest coordinator.



Donna Eyman and Mike Ortega showing some fancy foot work!  
C Street Longboard Classic Finals, September 2009  
(Photos: Jeanette Ramieri)



## VSC T-Shirt Journey to Japan! - VSC Member Marvin Lee

As I sit in my SUV and gaze into this white abyss sheet of hotel stationary wondering how to start writing or more like where to start writing a short story of our club's t-shirts' 2,600 mile trek across the PacO and ending up on small island in the Nagasaki prefecture in the country of Japan. The warm late October breezes passes through the open windows and cools me off along with the shade of the trees that keeps my SUV cool, on this sunny, clear blue sky day. I've had my 2 hour morning surf session of 3-5 foot waves at the Point at C-Street and now totally relaxed and content but minutes pass by and not a single word jotted down, but hundreds of words and thoughts have crossed my mind, like the cars racing down on the 101 freeway going back and forth in both directions- the words and memories of my past summer trip flash by - should I start the story with every detail or...then my interior architecture teacher's voice breaks the silence and blocks the breezes warmth on my skin - and I hear "stop staring at the paper, and start drawing and then the ideas will start flowing"...Our club t-shirts have made their way to a group of young pioneering guys who I met while on a family and friends vacation trip in June with my wife, Mika. At first the trip was to visit my in-laws, do a little relaxing, some sightseeing in the city - as we call it at the office, SOP (standard operating procedure). Until one day it hit me, hey since we are going to Japan in the summer why not try checking out the surf?! Dah! The adrenaline started pumping, my eyes swelled up like silver dollars and my mind spun around with the possibilities of surfing in Japan, like a roulette wheel at the Venetian Casino hotel. Countless days and nights went searching the web in both English and Japanese for any type of surf information on Japan, numerous web sites were joined for chats, Google earth for maps were printed, surf shops with board rentals locations etc. Finally, after hours of searches, Mika made contact via email to this guy who is from a small island named Iki. After a few emails back and forth the dates were set to meet, a Longboard would be waiting for me as well as a tour guide, all for the asking. Wow, how can that be, all that for the asking, what's the price? As you may know, things in Japan are expensive and any cost that we can reduce would help the pocket book. My brother in-law anteed up his surf board but Mike says that he was going to throw away the board and that it sunk, and couldn't catch any waves. Hmmmm, how can that be as the board from Hawaii must have cost \$1,000+ but I can save a hundred bucks in rental fees, great! .....So we get to Japan and Mika shows me the board. Whoa! A 9 foot 6 inch, beautiful clear glassing, triple 1/2 inch stringers, single wood carved fin, 50/50 rails, concaved nose, slight pressure dings and only slightly yellowing, man it was she was a beaute, simple and classic design. At first sight, I felt, this board is something special, and thought it has the potential to do what you would like to do on a wave. I think most of us have experienced that feeling as we checked out our shop after shop after shop, rack after rack after rack. As I checked out the bottom of the board for its shape and to see if it was water tight I noticed the the fin was set to back in the box - ah ah! I think I found the reason why my brother in-law couldn't catch waves, I adjusted the fin towards the center of the box, tighten the screw and hoped that would do the trick.

(CONTINUED NEXT PAGE)



Hebara



## VSC T-Shirt Journey to Japan! (Continued)

The next day I strap on the soft racks on the Mercedes, (too cool in Japan) and we head out to Chiba, the east side of Japan, about an hours drive from Tokyo. Chiba is the meca of surfing in Japan. It faces direct east and open to the PacO, with it's natural geographic contours Chiba has any type of surf breaks – beach breaks, point breaks, reefy bottoms and sandy bottoms, beginners to advance breaks all along this 40-50 mile stretch. We found our exit, thanks to Mika's driving skills and reading maps and no help to me because everything on the map looked like chicken scratch, except the line of demarcation of land and ocean. The first break we came upon was one of the most, so called, consistent breaks – all lefts, head high, not much shape, stormy conditions with slight overcast and no wind, and 15+ surfers in the line up. We passed on it as wed watched surfers getting caught in a riptide and after 15 minutes or so ended parallel to the beach 50 yards from where they started to paddle out, bummer. After driving another hour or so and countless breaks, most of them with no more than 5 surfers in the line-up, I thought to my self there has to be somewhere. We passed by a spot called Onjuku (pronounce every syllable – on-ju-ku) a spot similar to Solimar, beach break, but with hundreds of surfers out, and everytype of board you know of, was out there. Ugh. 5 minutes, further south we make a short pit stop and I'm looking over a wall that is 100 feet above the beach and look to my right, there I could see these waves breaking right, only 1 surfer on the wave and consistently breaking, maybe chest high. Have you all seen Bruce Brown's Surf'n' Shorts movie where Del Cannon and 12 year old Peter Johnson travels to Japan in 1963. It was the year before the Tokyo Olympics were held in Japan. Here, Del Cannon, Peter Johnson and Bruce Brown surfed a spot called the Kamogawa break water and I had to visit the spot, if not surf it. Well, this pit stop was the Kamogawa breakwater to my surprise. Of course 26 years later, the beach is developed with condos and stores but the break looks about the same, only the blue water PacO water dotted with surfers. In the movie, if you remember, it was only Del Cannon and Peter Johnson out in their surfing. We jump back in the car and head for the spot I saw, drive around a little to see where the actual break was, and find this 10 car parking lot, dead front of the break. With only footprints in the sand, here, the sets were headhigh, smooth conditions, slight off shores, sunny, clear skies, clear blue 70 degrees water, and 6 surfers out, clean and warm PacO, clean enough to see the bottom, 15 feet or so below. The wave broke like a mini sunset beach in Hawaii. Peaky, steep drops, walled up for a good 40 yards then closed out on the inside reef section unless you had a short speedy board to make it through the inside section. I thought to my self, "Oh boy this is going to be fun". The wave energy to my surprise, was not as strong as Hawaii as I expected it to be as strong with its reefy bottom and direct PacO exposure, but stronger than Southern California wave energy. The board that sank and couldn't catch any waves? Worked just as I thought it would with the fin adjustment – drop down from the peak, take a easy drawn out bottom turn, stall at the top and run up to the nose and push the nose down the face and step back. Too cool of a surf day, what luck – a must for the memoirs.

A few days of rest and family activity pass and Mika and I hop on a 2 hour flight to the city of Fukuoka (fu-ku-o-ka) known for it's porcelain crafts to meet Mika's aunt and uncle. Another time I'll tell about the natural hot springs over nighter and the Mercedes car dealer incident. We catch a 1 hour ferry ride to the island of Iki, where Mika made contact with a local, check in the hotel and freshen up for the dinner party. As I'm getting dressed for dinner, I started to think to my self and ask questions – what kind of surfer is this guy, how old is he? Who else is coming to meet us? Are they party animals? How safe is it as we only met them through them on-line.....I open up to Mika and my concerns and she assured me that she prescreened this person via email and a "secret" (for simplicity) Japanese writing code.

Where you use a certain type of grammatical writing style to generally see how this person was raised and whether or not they have an education and coming from a decent family. The secret code - Too cool. For those of you not familiar with the Japanese culture, this writing and screening technique dates back centuries before our own civil war to see if this was an actual writing note from a friend or foe.

As Mika and I are waiting in the lobby, of our economy hotel, with decent marble flooring and wood finish reception desk, the glass double doors open and casually this 5 foot 5 inch tall, frail mid 30s-40s guy walks in, wearing shorts and a aloha shirt, somewhat tanned, with slippers. We make eye contact and both with the look in our eyes "is that them?", we introduce our selves. We chat for a few minutes and Tak (his short name) says about 10 of his friends are waiting for us. I think to myself, 10? I only bought 2 shirts and some stickers. Oh well.....





## Bit's and Pieces

Reader Participation - Win \$\$\$!

### WHAT'S A WATERY WORD WORTH?

In the interest of drumming up a little reader involvement - and having some fun - we're asking you to weigh in. In 250 words or less, put us in the water. As you can see from the examples below, it doesn't have to be the act of riding a wave (though it can be). Just put us there. We - a certain degree of subjectivity here - pick the winner. They get published in the next newsletter, and they can brag about it when they go in to spend their \$25 gift certificate at Ventura Surf Shop. E-mail your submissions to [venturasurfclub@gmail.com](mailto:venturasurfclub@gmail.com).

To get your juices flowing, some passages from writers who might have won a gift certificate or two in their day...

---

Jack London (on getting worked off Waikiki)

Soon we were out in deep water where the big smokers came roaring in. The mere struggle with them, facing them and paddling seaward over them and through them, was sport enough in itself. You had to have your wits about you, for it was a battle in which mighty blows were struck, on one side, and in which cunning was used on the other side - a struggle between insensate force and intelligence. I soon learned a bit. When a breaker curled over my head, for a swift instant I could see the light of day through its emerald body; then down would go my head, and I would clutch the board with all my strength. Then would come the blow, and to the onlooker on shore I would be blotted out. In reality the board and I had passed through the crest and emerged in the respite of the other side. I should not recommend those smashing blows to an invalid or delicate person. There is weight behind them, and the impact of the driven water is like a sandblast. Sometimes one passes through half a dozen combers in quick succession, and it is just about that time that one is liable to discover new merits in the stable land and new reasons for being on shore.

---

William Finnegan (on one really nice ride)

It's a clean takeoff, a sudden sense of height fusing with a deep surge of speed. I hop to my feet and drive to the bottom, drawing out the turn, sensing, more than seeing, what the wave plans to do ahead...Halfway through the first turn I can feel the wave starting to stand up ahead. I change rails, bank off the lower part of the face, and start driving down the line. The first section flies past and the wave is a long, steep, satiny arc curving all the way to the channel ... I start turning harder, slicing higher up the face and, when a last bowl section looms beside the channel, I stall briefly before driving through in a half crouch, my face pressed close to the glassy, rumbling, pea-green wall. The silver edge of the lip's axe flashes harmlessly past on my left. A second later, I'm coasting onto flat water, leaning into a pullout, and mindlessly shouting "My God!"

Lord Byron (on the ocean's allure)

From a boy  
I wanted the breakers - they to me  
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea  
Made them a terror - 'twas a pleasing fear

---

Mark Twain (on the need for a well-made toupee)

It did not seem that a lightning express train could shoot along at a more hair-lifting speed.

---

Philip Larkin (on making just a few words count)

If I were called in to construct a religion, I should make use of water.

---

Mark Renneker (on surfing big waves)

I realized once again how, for those time-warped seconds, life is pure. There is no confusion, anxiety, hot or cold, and no pain: only joy.



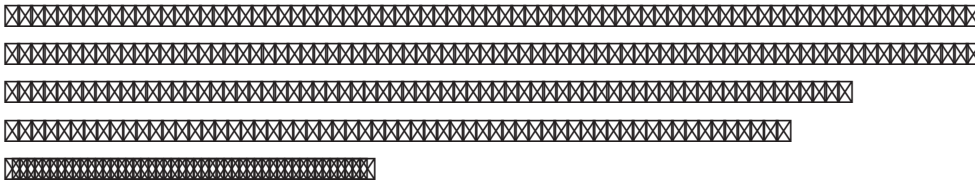
Sally Sanger tucking in on her Old Log  
C Street Longboard Classic 2009  
Photo: Jeanette Ramieri



## Bit's and Pieces



Have you seen the latest local surf videos?  
Check out the video page on [www.venturasurfclub.org](http://www.venturasurfclub.org)



### Congrats to local surfer “Caveman”

From the November Issue of Surfer Magazine’s Curious Gabe - When asked “Who is your local surf hero?”, Ventura surfer George Plomarity said:

“Caveman. His style is cartoonish, but for a homeless guy to be at Ventura Point everyday, doing multiple 360’s down the face of a triple overhead mackerism while playing the kazoo. That’s impressive!



THANK YOU ARBOR SPORTS!

Andrew Jacobson, manager of Arbor Sports in Venice, CA and son of member John Jacobson has generously supplied us a new Arbor skateboard for our annual Luau raffle.

Thank you Andrew and John!

To see the skateboards, surfboards, snowboards and accessories, check out [www.arborsports.com](http://www.arborsports.com)