

**South Zone Report to Board of Governors
September 2025**

Thanks to the Pirouettes of Texas for hosting our 2025 South Zone Champs! Monica Park and her team always do an amazing job. Special thanks to the fabulous scoring team of Rebecca Phillips & Jeanie Saunders, our ridiculously amazing Officials Chair Victoria Anderson, who handled the pre-meet officials planning, Darcee Kingsley who handled the on site officials direction, our always on the deck Tech Chair Beth Moore and all the judges/DTC/SC's who put in sooooo much time prepping for the meet and judging all those events! And thanks to all the coaches for ensuring that every athlete, coach, judge, chaperone etc had their SafeSport/Background checks and other required credentials finalized by the final deadline. It's a credit to all of you and to Meredith Simpson & Monica Park that the zone, specifically, received a resounding 'implemented' or pass on each element of our Safesport Audit. Woohoo!

Congrats to the following award winners, presented at South Zone Champs in March::

Youth High Point Award-Blue Legend Artistic Swimming

Junior High Point Award-Pirouettes of Texas

Overall High Point Award-Pirouettes of Texas

Coach of the Year-Ginny Whisenhunt (Houston SynchroStars)

Contributor of the Year-Jeanie Saunders

Athlete Spirit Award-Trinity Noriega (Palm Beach Coralytes)

The South Zone was once again the site for many USAAS events since last year's convention. Thanks to all who helped make each meet a success.

2024 US Masters Championships-Clearwater, FL

2024 Coaches College, Scoring Clinic & All Star Camp-Charlotte, NC

2025 US Nationals, US Juniors & AWD Invitational-Greensboro, NC

2025 US JO's-Arlington, TX

We lost three beloved members of our community this year. **Gerry Norris**, (on Oct 22) husband of Karen Norris for almost 50 years, and longtime supporter of the Tallahassee Serinas since their 1977 inception. He was often seen on deck at Florida meets helping wherever needed. **Linda Thomson** (March 29), 40 years+ member of DC Synchromasters & a coach for many years with the Northern Virginia Nereids. Linda was an active member of the USAAS South Zone participating enthusiastically at convention and was a regular contributor to the Zone's fundraising efforts for the USAAS Foundation. She spoke of how hard it was to stitch the names of the masters swimmers lost onto the memorial banner. I'm sure it was very difficult for the person who had to do that for Linda, a true gem (cancer sucks!). **Barbara Longstaff** (on March 27) mother of Betty Hazle, who lived in Texas and spent a zillion hours in the scoring room at many, many meets. We are thankful for Gerry, Linda and Barbara and the impact they had on the South Zone Family.

Thanks to the south zone board for all they do to make everything happen. They are the absolute best team & I'm lucky to have served with each one of them:

DEI Chair-Dana Bradley

Education Chair-Camille Albrecht

Officials Chair-Victoria Anderson

Tech Chair-Beth Moore

Treasurer-Cheryl Cook

Athlete reps-Lily Schlemmer (Florida Elite Synchro Warriors), Mya Park (Pirouettes of Texas), Norah Droste (Austin Angelfish)

After 158 years (not a typo, I know it feels like it's been that long to all of you), this is my last report to the BoG. I couldn't be more thrilled to turn this job over to the ridiculously organized and detailed Victoria Anderson, who has been my right hand partner for most of these years. Along with Beth Moore, who has been my left hand partner for the same timeframe, we continued to serve the zone as a trio, even if trio no longer exists at most meets. I'm glad the south (and collegiates) still has it when needed! I've been in synchro since 1974. And every moment has been in the South Zone/Best Zone. I love my South Zone family. I love my synchro family. I'm humbled to have served as Zone Chair with and for the best people I know.

Respectfully submitted,

Carole Mitchell

South Zone Chair