

Ocean Lifeguard John Olguin

John Olguin is the recipient of the 2008 Los Angeles County Lifeguard Lifetime Achievement award. John Olguin was born in San Pedro in 1921 and has always been recognized as a natural leader. During World War II, he served in New Guinea, the Philippines, and Japan with the First Calvary Division and was awarded the Silver Star. He returned after the war to San Pedro and the beach.

Before graduating from high school, he went to work as a beach lifeguard for the L.A. City Department of Recreation and Parks. John worked almost his entire lifeguard career at Cabrillo Beach. He served as a beach lifeguard for 26 years. He is a waterman, it's in his blood. Five of his brothers have also been lifeguards. He has been rowing a dory for 72-years, most of the time with his wife Muriel. They have rowed from San Pedro to Catalina and back numerous times. In 1949, he swam the Catalina Channel in order to escort a blind swimmer. He swims in the ocean every day all year long to maintain his physical fitness and to remain connected to the ocean.

John started the Jr. Lifeguard Program at Cabrillo Beach. He remained in contact with many of these Jr. Lifeguards and is very proud of their many accomplishments as citizen, professionals, and leaders in the community. Many of his Jr. Lifeguards later became guards themselves and played important roles in the lifeguard family.

In 1949, John became the director of the Los Angeles Cabrillo Marine Museum and he remained in this position until he retired in 1963. In this role, John created the Point Fermin Marine Refuge, he instituted the whale watching program, and he raised money to make sure every 6th grade student in the 17 schools in San Pedro could visit the museum and enjoy every experience it had to offer.

Over the years, John Olguin has participated in every possible philanthropic activity in the area. He continued to work very closely with the lifeguards at Cabrillo beach and he was very helpful in easing the transition between the L.A. City and the Los Angeles County Lifeguards during the merger. After the merger John became very active in the L.A. County Lifeguard Alumni Association.

The citizens of San Pedro have recognized John's many contributions to the city, it's people, it's history, and it's beloved lifeguard service. He has been recognized as the Los Angeles City Employee of the Year, the San Pedro Citizen of the Year, the Honorary Mayor of San Pedro, the Citizen of the Century, and now the 2008 Los Angeles County Lifeguard Lifetime Achievement award winner.