

VALLEY SWIM TEAM **PHOENIX**

NEWSLETTER

1ST EDITION
NOV 25' - JAN 26'



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Big Splash Ahead!

The Icebreaker and Polar Plunge home meets are just around the corner – and we need all hands on deck to make them unforgettable! From cheering in the stands to volunteering behind the scenes, your support powers our swimmers and our team spirit.



REMINDER!



As temperatures drop, it's easy to forget the water bottle. However, hydration is just as important in winter! Athletes need steady fluids to perform their best and recover well. So drink up, and remind your swimmers to do the same. A well-hydrated team is a strong team!



[TEAM WEBSITE](#)



Head Coach Ben Marshall
(540) 327-3497



RMA Practice Facility: 200 Academy
Drive, Front Royal, VA 22630

MEET INFORMATION

Did You Know?

VSTP hosts 2 meets annually!

Ice Breaker Invite in December & **Polar Plunge** Meet in January.

What does it really mean to host a meet?

VSTP organizes the meet, rents the facility, contacts and encourages visiting teams to attend the meet, organizes officials and meet marshals, organizes and prepares food for hospitality for coaches and also officials.

Once all the prep work is done prior to the meet, we have to run the meet!

On meet day, our Meet Directors, Officials, Marshals, and Hospitality crews are at the pool at 6-6:30am getting things ready for the day. They, along with other volunteers work throughout the day at the multiple sessions doing whatever job they're assigned to. At the end of the meet, it's time to clean up and pack up!

What's the most important part of hosting a successful meet?

Volunteers like you! Since these are our two "home" meets we encourage all VSTP families to attend.

Wow, that sounds like a lot of work. Why do we host meets?

Swim teams host meets for a couple of reasons. The main reason is simple, for the money!

1. A successful swim meet can bring in thousands of dollars that goes towards keeping our membership fees lower.
2. Swim meets are fun! Our athletes love the two meets that we host. Since parents are typically working the meet, the athletes get to spend more time together and hang out on and off deck during the meet. Meets are a great opportunity for team bonding, not only for athletes but coaches and parents.

Where do we host our meets?

We use the WARF in Warrenton because it the closest pool that has the facility size and requirements we need to host a meet successfully.

Please put these dates on your calendar!

ICE BREAKER
Dec 5-7, 2025

POLAR PLUNGE
Jan 10-11, 2026



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Ice Breaker

December 5 – 7, 2025

The WARF - 800 Waterloo Road, Warrenton, VA 20186.

- This is a mid-season championship meet. 13 & over athlete's swim prelims in the morning. The top 16 from each event 13 & 14 and 15 & over athlete's swim in finals that evening. 12 & under athlete's swim timed finals in the afternoon session.
- Our meet was one of the first mid-season championship meets in the area and is an important benchmark for the athletes during this part of the season. It is also an opportunity to gain experience before championship season begins in February.
- The meet is 8 sessions that starts Friday at 1pm and ends Sunday evening concluding with finals. Friday are distance sessions that are timed finals.
- We need all hands-on deck to make the meet a success. We need volunteers to buy supplies and food for hospitality and prepare food before the meet. We need help transporting food and supplies to the facility the night before. Volunteer positions during the meet are hospitality prep and service, meet marshals on deck, head timers, officials (must be USA Swimming certified), announcers, Meet Directors, Meet Safety Officers.

We'll have a meeting on November 14 to discuss volunteer roles in more detail and answer any questions prior to the meet. We'll also create sign-ups for volunteer positions and the items we need to have donated and prepared for the meet.

- We encourage families with 12&U athletes to attend one night of finals. Finals are really fun for the athletes that have made it to the top 16 in their events. The energy in the building is higher than prelims because the lead up to the A final.
- The top 8 athletes in each event swim in the A final. The top qualifier gets to pick a walk-out song and the athletes are paraded out to the blocks. Typically, the younger athletes are the ones that get to lead the older athletes out to the block carrying a sign of the event.
- All officials, athletes and spectators are clapping and cheering for those in the A final as they parade out. Once the athletes arrive to the blocks the announcer, announces each swimmer's name and their team before the heat starts.



Polar Plunge

January 10-11, 2026

The WARF -800 Waterloo Road, Warrenton, VA 20186.



After making it through 3 days of the Ice Breaker in December, this meet seems like a breeze. This is a 2-day meet with 6 sessions (Ice Breaker is 8 sessions!). The two mid-day sessions are distance sessions.

We need all hands-on deck to make the meet a success! We need volunteers to buy supplies and food for hospitality and prepare food before the meet. We need help transporting food and supplies to the facility the night before. Volunteer positions during the meet are hospitality prep and service, meet marshals on deck, head timers, officials (must be USA Swimming certified), announcers, Meet Directors, Meet Safety Officers.

Want to make sure
your swimmer gets this newsletter
and stays up to date?

Please send their email address to
your Board President, Dave Sims!
davesims1183@gmail.com



TEAM WEBSITE



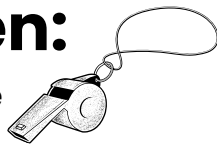
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Coaches Corner

Message from Ben:



The best athletes almost do more outside their sport practice time than inside their sport practice time to accomplish goals they have set sights on. This is because the time we have to practice is so little compared to grand scheme of the day that they want to ensure they are getting the proper challenge necessary to attain their goals. When speaking swimming specific this includes activities like studying up outside practice on the current top swimmers in the world. Dedicating time toward recovery and rehab modalities for top level performances. Following an out of water exercise routine both in season and out of season, especially for days not swimming. For example Coach Bens Daily Dozens. Be looking for ways to challenge yourself out of the water daily. Whether it is taking the stairs instead of the elevator or reading out loud in class. The challenge out of water will encourage you to find the same challenge opportunities in the water. That is what makes fast swimmers.

"If it were easy everyone would do it" – Eddie Reese

"There is no speed limit" – Usain Bolt

Coach Bens Daily Dozens

Bronze/ Silver 1 (12x) reps of each 1 time through

Silver 2: (2x12 reps)

Gold: (3x12 reps)

- Push-ups
- Squats
- Chair dips
- Tuck jumps
- Split lunges
- Streamline circles (make big circles with hands together in streamline 6 each way)
- Toe touch (bend and touch toes, return to standing breath focus)
- Lower trunk rotations
- Cat-cow
- High knees (above hips with knees or 90 lift at least)
- Jumping jacks
- 1 min plank extended



Winter Training Focus

This winter will be fun! We are focusing on developing a championship mindset. Making changes in the water for both technical and speed aspects of our strokes. And closing down the last 10 yards of races.

Quarterly Technique Tip

If you're sinking in the water you aren't swimming fast in the water. Primarily if you're dragging your legs. Develop a good float even as an older elite swimmer. Having control of the body line at the surface of the water is crucial for swimming fast at any level! Focus 5 key body zones: head, neck/ shoulders, chest/ hips, low back, hamstring, thigh/ knees, shin, ankles/ feet, toes. Floating better is the key to kicking better, kicking better is the key to swimming faster!



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Parent Zone

NOVEMBER MEETING

11/14/2025 @ 6:00pm

Calvary Episcopal Church, 132 N Royal Ave, Front Royal



- We will have a meeting Nov 14th to go over more information about the upcoming meets.
- We will need everyone to help run the events.
- There will be two signup geniuses for items we need and for volunteers.
- We Need You! We can NOT do this without help from the parents.
- Volunteer hours- If your child is swimming a session you MUST volunteer. If not, you will be charged 100 dollars for not helping out.

Thieves Christmas Party

12/11/2025 @ 6:00pm

Calvary Episcopal Church, 132 N Royal Ave, Front Royal

Join us for a potluck and thieves gift exchange!

Two Age Groups = Double the Fun!

Little Elves - 12 & Under

Teen Elves - 13 & Over

Maximum gift amount is \$10;
no gift cards please.



Tips for Meet Prep

- Please arrive to the facility 30 minutes prior to the warm up time.
- Athletes should arrive in comfy clothes and change in the locker room prior to warm ups.
- Athletes should wear their racing suit and team cap
- Athletes should have a sweatshirt or parka and shoes/crocs to wear on deck in between events. It is important to keep the body warm.
- Snacks, snacks and more snacks. Swimmers need to eat and drink before, in between and after their races. Healthy small snacks are best. Granola bars, fruits, veggies, etc... Bring plenty of cold water / healthy sports drinks.
- Athletes and coaches sitting areas are typically not in the same areas as parents and spectators are sitting, so having your swimmer prepared for the day with clothes, water and snacks is important for race day.



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Volunteer Information

Volunteer Positions Explained

Timers – These duties are typically assigned to parents when we visit other pools/away meets. The week before the meet the host team sends out an email for lane assignments for timers. Typically, assignments are based off of size of the teams attending the meet. Smaller teams like VSTP usually only have 1 lane per meet. Once we receive our timer assignments from the host team, we split up the duties between parents attending the meet. Normally, each shift is for an hour and not the entire session. **Timing is FUN and gets you close to the pool!** A few things to remember about timing, if you're assigned to time it is expected that you'll attend the timers meeting before the session starts (even if you've timed before). The meeting is typically held 30 minutes prior to the start of the session. The time and location of the meeting is announced on the PA system before the meeting. Each meet is run differently and the devices that you use to time may change meet to meet, so it's extremely important to go to the meeting so you know what you're doing. They also do a head count at the meeting and we want to make sure we are present to be counted at the meeting. If you're scheduled to be "relief" please still attend the meeting, also make sure you're on time to relieve the person timing before you. If you are assigned to time and you are unable to time for your shift please let us know ahead of time so we can make adjustments. When timing assignments are given, we try to share the load evenly among the parents attending meets.

Marshals – Marshals are used at swim meets to keep the pool deck / warm up lanes / locker rooms / team bleacher areas safe before, during and after the session. These duties are needed at our hosted meets (Ice Breaker and Polar Plunge). Parents sign up for these positions on the sign up genius before the meet. A Head Marshal assigns marshal locations before the session starts. One of the perks to being a Marshal is being on the pool deck, which is the best seat in the house! Most positions are located around the pool deck and some positions are located off deck in team sitting areas or access points. **We cannot run our meets without parents working these positions!**

Head Marshall – This position works with the Meet Director to assign positions for Marshals for the session and also fill in as needed during the session for other Marshals when breaks are needed.

Wait...there's MORE!



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Volunteer Positions Explained

Hospitality - Coaches and Officials are treated to food / drinks during the meet. At VSTP meets we prepare homemade dishes as well as store bought items to feed the coaches and officials for the weekend. The week of the meet parents are donating food, drinks, small appliances, preparing homemade dishes for the meet. During the meet the Hospitality team warms up food, prepares snacks and keeps the coolers stocked. This is a huge job, but one that VSTP has done amazing with. **We receive so many compliments from the officials and coaches about the Hospitality at our meets.** Our swimmers also are fed during the weekend since so many parents are working the meet! To make this a success this takes many hands, long hours and several shifts.

Officials - USA Swimming certified officials are needed for all swim meets, especially our meets. The past few years our base of officials has "aged out" as their kids have moved on to college and beyond. We really need parents to start getting trained for these positions. USA Swimming has created less rigorous training in the last year to attract more officials. **Being an official is THE BEST seat in the house, you can't get any closer to the pool unless you're swimming in it.** Another perk of being a USA Swimming certified official is it certifies you for high school and summer league swim officials! If you're interested please contact Dave Sims, President.

Fundraising & Sponsors

Fundraising help wanted!

We are looking for someone to take the lead on fundraising and sponsorships as the Fundraising Coordinator. If this is something you'd be interested in please contact a board member. More details about sponsorships can be found on the next page.

Primary Functions:

- Planning and running fundraisers.
- Seeking out and speaking to businesses that would be interested in sponsoring VSTP.

Thank you to our Sponsor:



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Valley Swim Team Phoenix

PO Box 42 Strasburg, VA

Contact – Dave Sims 540-974-9444, davesims1183@gmail.com

2025-2026 Sponsorship Information

About Us – VSTP is a year-round youth club swim team affiliated with USA Swimming and Virginia Swimming. Founded in 2005 by a group of parents to offer a guided youth program for children 6 years and older, from the beginner swimmer to the competitive skilled swimmer. We are a team of about 70 athletes from the northern Shenandoah Valley. Our coaches and athletes are a tight knit group that encourage one another and support fellow teammates. We take pride in our sense of community and comradery. We are asking you to become part of our Phoenix community and support our team in the 2025 – 2026 season.

Sponsorships -

- **Bronze - \$250.00** – Company name on team website sponsorship page for the season.
- **Silver - \$500.00** – Company name on website sponsorship page, company name on team banner for the season (if purchased prior to 11/1/2025).
- **Gold - \$1,000.00** – Company name on website sponsorship page, company name & logo on team banner for the season (if purchased prior to 11/1/2025), VSTP decal, 2 VSTP team shirts.
- **Platinum - \$1,500.00** - Company name on website sponsorship page, company name & logo on team banner for the season (if purchased prior to 11/1/2025), VSTP decal, 2 VSTP team shirts, Company name on back of team 2025 shirt. Commitment is required by October 10, 2025.
- **VSTP Icebreaker Sponsor - \$2,000.00** – Company name on meet banner, Company name on back of meet team shirts, 2 VSTP meet team shirts, company name announced during meet sessions. Commitment is required by October 31, 2025. This could be a co-sponsored event!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER

- Nov 8-9: PWSC Meet @ JRSSC Stafford, VA
- Nov 14th: Parent Meeting @ 6pm @ Calvary Episcopal Church

DECEMBER

- Dec 5-7: VSTP Icebreaker Invite @ the WARF, Warrenton, VA
- Dec 11th: Thieves Christmas Party @ 6pm @ Calvary Episcopal Church

JANUARY

- Jan 10-11: VSTP Polar Plunge Meet @ the WARF, Warrenton, VA
- Jan 16-18: Hanover Duck Bowl @ JRSSC Stafford, VA

HOME MEET!

HOME MEET!

Communication Reminders

Team Website: <https://www.gomotionapp.com/team/vavst/page/home>

Remind App: This is used for parent communication

Meet Mobile App: Tracks swimmer heat and lane assignments at meets

Sports Engine Motion App: Keeps track of swimmer information, best times, attendance and it's also where you can declare for a meet.

If you need assistance with the apps, please contact your Board Secretaries, Tiffany or Jerl Louk!

Follow on:
Facebook & Instagram too!

Contact Us:

Coaches:

Head Coach: Ben Marshall
bsmarsh2012@yahoo.com

Coach: Elissa Ryan
elisslav@yahoo.com

Coach: Ethan Coleman
ethanscolemangmail.com

Coach: Jeremy Linaburg
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Member: Catherine DeMay
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