

Marine Safety Captain Nick Lerma Day

December 15, 2015

Presented by Councilmember Scott Sherman

WHEREAS, Captain Nick Lerma has served the citizens and visitors of San Diego for 36 years as a San Diego Lifeguard. He began his exemplary career as a Lifeguard I in 1979 making water rescues, cliff rescues, boat rescues and performing medical care to those in need. In 1984, he was promoted to Lifeguard II and took on additional roles as a rescue boat operator, Dive Team member, Cliff Rescue Instructor and that of a head lifeguard. In 1987 he was promoted to Lifeguard Sergeant, where he supervised teams of lifeguards, managed daily beach and bay operations and coordinated rescue operations. In 1995 he was promoted to Marine Safety Lieutenant, leading large operational districts and special operation teams. In 2013, he was appointed to his role as Marine Safety Captain where he had oversight of all lifeguard emergency operations for the beaches, as well as the Boating Safety Unit on Mission Bay; **AND**

WHEREAS, in 1987 the Lifeguard Division merged with the Mission Bay Harbor Patrol and he served as the first Lifeguard Sergeant in the newly established Boating Safety Unit (BSU). He created training plans, curriculum and testing procedures for rescue boat operators. He served as a lifeguard harbor police officer and supervisor providing oversight of rescue and enforcement operations on Mission Bay; **AND**

WHEREAS, Captain Nick Lerma was the first to establish the Lifeguard Division Training Section. He created the first Advanced Lifeguard Academy for full time lifeguards, as well as the first internal boating officer academies for bay patrol and dispatcher, marine firefighting and surf rescue boat operator. He co-developed the first lifeguard field training guides. He established the first lifeguard training and safety committees. He co-wrote and directed the first three lifeguard training videos for the United States Lifesaving Association (USLA). He was a contributor to the USLA Open Water Training Manual Text Book, 2nd Edition. These videos and text books were utilized by lifeguard agencies across the United States to train and prepare lifeguards; **AND**

WHEREAS, Captain Nick Lerma was widely regarded as a key regional leader in lifeguard training and emergency operations. He was the founder of the Miramar College San Diego Regional Lifeguard Training Program. Working with Miramar College, he developed the first Associates Degree and Professional Certificate for Open Water Lifeguards. He served as Chair of the San Diego Regional Aquatic Lifesaving Emergency Response Taskforce, charged with coordinating plans, procedures and training for regional maritime first responders; **AND**

WHEREAS, Captain Nick Lerma was the Team Leader for the San Diego Lifeguard and Police Dive Team. He was the first person to successfully integrate lifeguards, police officers, lake rangers and a deputy county medical examiner into one coordinated team responsible for SCUBA rescue and recovery and underwater investigations; **AND**

WHEREAS, Throughout his career, **Captain Nick Lerma** proudly represented the best of the San Diego Lifeguard Service through his commitment to ensuring public safety and enforcement of the law and, as Captain, was a role model to all those serving under his command; **NOW, THEREFORE**

BE IT PROCLAIMED, by the Council of the City of San Diego, that this Council, for and on behalf of the people of San Diego, does hereby declare December 15th, 2015 to be "**Captain Nick Lerma Day**" in the City of San Diego and recognizes and thanks Captain Nick Lerma for his unwavering dedication to protecting and serving the citizens of America's Finest City.