

# **The Story of the Ken Harmount Pier to Pier Paddle**

"A lifeguard, a tough situation, a group of guys, an event is born in 1993"

*On an overcast August morning a handful of local watermen (lifeguards, surfers, paddlers, and kayakers) got together and paddled from Avila to Pismo for a "friend" and fellow waterman on paddleboards, longboards, and kayaks. Each chipped in a few bucks, sold T-shirts, and raised some money for their fellow waterman's rehabilitation as a result of an unfortunate snowboarding accident a few months before that early August morning. Today, Ken Harmount lives in his home town of Santa Clara bound to a high tech chair paralyzed from the shoulders down with only little use of one arm.*

*Ken was an avid waterman and a lifeguard in Morro Bay. The money raised on that day over a decade and a half ago was given to Ken as a gesture of camaraderie and support. When the few hundred dollars was given to Ken, Ken turned around and said, "Thanks, but go ahead and use it for the newly formed Surfrider Foundation" and gave the money back.*

*In his honor and unselfishness, The Ken Harmount Pier to Pier Paddle Event was born. The Surfrider Foundation...San Luis Bay Chapter (now San Luis Obispo Chapter), Central Coast Kayaks, other local businesses, along with individuals have all helped to raise many thousands of dollars for San Luis Obispo County Junior Lifeguard programs in Ken's name over the years.*

*Without all the participants, volunteers, sponsors, and all those who helped make this event possible, it just wouldn't happen. Thanks to all for being part of the event today.*

*"Mahalo to all the paddlers today"*

*"Life is short...Paddle Hard"*

