



Swim instructor Rosemary Pulick: "You have to be very perceptive of feelings."



Andy Luzod encourages his 2-year-old daughter Tara during a tot-parent swim session at the Mercy Center pool. (Staff photos by Tom Baer)

YMCA offers program

Tots learn joys of swimming

By CORINNE ABATT

Tara Luzod of Farmington Hills is only 2½ years old, but for the past 10 or 11 months she has been taking swimming lessons through the Farmington YMCA. With a square tympanum "sugar" cube strapped on her back and her father, Andy, beside her, she paddles around the Mercy Center pool like a giggling fish.

"She can get in and out of the pool by herself, and she chases after her floating toys with a bright, happy smile on her face," Luzod said that he and his wife decided to enroll in the Parent and Tot swim classes taught by the YMCA's Rosemary Pulick, as a safety measure.

"We live around a lot of pools and we hope to buy a sailboat," he said. "And a lot of our friends tried the classes and were very happy with them."

The Lawrence Castleman, also of Farmington Hills, has a pool built in their yard this summer. Their three youngsters, Scott, 4, Melissa, 5, and Laura, 9, are all swimmers. Scott, who is enrolled in the YMCA program, can swim the length of the family pool and the width of the pool at the Mercy Center.

Scott and Melissa both learned to swim in the YMCA classes when they were about three years old. Mrs. Castleman said she wanted the children to learn early so they could use the pool they were building.

MRS. PULICK, the YMCA program director and swimming instructor, said she works with many youngsters under one year old. Either parent has to be in the water with them and as much as teaching swimming, she teaches parent-child communication.

She talks with parents ahead of time about body language, about messages and the different kinds of communication. She urges her parents to pick up a book or two on touching and body language. One book in particular — "Your Baby Can Swim" by Bonnie Prudden — is especially helpful to the parents, according to Mrs. Pulick.

Once she has established some understanding for the new venture, instructors, parents and tots move into the water.

"Very young tots have only recently come from a pre-natal environment of water and weightlessness, but the move into the pool atmosphere can still be a frightening one. There are strange sounds, faces of other children, which is a new experience for many youngsters, the feel of the water and possibly even new smells."

"You have to be very perceptive of feeling," said Mrs. Pulick, who lives in Livonia. "If a child is very rigid or very excited, he's probably afraid. When you hold a child who's crying, but the body is relaxed, you know you can go ahead. If he's rigid, you know you have to back off."

When the children reach three years of age, they can attend the classes without a parent in the water. Enjoyment is another important goal for swimmers of all ages, according to Mrs. Pulick.

"OUR GOAL is to have fun in the water," she said, adding that having fun is a sign of excellent communication with a very young child whose language skills are yet to come.

By nine months a tot can learn to float on his back and pre-schoolers can learn the butterfly. It's a natural motion for them," Mrs. Pulick said.

In addition to the safety and enjoyment factors, Mrs. Pulick sees other benefits from teaching children to swim at an early age. She feels the improvement in the basic motor skills is a definite advantage and cites tests which indicate a relationship between motor skills and the total educational process.

"If you can swim, you can do most everything else," she said.

She also said that she considers swimming an excellent outlet for adults who function under pressure in a highly technical society and beginning the enjoyment of the sport at an early age will build a lifetime leisure sport.

The YMCA philosophy, which is concerned with body, mind and spirit, is also claimed by Mrs. Pulick. She sends her philosophy to the very young, by way of smiles, encouragement, warmth and understanding.

For their parents, she has words of counsel on understanding children and enjoying themselves in the process.

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Scott Castleman, 4, shows that he's not afraid to go off the diving board at the Mercy Center pool. Scott and his sister Melissa learned the enjoyment of swimming in a program offered by the Farmington YMCA.

At Livonia course

Entry deadline nears for O&E tournament

By DOUG FUNKE

Entry forms for the eighth annual Observer & Eccentric Open Golf Tournament have been coming in at a faster rate than last year, when the largest contingent of amateur golfers participated in the 36-hole medal play event, said Gary Whitener, tournament director and club pro at Livonia's Whispering Willows Golf Course.

"We probably have close to 80 confirmed entrants," Whitener said, noting that the great crush of entries has traditionally come the week before the turnney.

"I parsed out 100 entry forms during the last week at the course and I'm sure I'll get two thirds back," Whitener added.

The tournament director indicated that entry forms for the O&E Women's Open Tournament, 18 holes of medal play, have been returned at about the same rate as last year.

The men will tee off at Whispering Willows (Eight Mile and Newburgh roads)

Sept. 11-12, while the women will take to the links Sept. 16.

Entry fees for the competition to be divided into flights based on handicap, are \$22 for men and \$8 for women. The fee takes care of greens fees, a golf bag tag, prizes and trophies.

Last year's Men's and Women's Championship Flight winners—Dave Wall and Lynn Waldecker—have definitely committed themselves to defending their titles, Whitener said.

Wall, in fact, reportedly has been attempting to persuade his entire Publix golf team to enter the tourney with him.

The other members of that crew include Roger Strong, Tim Shelling and Ken Timmons. All are expected to compete in the Championship Flight if they choose to enter.

Bill Curtis, who won the O&E Championship Flight in 1974 has been practicing at Whispering Willows frequently, Whitener said, and is expected to be among the starters next weekend.

So, too, is Bud Stevens, a prominent amateur in the state and 1973 O&E Championship Flight winner.

Another prospect who Whitener gives a good shot at the Championship Flight crown is Rick Goldsmith, a Bloomfield Hills resident and a former club champion at Shennadoah. He is listed as a five handicapper.

"We're getting a lot of entries out of Farmington and a lot out of Westland," Whitener noted. Any amateur golfer who resides in a community in which the O&E circulates may participate.

"I'm now in the process of putting golfers into categories and most of the entries we have received so far are in the Championship and First Flights," the tourney director said. Last year, the field was divided into four flights.

Entry forms are available at Whispering Willows and Edy Wyld Golf Courses. The latter is located at Five Mile and Newburgh roads. Closures may also be found in most editions of the O&E. Registration deadlines are Sept. 8 for men and Sept. 13 for women.

Whitener again reiterated that Whispering Willows will be in tip-top condition for the tourneys. "The course is coming along well. We've been pumping a lot of water in it and it's as green as can be," said Whitener.

Farmington boy is really rolling

Tim Smith, a 16-year-old Farmington boy, is becoming well known in the Youth Bowling Association (YBA) competition. Tim, who will be a fifth grader at Long-acre Elementary school, finished third in the YBA state finals held recently at Colonial Lanes in Ann Arbor. In three games, he rolled a 301-pin total, considering handicaps. Tim qualified for the state tournament by winning the regional competition with a 403-pin total in Dearborn.

Last year, Tim teamed with Chuck Hasty of Livonia to win the YBA-state doubles double crown with a 1200-pin total.

Tim bowls in the Prep-Star League, managed by Fred Hamlin, at the Farmington Lane.

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MEN'S
36 holes medal play, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 11 and 12. Entry fee \$22 (greens fees, trophies and prizes).

WOMEN'S
18 holes medal play, Thursday, Sept. 16. Entry fee \$8 (greens fees and trophies). Make checks payable to Gary Whitener, tournament director and enclose with entry blank.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ HANDICAP _____

Men's entries close Wednesday, Sept. 8 at 8 p.m. Call for starting times on Friday, Sept. 10 at 10 a.m.
Women's entries close Monday, Sept. 13 at 5 p.m. Call for starting times Wednesday, Sept. 15 at 10 a.m.

Open to all residents of Livonia, Plymouth, Canton, Garden City, Westland, Redford Township, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Southfield, Birmingham, West Bloomfield, Bloomfield Township, Bloomfield Hills, Troy, Rochester and Avon Township.

Entries may be mailed to Tournament Director Gary Whitener, Whispering Willows Golf Course, 20800 Newburgh, Livonia.