

# Waterford pool waves hello

By LISA GERBER

Even if you're unable to visit the ocean front this summer you don't have to wave waves.

Minus sand, seagulls and sharks, Oakland County has brought coastal waves to the Midwest. In fact, the county has brought the waves to inland Waterford Township.

Children of all ages can body surf, dodge and just plain enjoy waves of up to four feet in the Waterford wave action pool located on Scott Lake Road between Watkins Lake Road and Dixie Highway.

The waves are set into motion by principles of air pressure and hydraulics. A series of fans blows air under the water and into air chambers in a synchronized method so that air is released from one chamber while being taken into another.

The process creates five wave heads of about 3 1/4 feet at about 10-15 miles per hour.

"You would have to be running alongside the pool to keep up with them," said one lifeguard. The surf diminishes in size and force as it travels the length of the 180-foot pool until it becomes tiny ripples, like those on a lake shore. The waves run at intervals of nine minutes on, 12 minutes off so that "the swimmers the fans have a rest," the lifeguard said.

The wave pool, which is owned and operated by the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Department, was the third pool of its kind in the county. "The parks and recreation department wanted to build something that people would enjoy and couldn't have in their own backyards," said Chris Austin, pool manager.

Until this summer, it was the largest

in the country but several pools in Pittsburgh have since surpassed it in size. The Waterford pool is 82 feet wide at the deep end and fans out to a width of 140 feet at the shallow end.

Michiganers have traveled from all corners of the state to enjoy the pool's breath-taking waves. According to Austin, the pool has hosted a near-capacity crowd almost every day—about 1,000-1,200 swimmers.

Now in its third year, the pool has been getting more popular each summer, Austin said. "We even have to occasionally close the doors because the pool is full."

Even though the pool is sometimes walk-to-wall bodies, there has never been a drowning. "There is less chance of an accident in this pool than in a regular backyard pool," Austin said.

There are no diving boards, elimi-

nating the most treacherous swimming pool hazard, Austin said.

In addition, the force of the wave action keeps small children from venturing into water over their heads. The force of the waves is not enough to cause injuries in itself. "We don't even hand out very many Band-aids," Austin added.

The only serious accidents are the "result of stupidity—people diving into shallow water," he said. If an accident does occur, each life guard has an emergency stop button on his chair that halts all wave action immediately.

Children are well supervised. There are always 10-15 life guards working, or one for every 25 persons. Swimmers age 9 or younger must be accompanied by an adult.

Admission to the non-profit pool is \$1 for children 17 and under and \$2 for adults. The pool is open from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week.

## Adoption luncheon stars PW leader

A past national president will be the featured guest speaker at the Greater Detroit Council of Pioneer Women's annual Spiritual Adoption Luncheon at noon, Thursday, July 20.

The event will take place at Stouffer's Restaurant at Northland, 21100 Northwestern Highway in Southfield. Rose Kaufman, now of Israel, a past president of Pioneer Women in this country, will speak.

A minimum contribution of \$36 is required for attendance. Spiritual

adoption of one child for a years costs \$360, six months costs \$180 and three months, \$90.

The program provides full-time care for Israeli children who are orphaned or come from troubled homes. The "Day-Night" homes are at Omna, Rese Kaufman, now of Israel, a past president of Pioneer Women in this country, will speak.

For more information call Pioneer Women at 651-0750.

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