

Farmington Observer

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Pool use calls for caution

By Julie Brown
staff writer

It doesn't take very long for a child to drown in a swimming pool.

Leaving a youngster alone even for a moment can bring tragic results, such as last Tuesday's drowning of a youngster in a Farmington Hills home's swimming pool. Planning ahead, however, can reduce the likelihood of an accident.

"They have to think safety," said Jan Lockman, senior physical education director/membership director for the Farmington Area YMCA. Children should be supervised at all times while swimming or playing near the pool.

"They should never be left unattended. If the phone rings, let it ring."

Some parents are unaware of the importance of poolside safety, she said. A parent who would, for example, never think of leaving a child unattended in a running car may not realize how quickly a drowning can occur.

"They don't think about the pool as a danger spot, they think about it as recreation and fun."

Parents should be aware of a child's swimming skill level, Lockman said, and should never assume an older sibling or friend can adequately supervise younger children.

"They should just never assume anything."

Swimming lessons for youngsters are a good idea, she said.

"We teach them to swim back to a point of safety." Children are also taught to "jump in and turn around," learning to rotate the head so as to roll the body into a floating position.

Basic water safety programs are beneficial, even for non-swimmers, she said.

"That's only a four-hour course and it's definitely saved thousands of lives throughout the state."

SUCH COURSES COVER the techniques of "reaching assists," extending an object out to the child, and "throwing assists," throwing a floating object to the child. Parents can also learn how to remove a child with a back or neck

injury from the water safely, so as to avoid paralysis.

Parents and older children will benefit from lifesaving courses, she said.

"Basic first aid and CPR should start to become household words."

Having a phone at the pool's side is also helpful, Lockman said, in that it allows parents to answer calls on the spot and to summon emergency help quickly. Electrical devices, however, should never be used near a pool.

A ring buoy — with a rope 1 1/2 times the pool's width — is also an essential safety device. Parents should avoid relying on inflatable rings as safety devices, she said.

"They can slip off, they can deflate. They are training aids only and should be used with a parent in the water."

A pillow-type life jacket, designed to hold a youngster's face out of the water, can be used in the pool for added safety. Parents shouldn't assume, however, that such a device will rule out the possibility of an accident.

"It's not 100 percent perfect, it is, again, just an aid," she said.

Poolside toys, such as beach balls, should be deflated and stored away from the pool when not in use.

"If the wind picks that beach ball up, they're going to go after it," Lockman said. A child could fall into the pool while chasing after such a toy.

THE DESIGN AND location of a backyard pool can also contribute to greater safety. Such basics as sturdy fences with self-latching gates can make pool accidents less likely.

Sliding doors that lead from a home to the pool should be secured, Lockman said.

"They should make sure that it is locked with some kind of safety switch." An above-ground pool should have its ladder placed out of the reach of children when adults aren't around to supervise.

Both Farmington and Farmington Hills have safety and design requirements for swimming pools.

"We're under a space crunch right now," Schreiber said.

"The way medicine has changed, the way the practice (of medicine) has changed, the need for space has

changed too."

Phase II construction includes a six-level tower to be located at the front of the hospital between the existing south tower and the professional building. These six levels will contain a basement, classrooms, a day room, nurses lounge and locker room, visitors waiting room and a doctor-patient conference room.

Ground level construction includes expansion of the surgical suite, em-



Putting on a summer face
Thousands came to this year's Farmington Founders' Festival to enjoy the traditional summer offerings. Here Leslie Helsek, 3, mother Cindy and Lauren, 6, enjoy the recent Kids Day activities. To see the other faces of the festival, turn to page 3A

Council filing dates are set

Filing deadlines are nearing for city council races in both Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Petitions are available at the city clerk's office, 23600 Liberty St., Farmington, for the election of candidates for three seats on the Farmington City Council.

Petitions may be filed from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, Aug. 6-16. All candidates who qualify will be placed on the ballot.

There is no primary election, and voters will elect three council members on a non-partisan ballot at the regular odd-year general city election Nov. 5.

Candidates for nomination must have the following qualifications:

- a resident of the city of Farmington for three years immediately prior to the last day for filing petitions;
- a qualified and registered elector of the city of Farmington on Aug. 15 and throughout the tenure of office.

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Trustee returns with tales of Orient

By Jean Adamczak
staff writer

Ever since she was a little child and heard the myth about digging a hole in the earth to get to China, Helen Ditzhazy had been fascinated with that country.

Ditzhazy, newly elected to the Farmington Board of Education, realized her dream recently by visiting China and Russia and comparing their educational systems.

Ditzhazy was one of 19 school teachers, administrators and board members from Michigan who participated in the People to People program sponsored by the federal government and held in conjunction with the Michigan State Department of Education.

The group left Michigan on June 18 and returned July 14 after spending time with teachers, administrators and students from China and Russia.

"To get a feeling of the countries' cultures we intermixed sightseeing with

educational trips," she explained.

Cities visited by the group while in China included Shanghai, Xian and Beijing.

Ditzhazy said the group was surprised at the number of people who could speak a "little bit of English."

"They see English as a language of commerce," she said. "They all want to learn to speak it. In fact, English is the most studied foreign language in China."

Just outside of Shanghai was a self-sufficient commune the group visited. About 1,200 students from kindergarten through high school age attended school at the commune, she said.

"There were about 60 students to a class, and the classrooms were no bigger than ours. There were no discipline problems even though the students' desks were extremely close together," Ditzhazy said.

ALTHOUGH THE STREETS of Shanghai were "wall to wall" people and bicycles, Ditzhazy said she never

felt uncomfortable in the crowds.

"Everyone was friendly to us although it was obvious we were tourists," she said. "People would come up to us because they were so eager to learn to speak English."

One of the most notable differences between American and Chinese cultures is the attitude younger people have toward the old, Ditzhazy said.

"It was unthinkable to anyone we talked to that the children would not take care of their parents as the parents got older," she said.

Through a young Chinese tour guide named Tao, the group was informed of the amount of control the Chinese government has over its people.

"Students don't have to pay anything to go to school, the government foots the bill, but then the government owns you," she said.

"The government decides what you do and where you go."

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Helen Ditzhazy

Hospital expansion going full tilt

By Jean Adamczak
staff writer

After months of planning and numerous delays, the \$11.5 million expansion project at Botzford General Hospital in Farmington Hills is under way.

Termed by hospital administrators as "Phase II," construction on the 75,432-square-foot addition began in May and will increase the licensed

bed capacity of the hospital to 336.

The expansion, scheduled to be ready for occupancy at the end of 1988, will provide the hospital with some badly needed space, said William Schreiber, assistant administrator at Botzford.

"We're under a space crunch right now," Schreiber said.

"The way medicine has changed, the way the practice (of medicine) has changed, the need for space has

changed too."

Phase II construction includes a six-level tower to be located at the front of the hospital between the existing south tower and the professional building. These six levels will contain a basement, classrooms, a day room, nurses lounge and locker room, visitors waiting room and a doctor-patient conference room.

Ground level construction includes expansion of the surgical suite, em-

ployee dining room, bulk equipment storage areas and the addition of a mechanical room. The first floor of the construction will include a new lobby and three elevators which will separate visitors from patient and service traffic.

The most controversial part of the construction is the addition of a fourth and fifth floor to the south tower.

BOTSFORD HAD TO acquire a

special purpose zoning amendment from the Farmington Hills City Council in order to extend the south tower to a maximum 85-foot high — more than 20 feet taller than current zoning allows.

The council approved the zoning ordinance amendment in November 1983 by a 3-2 vote, overturning the city's planning commission recommendation to deny the ordinance amendment.

The two additional floors will contain the hospital's 86 new beds and an equipment warehouse on the top floor.

Phase II will increase the hospital's square footage by about 25 percent. Schreiber said the expansion is necessary.

"We're not overbuilding," Schreiber said. "We're building to code and we're building to meet the needs of medicine today."

Due to the many technological advances in medicine, those needs have changed drastically since Botzford opened in 1963, he said.

"It takes much more space to do something in medicine today than it did 20 years ago," Schreiber said.

The care of the 36 additional patients generated by the expansion will provide about 110 new jobs at the hospital, including 42 nursing positions, said Peg Reithner, vice president for planning, marketing and development at Botzford.

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Botzford Hospital is involved in a major expansion resulting in an increase of employees, space and patients.

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