

Learn rules for safe swimming

The good old summertime usually includes swimming, boating and water activities for most Michigan families. And author Julia Grice is preparing a new book, "The Wet Book, Family Fun and Safety" aimed at making summer a safe time.

The most important rule for families with young children according to Mrs. Grice is to "Never, never leave a young child alone with water." Not only must a responsible adult be with the child but the adult must be "watching every minute."

Mrs. Grice, president of the Detroit Women Writers, has had a continuing interest in children's swimming. After receiving a life saving certificate, she worked as a volunteer in the swimming instruction program at the South Oakland YMCA for several years. Her own children, Michael, 9 and Andy, 6, swim on the Heart of the Hills swim team.

Water safety and the need for a family guide on the subject caught the author's interest when she read about an incident last summer. A non-swimming father fell off the boat and drowned while his wife and children looked on helplessly.

"If one person or one family is helped by this book," said Mrs. Grice, "it's worth it."

The book covers safety in the wading pool, home or public swimming pool and lake swimming and boating.

If you have a wading pool, you must watch your child every minute from the time you fill it until it's empty. If you have to leave, take the baby with you, she said.

MRS. GRICE thinks too many swimmers become casual about wading pools because they are shallow. Young children can and do drown in a few inches of water by falling or panicking.

Swimming pools also require constant vigilance. Statistics reveal that two is the prime age for swimming pool drownings. In 1965, out of 485 pool drownings in the United States, children from birth to four years old accounted for 43 percent and children under 10 for 50 percent. Three out of four victims are male.

"If you have boys under 10, watch out," Mrs. Grice said. Even

adults should never swim alone, according to Mrs. Grice. An accident, a fall or a seizure could prove fatal.

The planning of home pools must also be carefully examined for hazards. A door opening directly from the home to the pool area are potentially dangerous. A small child can easily slip out unnoticed.

Home pools should be fenced and the gate kept locked. If you are to be away, get someone to keep an eye on the pool. A pool alarm should be tested frequently.

Public pools, even when attended, also require precautions. Here again, the rule is to never swim alone or let your children swim without watching them. Statistics show that 58 percent of the drownings in public pools occur with a professional life guard on duty. The more people who are watching, the better off you are," said Mrs. Grice.

LAKE SWIMMING presents additional factors to consider. Mrs. Grice suggests limiting the beach and water area your child can play in, being sure you can get to the area quickly. These limits should be marked by specific boundaries that children can understand. With several children involved at a lake, she recommends using the buddy system.

In lake swimming, even experienced swimmers must use common sense. Swimmers in deep water should always swim parallel to the shore so they can reach shallow water easily, according to Mrs. Grice. No one, no matter how capable, should swim out and attempt to cross a lake unless accompanied

by a boat manned by two people. If there is boat traffic, swimmers should stay far away from water skiers.

In the area of boating safety, Mrs. Grice said 96 people were killed in boating accidents in Michigan in 1973. These accidents occur between 3-5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. This is when sun glare is bad and people are tired, careless and in a hurry.

BOATING RECOMMENDATIONS Mrs. Grice suggests include: never stand in a small boat, wait until shore is reached before switching positions, never overloading a boat, staying home when there are small craft warnings, fastening life vests on every child and on every adult who is a non-swimmer or weak swimmer, always having two persons in a boat towing a skier, one to drive and one to watch, and stopping when you are tired.

Questioned on flotation devices like bubbles, pool baby seats and pool mattresses, Mrs. Grice said they are all fine if the child is carefully attended. Children can slip out, straps can break or the child can panic and an adult must be immediately at hand.

Diving boards, slides and other apparatus must be used carefully. Only one person should be on the ladder at a time and there should be no pushing or shoving. Always be sure the area below is clear of swimmers.

Mrs. Grice suggests that at least one person in every family take a first aid course. The Red Cross offers them free at several locations in the county.

Infant swimming classes are

helpful, according to Mrs. Grice, because they teach mothers how to handle their babies in the water and how to rescue them. They also teach babies to enjoy water and respect it. She cautions however, that parents sometimes overestimate their child's capabilities in the water and are not careful enough. Also, many pediatricians warn that your babies can pick up serious infections in public pools.

BESIDES ALL of the information on water safety, "The Wet Book" has tips for fun. There are chapters on water games, competitive and synchronized swimming, educational chapters on how to choose the best swimming lessons for a child and how to go about preparing for and finding jobs in swimming.

Mrs. Grice has been a writer since high school, continuing to write in college. After her first child was born, she decided to submit articles for magazines. More than 50 have been published. Her manuscript entitled, "What They Don't Tell You About Having a Baby," was purchased by Paperback Library. She is now working on a romantic, historical novel set in the 1820s in New Orleans and Florida.

Mrs. Grice fits in two-four hours of writing a day whenever a spare time appears.

As president of the Detroit Women Writers, she is also involved in planning the annual conference scheduled Oct. 25, at Oakland University. The one-day conference includes editors and writers as speakers. Anyone interested is welcome. Information is available from the conference de-

partment of the university. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the women writers organization. Mrs. Grice said the organization and annual conference are very helpful because, "Writing is a very hard, lonely, heartbreaking job and writers desperately need to talk to other writers."

"The Wet Book, Family Water Fun and Safety," will soon be available in Michigan.

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Families plan pot-luck picnic

Michigan Families of Adopted Foreign Children will hold its first picnic Saturday at Lower Huron Metropolitan Park in Belleville. Hours are 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The picnic will be pot luck, with admission for each family group being a covered dish or side dish sufficient to serve at least six. What guests bring depends on the first initial of their last names.

Persons with last names beginning with A through I should bring a casserole or meat dish; J through Q, vegetable, salad, relishes or other condiments; and R through Z, a dessert, bread or rolls and butter.

Everyone, members, guests and interested persons — may attend. Label all dishes and serving utensils. Pop, ice cream and miscellaneous treats will be furnished by the group.

Lathrup church names speakers

Beginning Sunday, until Aug. 10, members of Community Congregational Church, Lathrup Village, and one guest will be filling the pulpit and leading the worship service.

The services will be: Sunday, Dr. John English, superintendent of Southfield Schools, with Robert Wright, worship leader; Aug. 3, Dr. Daniel Anbe, vice president of Michigan Heart Association, with Dick Purchias, worship leader; and Aug. 10, Dr. Dorothy Frackelton, Vice president of Wayne State University, with Bill Frackelton, worship leader.

The church is at 27800 Southfield Road.

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