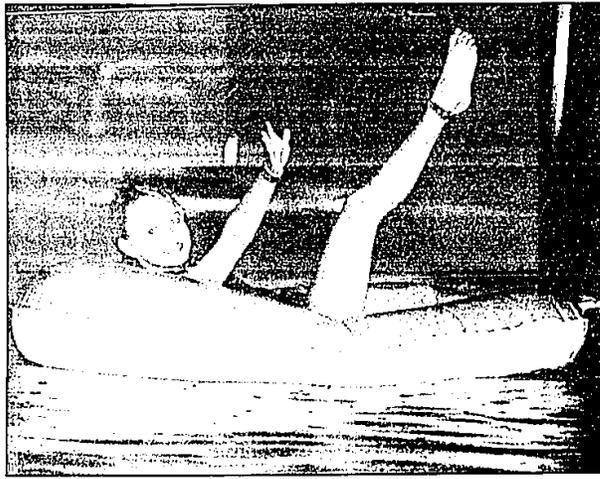


'Little Mermaid Medley'



STUBBS LE MOUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Getting in synch: Sarah Shanahan begins the "Little Mermaid Medley" on a raft during a performance of synchronized swimming routines on Aug. 12 at the Kendallwood Swim Club in Farmington Hills. The performances were set to music from Hollywood and Broadway.

New laws will help the cities

Gov. John Engler has signed into law bills empowering cities to deal with downtown shopping and abandoned buildings, as well as a bill correcting a single business tax flaw.

Sen. Michael Bouchard, R-Birmingham, was author of the bill allowing principal shopping districts to promote economic activity. They may engage in marketing research, promotions, special events and such physical improvements as walkways, roads and parking lots.

A city is required to appoint a board to manage the projects, paid for by special assessments.

"Many businesses in shopping districts are unique enterprises," said Bouchard. "At the same time, these small enterprises don't usually have large budgets for advertising and promotion. We need to revitalize struggling urban areas by giving them economic tools they need to compete in the 1990s."

The bill by Sen. William Faust, D-Westland, amends the state Housing Law to allow local units to demolish abandoned residential and commercial buildings. It defines "dangerous" buildings to include those that are deteriorated.

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Spiritual retreat planned

"Across a Lifetime" is a spiritual weekend retreat with Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, hosted in part by Temple Beth El in Bloomfield Township, from Sept. 11-13.

At 8:15 p.m. Friday, Rabbi Schachter focuses on "New Age Spirituality Within Judaism" at Temple Emanu-El in Oak Park. No charge to the public.

From 1-5 p.m. Saturday, Rabbi Schachter will discuss "Personal Reflections on the Days of Awe" at Temple Beth El at Telegraph and 14 Mile.

Cost for the Saturday and Sunday seminars is \$45.

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