



J. MICHAEL SHORT/SPECIAL TO THE EXPRESS-NEWS

Avangelina McWhorter, 4, takes wing on the thrust of her father Russell McWhorter's toss at the Leon Valley Community Pool.

Community pool offers summer fun

Leon Valley's swim team hopes for another winning season.

BY AMANDA REIMHERR
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

At the end of every school year, youngsters get excited about summertime fun. Summer can mean playing outside and staying up late, but swimming is at the top of many kids' lists.

The Leon Valley Community Pool has provided relief from the heat for members since 1970. Families spend lazy summer days relaxing at the pool, but they also take the pool's swim team, the Blue Marlins, very seriously.

Last year, the Blue Marlins won their division championships. There are high hopes of a repeat win for this year's season, which begins Tuesday and runs through mid-July.

The families of the swim team members rally around the kids by coaching, cooking, driving and organizing every aspect of the team's season.

"The swim team helps kids to learn that defeat is not the end of the world, and winning is not everything," Cathy Nelson, swim team parent and Leon Valley Community Pool Association secretary, said.

"This is such a positive activity for the kids that the parents are excited to be involved."

The 45 children on the swim team and their parents especially relish the excitement at swim meets.

"I can't wait for swim team this summer. It's fun. The meets are my favorite part," Paul Freeman, 11, said.

Cathy Nelson said the swim team teaches the children to be good sports and work as a team.

"All the kids' effort is amazing, they work hard to not let their teammates down," she said.

Gail Nelson, president of the association, said he is proud of everything, including the swim team, the pool offers families.

"I want these kids to have a nice place to go during the sum-

mer and not run around the streets," he said. "Parents can come and relax in the shade after work and kids can get some exercise."

The Leon Valley Community Pool Association has eight volunteer board members. Nelson and the other board members have worked diligently with the city of Leon Valley to renovate and make improvements to the pool.

"The city is working closely with us to get everything looking really nice. We hope that it will get more people involved with the pool," he said.

The pool boasts improvements this year, such as a new pump house roof, pavilion fans and fresh coats of paint. All of the pebbled concrete surrounding the pool has been pressure washed and is awaiting repair to cracks.

Gail Nelson said the pool is a vital aspect of the Leon Valley community.

"This place helps to build good community relations and friendships between everyone in town," he said.

Although the adults see the many benefits the pool offers, the kids are just happy to swim.

"I am so excited that the pool is finally opening, it is so much fun to play in the water with all of my friends," Amy Lascari, 10, said.

The Leon Valley pool is owned by the city of Leon Valley and located at 6600 Straw Flower across from Raymond Rimkus Park.

Membership fees are \$100 to \$170 prior to Monday and \$110 to \$185 thereafter. The fee for the Blue Marlins swim team is \$35 per child and the team is open to children 4-16. Family discounts are available.

For more information, call Gail Nelson at (210) 857-8223 or e-mail leonvalleypool@yahoo.com.

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SPORTS BRIEFS

Former Spur to lead June basketball camp

The Full Court Press Foundation will hold a basketball camp for boys and girls in first through eighth grades 8 a.m.-3 p.m. June 13-16 and 8 a.m.-1 p.m. June 17 at Brauchle Elementary School, 8555 Bowens Crossing. Early drop-off can be arranged.

Former San Antonio Spur Keith Edmunson will lead the camp. The \$125 cost for the event includes daily lunch, a T-shirt, prizes and awards. All camp attendees may qualify for a free fun activity during the school year, depending on academic progress. For more information, call (210) 313-5111.

Summer sports camps set at Trinity University

The following summer sports camps will be held at Trinity University:

■ The Julie Jenkins Volleyball Camp is offering various camps for girls during July. For more information, call (210) 421-8549 or e-mail slender007@aol.com.

■ The Baseball Academy is offering various teaching sessions for children in June and July. For details, call (210) 999-8287 or visit www.sabaseballcamps.com.

■ The Soccer Academy is offering various teaching sessions for children in June and July. For information, call (210) 865-7552 or (210) 240-0946 or visit www.thesocceracademy.net.

■ The Basketball Academy is offering three sessions for youngsters in second through 10th grades in June and July. For more information, call (210) 602-6281 or (210) 241-8652 or visit www.thebasketballacademyfreeservers.com.

Police Officers Memorial 5K scheduled for Saturday

The Run-A-Way Runners Club is holding the Police Officers Memorial 5K Run 9 a.m. Saturday at Sam's Burger Joint. Cost is \$20. Call (210) 826-1888.

E-mail sports briefs to neighbors@express-news.net or send by fax to (210) 250-3305.

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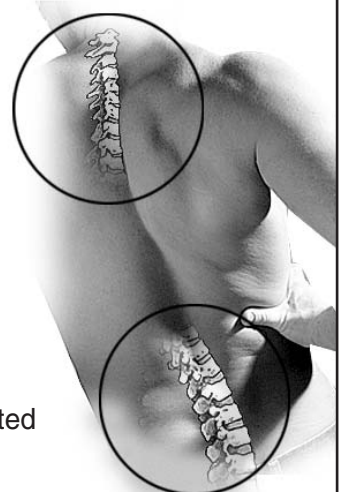
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Kendra Ward's Family Thanks You

On March 8, 2005, Bradley, Douglas, their sweethearts Nicole & Christine, Brad and myself had to take the most difficult journey of our lives, to send our sweet Kendra home to serve God. As the six of us began, we realized that we were not alone. The loving arms of our families and friends surrounded us at home and from afar.

Our home was filled with comforting photos, loving words, beautiful cards, letters, flowers & plants. Family & friends came to sit and share Kendra's stories and memories with us. There was always plenty of food to feed everyone. Her sweet friends said special good-byes with the sounds of their music & song. With the generous donations from our families & friends, we were able to start scholarships at Randolph High School & San Antonio College in Kendra's memory hoping to keep her dreams alive.

We can never express in words what our hearts feel, our appreciation & gratitude, but most of all our love for walking with us on this long hard journey. We love you all & Thank You.

God Bless Everyone, Love Always, Kendra's Family