

SPORTS: *Swimming*  
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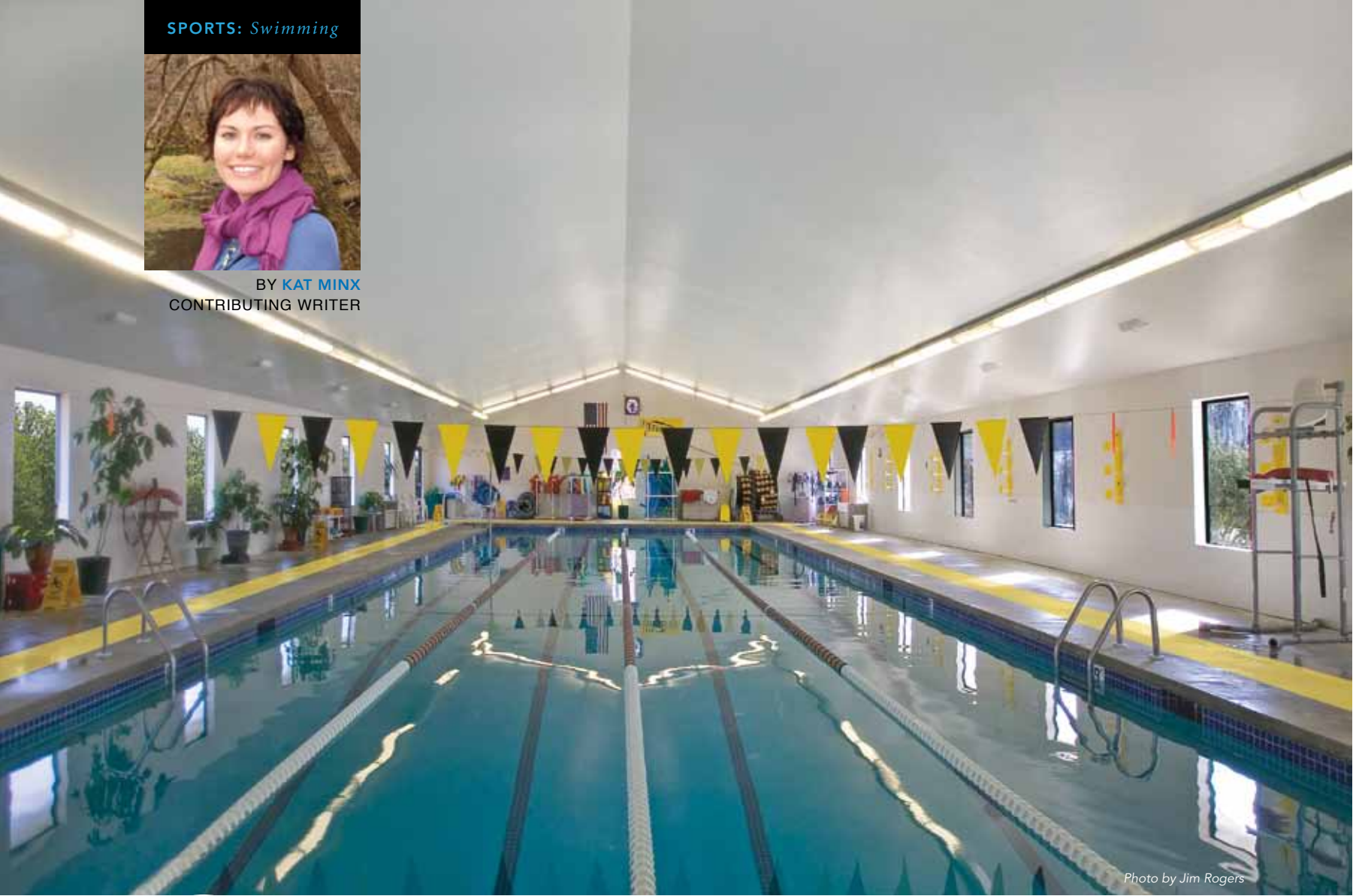


Photo by Jim Rogers

# SWIM FACILITIES OFFER WATER FOR WELLNESS *for* LIFE

WHEN THE AVERAGE AMERICAN HEARS THE WORD **SWIMMING**, THE STRAPPING PHYSIQUE OF MICHAEL PHELPS WITH EIGHT, SHINY GOLDEN MEDALS DANGLING FROM HIS NECK PROBABLY COMES TO MIND. HERE AT THE LAKE, THE WORD IS MORE LIKELY TO ELICIT THOUGHTS OF FLAILING IN THE WATER AFTER DUMPING A PWC OR FALLING OFF A DOCK.

**SWIMMING** is often overlooked as an excellent way to exercise. This sport is not limited to competition or inept watercraft operators. It is a type of recreational activity that can be an intense competitive sport, a low-impact workout that prevents wear and tear on the body, or a lifesaving skill that proves indispensable on a busy Fourth of July weekend.

Whether you're a parent of a youngster learning how to dog paddle, a seasoned lap-swimmer, or are just working out an arthritic pang, this lifetime sport presents many benefits.

Swimming is an exceptional aerobic exercise. Aerobic exercise (heart-pumping) increases the lung's size, capacity and efficiency. Blood vessels increase in number and become more flexible. With the body horizontal and immersed in water, the human heart can take in more blood and move more oxygen than on land in the vertical position pumping against gravity. As a result, between 10 and 20 percent more blood is pumped with each heart contraction.

Unlike running, swimming forces an individual to take controlled breaths. Breathing appropriately increases cardiovascular endurance and strengthens the chest muscles. Swimming is a full-body workout that tones the arms, shoulders, hips, abs and leg and back muscles. This can improve stamina and posture and help overall performance in other sports if used as a cross-training activity.

Like all sports, the proper techniques of water aerobics and swimming are beneficial. In the Lake area, there are facilities where professionals teach swim classes and water aerobics and conduct therapeutic rehabilitation. These include Westlake Aquatic Center in Laurie, Country Club Hotel and Spa in Lake Ozark and through the YMCA in Osage Beach.

For years, Americans have been under the impression that arthritis patients should refrain from physical activity to rest their joints. But according to the Missouri Arthritis and Osteoporosis Program, swimming actually loosens joints and makes other activity less painful.



Photo by Merry Ballard

The Aquatic Center keeps its pool temperature at 86 to 87 degrees to help minimize joint pain. The center hosts several kinds of swim classes at its four-lane indoor pool, owned and operated by the non-profit organization Laurie/Sunrise Beach Rotary Club. Several co-ed classes are offered to satisfy every age group, including lap swimming, Super Senior Workout, arthritis rehabilitation, fast-paced water aerobics using resistance training and water-walking.

Coach Clark Palmer trains his Trident swim team there as well. Carolyn Solomon is the facility coordinator and teaches classes.

"As a personal goal I attempt to lap swim a minimum of three days a week. It is an excellent full-body aerobic workout. The buoyancy of the body minimizes the impact on joints," she said.

Buoyancy allows less force on the joints by gradually and gently relaxing them. When athletes are injured, particularly in the lower ex-



Photo by Merry Ballard

MIKAELLA STIPANITZ  
Photo by Merry Ballard

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—JOANN RUTHERFORD

tremities, they are frequently told to swim to maintain their fitness level. Swimming helps athletes stay in shape, and it's even part of the rehabilitation. That's because the resistance of the water makes the muscles work hard without the strain or impact that is experienced on land.

Down Horseshoe Bend in Lake Ozark is the Country Club Hotel and Spa which features an indoor pool that is open to the public through daily fees or quarterly dues. Eighty-two and sunny is the consistent climate of the three-lane, four-foot deep water paradise.

The YMCA has teamed with the Country Club to conduct swimming lessons. On Thursday nights, Scott Leffingwell, a certified swimming coach with the YMCA, teaches children the fundamentals of swim safety and technique. Frank Stipanitz enjoys watching his daughter make a splash.

"Mikallea has always loved the water. When she was a baby, we couldn't get her out of the bath! This class gives her the opportunity to maintain that confidence, and it's a good thing to learn in terms of safety," he said.

Leffingwell teaches all of the classes held by the YMCA from water babies for six-month olds to the advanced swimming classes for teenagers.

Joann Rutherford, YMCA director, says she is appreciative of the relationship with the Country Club pool, and remains positive about the Y's endeavors to finish Phase 2 of the YMCA building plan, which includes a swimming facility.

"The swimming pool is already dug, and \$500,000 has been put into it. It will happen; people always step up. We don't have many corporations here, so this (existing) facility was built with individuals from the community. That's a lot when you're talking \$4.5 million," she said.

The new indoor/outdoor pool will be located next to the main facility at 950 Airport Rd. in Osage Beach. Its main focus will be on teaching technique and producing competitive swimmers.

"Swimming is the best physical conditioning you can do for your body, and it's something you can do until you die," Rutherford ex-

plained. "The joke is, when I get the check, we'll start building the next day."

Country Club Spa Director Claudette Taylor plans to offer the club's own private swim lessons and water aerobics to members and nonmembers.

"I would even like to see competitive swimming here in the near future," she said. "Maybe we could have competitions among the YMCA and Westlake teams." ●

# DIFFERENT STROKES

## ON THE BREAST

- FRONT CRAWL
- BREASTSTROKE
- HEADS-UP BREASTSTROKE
- BUTTERFLY
- SLOW BUTTERFLY
- DOG PADDLE
- HUMAN STROKE
- SURVIVAL TRAVEL STROKE
- BREAST FEET FIRST STROKES
- SNORKELING
- FINSWIMMING
- AN ARM AND A LEG

## ON THE BACK

- BACKSTROKE
- ELEMENTARY BACKSTROKE
- INVERTED BREASTSTROKE
- INVERTED BUTTERFLY
- BACK DOUBLE TRUDGEN
- FLUTTER BACK FINNING
- FEET FIRST SWIMMING

## ON THE SIDE

- SIDE STROKE
- OVERARM SIDESTROKE