

# The Community Page

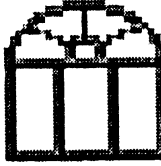


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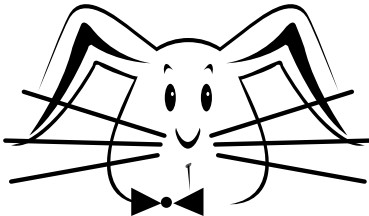
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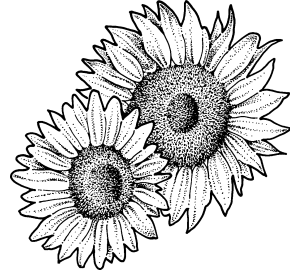


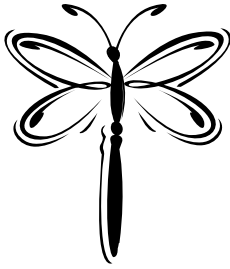
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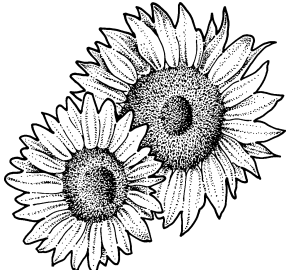










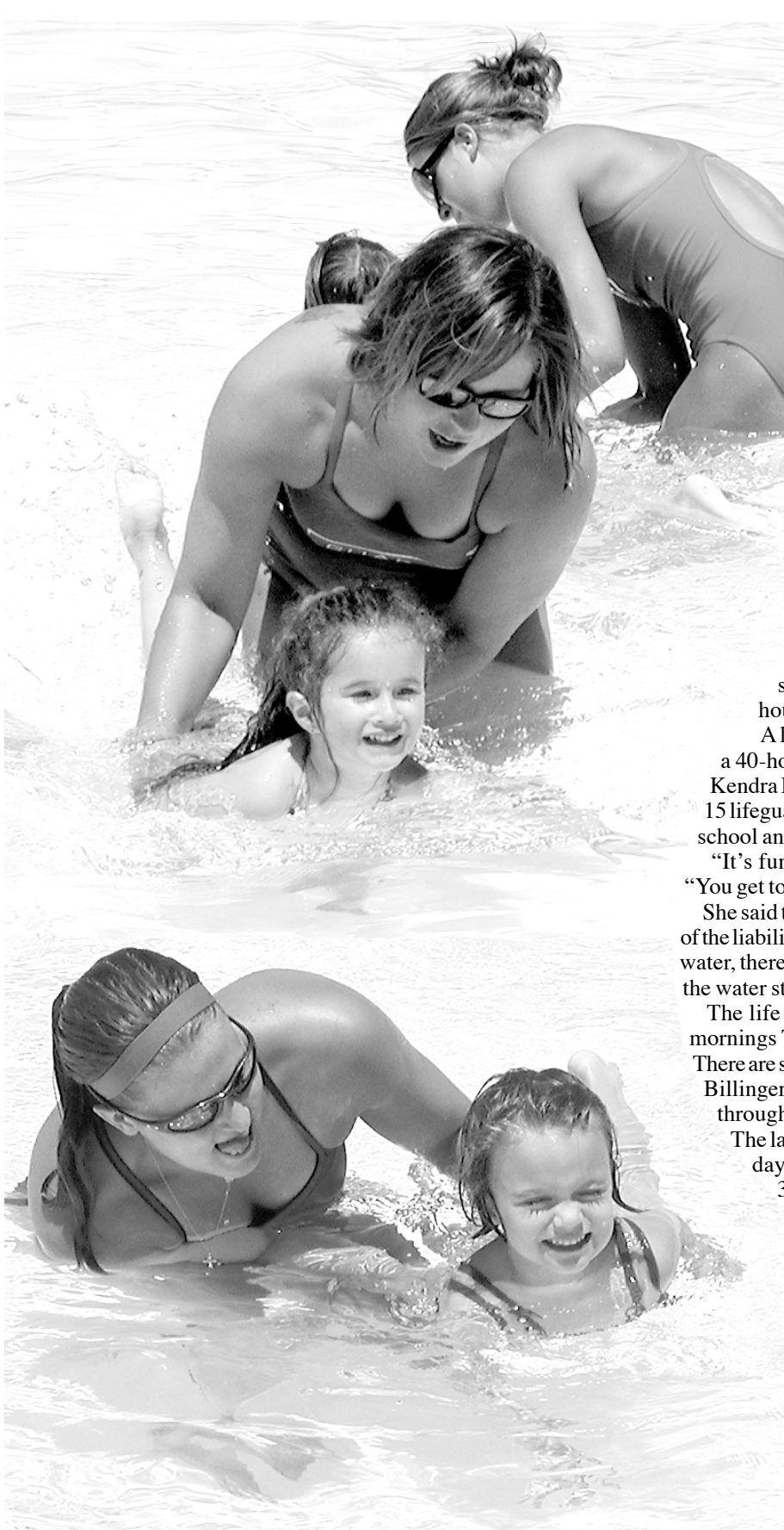


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Life guards Chelsea Gray (left) and Kaylee Billinger worked with a class of 3- and 4-year-olds learning to put their faces in the water and blow bubbles “like a motor boat.” Students included Saisha Cornett (back), Daniel Ordonez (front left), Bryson Ihrig and Gavin Wilson.

## Life guards instruct, keep swimmers safe



Kaylee Billinger (top) helped one of the 3- and 4-year-olds kick while they float. Chelsea Gray (middle) held on to Hannah Dechant as she tried to learn those skills. Jayci Stone (bottom) helped Katie Patton. The class introduces children to the water and teaches them some basic swimming skills.

Photos by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

By Pat Schiefen

*The Goodland Star-News*

The unsung heroes of any pool or water park are the life guards, who spend their days watching kids and doing chores, but stand ready to help any swimmer that gets into trouble.

In their lesson with the 3 and 4 year olds, the life guards coaxed the scared ones into the water. They led them bouncing their way across the pool. The kids played motor boats to stick their faces in the water and blow bubbles.

A little later the life guards helped the kids float so they could kick their feet. The kids had small bars to throw into the water so they could go after them.

Life guards in their red swim suits set in elevated chairs overlooking the different areas in the water park watching the swimmers holding onto red floats during park hours.

A life guard needs to be at least 15 and has to take a 40-hour course in life saving, said head life guard Kendra Billinger. Goodland’s Steever Water Park has 15 lifeguards, four guys and 11 gals. Ten are still in high school and five will go to college.

“It’s fun and you’re out in the sun,” said Billinger. “You get to know the regular kids that come every day.”

She said the park is a lot more strict in its rules because of the liability issues than the old pool was. With shallower water, there are younger swimmers than before, because the water started at three feet deep.

The life guards also teach swimming lessons in the mornings. The youngest group is from 3 to 4 years old. There are six levels of Red Cross swimming lessons, said Billinger, starting with beginning swimming running through life guard readiness and fitness swimming.

The last set of Red Cross lessons will end on Thursday, July 20. There will be one more session for 3-4 year olds.

The life guards include Janelle Wolak, Briana Taylor, Chelsea Gray, Megan Stefan, Tanae Garrett, Billinger, Whitney Archer, Kerek Mason, Derrick Raymer, Halli Stone, Emily Murray, Bryan Gray, Julica Bonsall, Brennan Clouse and Shelbi Herl.

The pool will be open for regular swimming and the adult swim until the last part of August. The pool is open 1 to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Sunday with an evening swim on Friday from 6 to 8 p.m. Adult swim on Monday, Wednesday and Friday is from noon to 1p.m. and Monday to Thursday from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.



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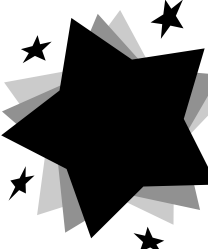
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