

Local laws require pools to be fenced

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Giggles, shouts and splashes are the summer's music, as families hit the backyard pool for some cooling family fun.

But those same backyard pools can be a challenge for municipal zoning officers, whose job includes making sure that swimming pools conform to all local zoning ordinances.

"The pool ordinance is a tough law to enforce," said Jackson Township Zoning Officer Robert Culp. "People sometimes consider it to be an intrusion on their private property, not realizing that our intent is to help protect people from accidents and liability suits by preventing unauthorized access to private pools."

Although all Back Mountain municipalities require a homeowner to obtain a permit before installing a pool, individual local zoning ordinances may differ on

other requirements.

For example, Dallas Township's only mandate is that in-ground pools and above-ground pools partially dug into the side of an embankment be surrounded by a four-foot fence, according to zoning officer Len Kozick.

On the other hand, Jackson Township requires a four-foot fence with a locked gate around either the in-ground pool area or the entire yard, while above-ground pools must have either removable access ladders or a railing round the pool's deck and steps that must be removed when the pool is not in use. Pools are restricted to the home's back yard.

Similar ordinances in Dallas Borough, Harveys Lake and Kingston Township also stipulate side or back yard setbacks and require that metal fences be electrically grounded.

"Kingston Township homeowners have been extremely cooperative in complying with the ordi-

nance," said zoning officer Ben Gorey.

Kozick said that Dallas Township pool owners often go out of their way to comply with the ordinance.

However, zoning officers say that private ponds used for swimming are not covered by Back Mountain pool ordinances.

"In a way, it's ironic that a family with a pool must comply with the ordinance, while the next-door neighbor with a pond is excluded from it," Culp said.

Penalties for non-compliance vary, from \$500 and magistrate's court costs in Kingston Township to \$100 in Jackson Township. Further noncompliance can result in stiff penalties for every day that the property violates the ordinance.

The zoning officers agree that property owners wishing to install a new swimming pool contact them to make sure that all requirements are met.

Pools

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yard pools last year, said Nicole Gfeller, aquatics director at the Wilkes-Barre YMCA.

The other 4,500 drowned by losing their footing and falling into the water, or in fishing or boating accidents. Gfeller said that a person can drown in as little as six inches of water.

Gfeller recommends that parents teach children to swim and be comfortable in the water at as early an age as possible, to help prevent them from panicking if they accidentally fall in.

The YMCA offers group lessons for \$15 at private pools, which must first be inspected by "Y" instructors. The pool owner must provide access to bathroom facilities and a porch or other type of shelter for the swimmers in case of sudden thunderstorms.

Instructors prefer to use in-ground pools, which provide more room, and limit classes to six students per teacher. Group lessons can accommodate any age and swimming level, from preschoolers on up to advanced swimmers.

Although this summer's classes are already booked solid, interested families may contact the YMCA for the 1993 class schedule.

The "Y" also offers lifeguard training for strong, expert swimmers who can swim for at least 500 yards and tread water. Call 823-2191 for more information.

Irem Temple Country Club offers swimming lessons and lifeguard training to the general public. Call 675-1134 for further information.

Pool safety guidelines

In addition to being a source of fun, the family pool also should be safe. YMCA aquatics director Nicole Gfeller and Chip Morgan, pool director at Irem Temple Country Club and member of the Red Cross Water Safety Advisory Committee, offer these suggestions for safe swimming fun this summer.

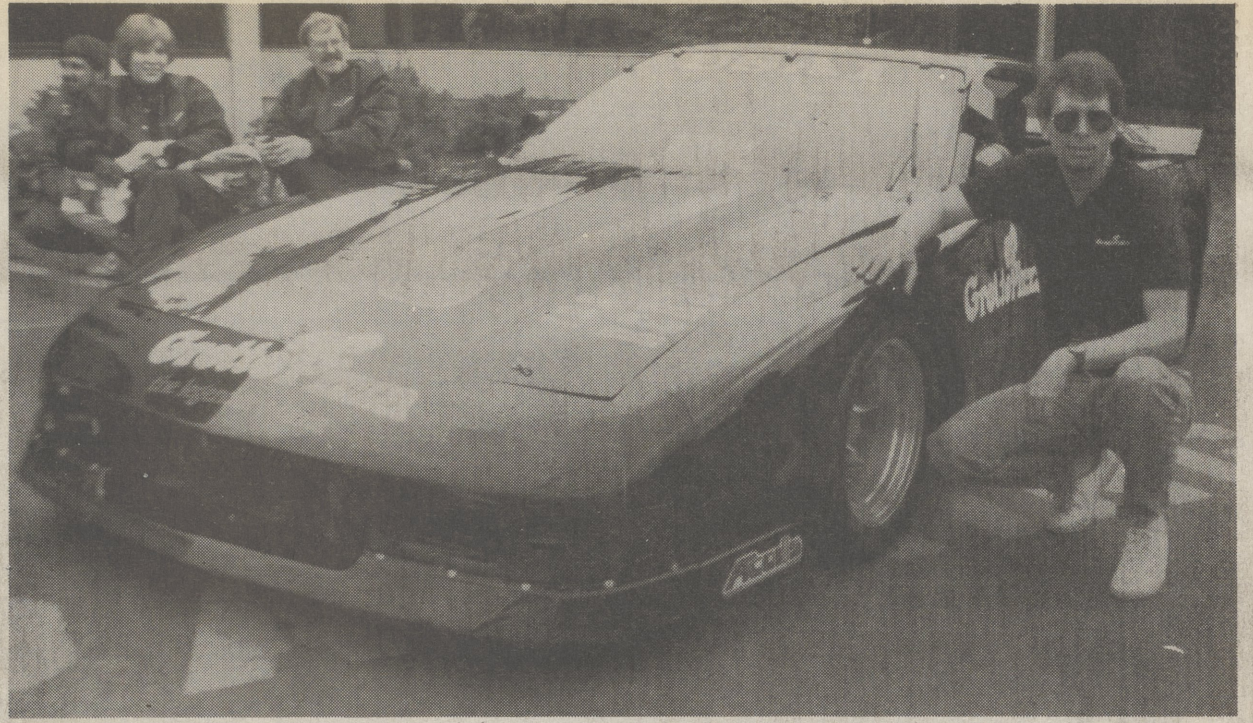
- Teach children to swim and be comfortable in the water at as early an age as possible.
- Limit pool access with a six-foot fence around the yard or pool area and locks placed high enough on gates so that children can't reach them.
- Install child-proof locks on inside doors leading to the pool area.
- Protect pools 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, covering them in the winter to prevent children from venturing out onto the ice.
- At least one adult in the household should be trained in both adult and infant/child CPR and basic first aid.
- Keep a ring buoy (styrofoam ring) and pole by the pool and know how to use them in case of an accident.
- Closely supervise all children playing in the pool or pool area.
- Keep the pool free of toys, which could entice young children into playing with them in the water and falling in.
- Keep all lawn furniture, which could be dragged to the pool and used to gain access to it, away from above-ground pools.

Over twenty artists expected for show and sale at Harveys Lake on July 19

The "Coors Light Endless Summer at Harveys Lake" Group (Harveys Lake Business/Tourism Association) is organizing an elaborate art show and sale on Sunday, July 19, from 1-4 p.m. The event is sponsored by and held at Damien's Restaurant on Harveys Lake.

Over 20 artists are expected to show their wares. Some of them will be showing their skills live, they will be painting right on the premises. Framed and unframed originals will be available for sale. The majority of art will be displayed at Damien's on the Veranda and in the Sunset Ballroom, weather permitting, some nautical pictures will be shown at Sunset Beach.

The event will benefit EVAC and the Shriner's Children Hospital, as most of the events of "Endless Summer at Harveys Lake" do. Admission is free. For more information or to exhibit at this event call Ruth Eaton at 639-2000.



GIANT SLAYER — John Halbing kneels next to his car, the Grotto Pizza Camaro GT-1, which he drove to a new record at the Giants' Despair Hillclimb July 11.

Zoom

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"The car was running so well," said Halbing, and "I wanted to do it in my car. I wanted to be able to say, this car broke the record."

To prepare for the hill climb, Halbing didn't change the car at all from the setup he uses to win road track races, except to put on a new set of tires and lower the gear ratios to get the most power for the steep incline.

While the car isn't much different from its road racing configuration, Halbing says the demands on the driver are more intense for the climb.

"To break a record at Giants Despair, you need a car with a lot of horsepower that handles reasonably well. On top of that, you need a driver who isn't squeam-

ish," said Halbing.

"When you're road racing you get a couple of laps for the car to warm up. On a hill climb you have to be able to read the corners and read your car so much better."

Originally from Easton, Halbing moved to the Back Mountain in 1984 and founded his construction business, Summit Pointe Builders.

That construction business opened the door to his racing career.

"I've always been into cars," said Halbing, who had done a little drag racing and motorcycle racing in the past. "I built a house for a guy in Newberry Estates. I traded him a street car and some extras on his

house for a 1970 Corvette."

Halbing raced the Corvette for three years, before moving up to the Grotto Pizza car last year.

While Halbing has earned the king of the hill crown, don't expect any rivalry with king emeritus Koveleski, who spent the afternoon after Sunday's run giving Halbing pointers on setting up a racing team.

"You have to understand, technology has changed in 15 years," said Halbing. "I'm tickled pink that I was able to bring the record to Dallas," said Halbing.

Halbing will race at Pocono on August 1 and 2 in the Pocono Sports Car Grand Prix, which will feature 250 racing teams in 23 different classes.

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