



## **#25: The Humble Swimming Pool – A Community Project**

The City of Humble has a community swimming pool located near the end of Main Street, at Hirsch Park. It's a nice pool where LOTS of people have gone swimming over the years. I myself took swimming lessons at the Humble Swimming pool when I was a youngster...years and years and years ago. At first glance, you would think it was just a common community swimming pool. Few would suspect its unique history.

The pool was a project of the Humble Jaycees (the Junior Chamber of Commerce). The Jaycees formed in August 1955, and immediately began to work on the construction of the community pool. Rather than raising a lot of money and hiring a construction firm to build the pool...they did it themselves. Through a combination of funds and donations, the Jaycees were able to start construction in January 1956.

Between 30 and 40 people (members of the community) worked on the pool in their spare time. The groups worked until about 10 o'clock each night. Most of the materials were donated by local businesses, including pipe, sand, gravel and 500 sacks of cement. For one of the biggest expenses, the Jaycees purchased a filter unit from the City of Bellaire for \$1,600. The construction of the pool was impressive! It is a 92-foot-long pool; 35 feet wide at the deep end and 50 feet wide at the shallow end. Underwater lights were installed to allow for night swimming. There was a high-dive diving board and a low-dive diving board, as well as a bathhouse. The Jaycees spent \$5,330 on a pool that was comparable to a \$70,000 job! The Jaycees auxiliary, the Jaycettes, also raised funds that went toward construction of a fence around the pool.

The pool was opened on May 12, 1956, to great fanfare! Opening day included a water show, a BBQ and dance at the recreation hall (the old Rec Hall that used to be located at the front of the parking lot), as well as four swim sessions. 403 people attended the opening day festivities. The goal of the Jaycees was to operate the pool themselves, but to only charge enough admission to pay for its operation. The admission for that first summer was 20 cents for children under 12, and 35 cents for those over 12. Humble assistant coach Arthur Tipton was in charge of operating the pool on behalf of the Jaycees. For that first summer he hired three lifeguards: two senior boys (Sidney Gober and Lewis Thomas) and one junior girl (Suzy Cezeaux). All three held Red Cross lifesaving certificates. The facilities included 200 baskets at the bathhouse to store the swimmers' clothes, as well as vending machines that had coke, root beer and orange soda for 10 cents. This was the old-style vending machines that served drinks in a paper cup. During the summer months, the pool was open for swimming sessions Monday through Saturday 2-5 and 6-9. There was only one swimming session on Sundays, from 2 pm – 6 pm. Swimming lessons were offered on weekday mornings.

All in all, the Jaycees did an excellent job! 64 years later, the pool is still in use. It's another great example of the uniqueness of our community: it's unique history, and the way we can all work together.