

Karen's Y Story

From the Y Archives – 1954

Meet Karen, age seven years, the bright-eyed miss getting a big boost out of the pool above. Karen is one of the 600 healthy, happy youngsters from six-and-one-half to 14 years who participated in "Learn-to-Swim" classes at the Everett YMCA during the past year.

Karen learned the rudiments of getting around in the water from swimming instructor Shirley Grove in a class with 24 other pint-size "junior misses" of the six-and-one-half to eight-year-old group. In an eight-lesson course devoted to giving the small fry a good "feel" of the water, Karen and her young friends became accomplished dog-paddlers, learned how to manage a sitting dive from the edge of the pool and tried their wings at floating.

What is even more important, these youngsters learned not to be afraid of the water – and for many it was their first experience of this sort beyond wading pools and the family bathtub.

Karen's class was one of 16 "Learn-to-Swim" courses offered to young YMCA members during the past year (eight courses for girls and eight for boys). Each class had 25 pupils enrolled and was held for eight or ten sessions. In addition, the popular annual "Free Learn-to-Swim" program held in June drew another 196 boys and girls, as well as 80 adults.

Important as they are, the "Learn-to-Swim" classes offered by the Everett YMCA are but a small part of the total "Y" swim program, which keeps the lone 20-by-60-foot "Y" pool busy from 9 am to 9 pm some 290 days out of the year.

Once the youngster progresses beyond the stage where they are adjusted to the water, there are beginning, intermediate, and advanced swimming classes they may participate in, plus special classes in life saving, synchronized swimming, and skin diving, etc. A host of recreational swim periods are also open to boys and girls throughout the year.