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Epic New Sleepy Hollow Adventure Opens in Orinda

By Laurie Snyder



It's summer in Orinda! Enthusiastic swimmers couldn't wait to take their first plunge at the grand reopening of the Sleepy Hollow Swim and Tennis Club's newly renovated, state-of-the-art pool on May 31. Photo Ohlen Alexander

genuine pinch-me moments. Alli Lovell's girls lit up when expressing their feelings. Andra Berkman's daughter called it "so new and awesome!"

"It must be the pool," shook the head of one dad. His toddler couldn't get enough - the same child had refused to put her face in the water at every other swimming hole they'd visited. Another parent happily related her daughter's firm comment: "Mommy, I don't want you to put on your bathing suit. I want to go in by myself." And kids from 3 to 73 could barely contain themselves when they learned that a water slide will be added next spring.

Orinda City Council member Steve Glazer observed that, unlike many communities, Orinda doesn't have homes where families wave at each other from their front porches. "Swim clubs like Sleepy Hollow are Orinda's great family rooms. It's where we come together and bond."

Parents pointed to values instilled by their beloved head coach as the key. "We've always tried to make it about pride in what you do ... giving your best effort.... You don't have to be the best one to be the best you," said Ehrenberger, who returns for his 20th year. New members Scott and Francesca Lohman were impressed by staff who already knew their kids' names just two days after joining. "The swim team is a bonding experience," they said.

But it is the almost mystical quality which truly hooks people. "I was only going to be here three years... That's how special this place is," mused Ehrenberger, who stops by when others aren't around just to sit and marvel at the magnificent serenity of the open space areas. "I can't believe I get to coach here."

To become a member or learn more, visit: www.SleepyHollowLegends.net.

It was the perfect start to Orinda's summer of 2013 - a gloriously warm, final Friday in May under a hypnotizing blue sky, joy bubbling up from kids freed from classroom confines - their parents laughing with cherished friends.

Several hundred celebrated the reopening of Orinda's Sleepy Hollow Swim and Tennis Club at One Sunnyside Lane. "This place has been here for 58 years," began board president Valerie Wilson, adding that adults "come and rejuvenate" while children make friends.

Early member Marion Jamison recalled riding her horse to SHSTC. Her parents joined two years after it opened, and her children were swimmers here, too. Orinda Mayor Amy Worth recounted SHSTC's past before telling children, "You are the future of our community ... of our state and country."

The modernization's \$3 million first phase spawned an eight-lane racer's dream with crystal clear water and an Olympic-class, rim-flow gutter system. "It's deeper than the old pool," said head coach Matt Ehrenberger, explaining how the gutters reduce turbulence. "It has high blocks - great for dives." Bath and dressing rooms were also transformed. Engraved bricks honor those who have called Sleepy Hollow home.

But it was the new mini-water park with its enchanting water bells and other features which generated



"Awesome!" That was the hands-down verdict as kids experienced the magic waters of Sleepy Hollow's new children's activity pool. Photos Ohlen Alexander



Scott and Francesca Lohman, 10-year residents of Lafayette and new members the Sleepy Hollow Swim and Tennis Club, recall the fun time had by all at the recent SHSTC Cinco de Mayo program.

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