

Friends of Rockbridge Swimming, Inc.
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Friends of Rockbridge Swimming, Inc. Local Community Impact, 2023

We are proud to provide a comfortable environment for people to exercise, do aqua therapy, and have an outlet for stress. We continue to stay on top of the changing environment to provide the best experience for all our patrons and remain a safe place for the community to enjoy physical activity.

During 2023, FOR Swimming provided on a weekly basis at the Rockbridge Aquatics Center:

- 56 hours per week of open public lap swimming and family swimming;
- 9 hours of weekly Aquacise classes targeted for the older adults, many for whom regular land; exercise is out of the question.
- 16 hours of weekly swim programming for youth ages 4-18.

In 2023, we had 355 individual members. Well over half our membership is held by individuals over 65. In addition to our regular members, we had, on average, 230 non-member daily users per month. We feel that our facility has been a key resource to our community for safe physical activity and connection during this year. The Rockbridge Aquatics Center employed 42 individuals – 41 from the three localities and one from out-of-state.

The Rockbridge Aquatics Center supported four teams – Rockbridge County High School Wildcats (*21 swimmers*), STORM (club swimming team affiliated with USA Swimming, primarily for elementary and middle school age children) (*113 swimmers over the course of the year*), and one swimmer Buena Vista's Parry McCluer swim team and the SVU college team and hosted 2 NCAA swim meets for their program this year.

Each year FOR Swimming has ensured that every child enrolled in 3rd grade at Waddell Elementary School receives free swim lessons through our Make-a-Splash program. In 2023, 55 third graders from Waddell participated in the program. Each participant received three swim lessons, free of charge, during the regular school day. FOR Swimming was able to utilize the outdoor pool as the venue for these 2023 Waddell lessons.

In 2023 we were once again able to offer our spring and summer swim lessons at the indoor pool. These lessons were taught in 30 minute classes by our talented FOR swimming instructors. We taught 132 swimmers between April and July. We are looking forward to continuing these swim lesson offerings in 2024.

This summer we were also able to offer free swim lessons to 18 swimmers from the Rockbridge County area through our FOR Swimming scholarships. These lessons were taught at the outdoor pool during the weekday mornings to expand the reach of our water safety programming. This was

only a small portion of our scholarship funded instruction for this summer. We were also able to teach swim lessons through four different summer camp programs during the summer months. The Washington & Lee ESOL program included 42 participants who came to the pool in the mornings of their program to receive water safety lessons and enjoy the water. We hosted the S.T.A.R. camp twice with a total of 8 participants enjoying sensory friendly, adaptive aquatic instruction. This year's Lexington Police Camp expanded in size, and we were excited to welcome 40 campers during August to learn water safety and swimming skills in August. As always, we hosted Summer Fun on Fridays in July to provide the opportunity for 20 swimmers to swim and learn water safety skills.

In all, we are delighted to have provided swim lesson instruction across all our spring and summer programs to **315** children in the Rockbridge County area.

Our Red Cross certified instructor, FOR Swimming's Aquatics Director Leslie Ayers, trained 49 lifeguards this year. Leslie taught classes this year to help train lifeguards for Buena Vista, Lexington City, and Rockbridge County pools. Leslie leads an efficient blended learning course that maximizes opportunity for in person skills training and uses online learning resources to accomplish the mandatory 27 hours of training required for all Red Cross certified lifeguards. The course is rigorous and focused on important water skills and CPR/AED skills over two days to complete the certification. The course is offered at least twice per year.

We were able to again manage the outdoor Municipal pool in Summer 2023. We are very grateful to the City for entrusting us with that task. We had a successful, wonderful and safe summer swim season. Our staff did a fantastic job keeping the facility clean and visitor friendly. We hired and trained 19 part-time high school lifeguards (7 city residents, 11 county residents, 1 Buena Vista resident) and ran the pool with an additional 12 staff members from the indoor pool.

FOR Swimming Board members in 2023: *Joe Borzelleca (President); Anita Givens (Vice-President) Ruth Kitchen (Secretary); David Mayersky (Treasurer); Butch Snow, Valentina Dimitrova-Grajzl, Todd Jones, Tuck Bowerfind, Shannon Dryden*