

OUTRAGE: One child dead, another critical in local pools

In one morning we read how a two-year old drowned at the Sweetbriar Apartments' pool, despite others being present... and the second account of a near drowning with lifelong implications for the child at a public Manheim Township pool.

Here is an excerpt from the *Intelligencer Journal*:

*"Teen lifeguard saved child's life at Skyline pool
A 16-year-old lifeguard is credited with rescuing
a child Friday afternoon at Skyline Park Pool in
Manheim Township.*

*"The guard was on duty at the children's pool at
Skyline, 245 Eden Road, when she noticed a 3-
year-old Manheim Township girl in the water who
was not breathing, township police Sgt. Tom
Rudzinski said.*

*"According to a witness, the child was limp and
blue-faced when pulled from the water.*

*"The unconscious child began breathing on her
own, Rudzinski said, before being transported to
the hospital.*

*"They're all well-trained guards, and they did
their jobs,' Becky Slick, programs manager for
the township, said."*

Nonsense! Becky Slick and the life guard should be discharged. The whole point of guarding is preventing children from getting into dangerous situations: *Their parents are to be admonished to watch them. The guard should blow the whistle and summon assistance as soon as the child is in a potentially danger, such as a two-year old approaching the side of a pool without an adult supervising. They are to sit on a raised life guard chair with whistle at hand. No one should ever be allowed in a pool without the guard being high up in the lifeguard chair!*

Good guarding rarely requires the guard to jump into the pool.

*bikes idea has taken off like a 21-speed
Cannondale whizzing down a steep grade."*

WATCHDOG: This is a page out of Amsterdam, Holland, where bikes are ubiquitous and pedestrians are invited to jump on and leave them at a rack near their destination. Perhaps they can be painted bright red and restricted to downtown.

Better bikes than empty trolley cars clogging the streets. Furthermore, bikes to ride will likely engender more publicity and be a bigger tourist draw.

INTELLIGENCER NEW ERA: "Lancaster Community Bikes off to flying start Bikes would be made available for residents to ride on short trips to Lancaster Central Market, city parks and neighborhood coffee shops" opens :

"While chatting recently with friends at his local hangout, the Chestnut Hill coffee shop, the city businessman began talking about rehabbing old bikes and making them available to the public. That was a month ago. Since then, the community

Taxation without representation is...LGH

*"In economics, a **monopoly** exists when a specific individual or an enterprise has sufficient control over a particular product or service to determine significantly the terms on which other individuals shall have access to it." - Wikipedia*

Lancaster General Health has such a position in the Lancaster County market place, and through acquisitions and mergers is continuously expanding its control. For example, just recently it both acquired the Heart Group and opened three Urgent Care clinics.

In other markets, insurance companies are able to negotiate competitive rates since they have a choice of two or three hospitals. However, here in Lancaster, most need to contract with LGH in order to sell policies.

The higher prices they must pay are a major reason for LGH's extraordinary profitability, continuously among the highest in the state. In a typical year, LGH earns well over a \$100 million dollars.

On the other hand, those seeking health insurance in Lancaster County are charged more by the companies to compensate the insurer for the higher cost of providing care at LGH. So the difference between what the cost of health care insurance would have been in a normal competitive situation and what we pay is comparable to a tax... a tax imposed by and benefiting LGH.

Since LGH is a Public Charity, this would not necessarily be a bad thing if the excess earnings were distributed in a manner that would best serve the community. But the community has no say

whatsoever concerning how LGH spends its profits. There is only one public meeting a year which is not widely publicized. LGH grants were only 1.5% of profits in 2007 and 6% in 2008.

Furthermore, the trustees are self perpetuating, with one board nominating and electing the next.

It is time for the community and especially the local media to begin to hold LGH accountable. Instead of devoting the hospital's resources to empire building and lavish compensations and perks, LGH should be directing a significant portion of its earnings towards benefiting the community at large, especially in matters of public health and education.

A place for LGH to start would be to approve the Urban League's request for funds to operate a first rate syringe exchange in Lancaster. In addition to reducing the spread of social diseases, syringe exchanges test clients for HIV / AIDS, provide counseling, and help those seriously addicted to obtain treatment. Syringe exchanges are as important in protecting our loved ones as are the police and fire fighters.

Another worthy cause would be to help support the libraries throughout the county. They are underfunded, and yet serve several thousand visitors each day.

LGH is a 'Public Charity.' Yet the trustees and administrators treat it as their fiefdom. By introducing transparency and a sense of responsibility towards the greater community, LGH can reach the same high level in Public Charity responsibility as it has achieved in health care.

**The above have been excerpted from NewsLanc.com.
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