

Our Neighborhood Cement Pond



I have many fond memories of growing up. And even though it has been decades since I revisited my childhood haunting grounds, I still vividly remember them as being important to me. Which is why it hurts when I learn that some of them no longer exist.

My home away from home every summer was our community pool, Aspen Hill Swim Club. It was within walking distance from my home. It is where we kids went every summer day when school was not in session; it was where we made long lasting friendships; it was where we connected with people before the Internet was invented. And I just found out that it no longer exists. It was sold to a development company almost 20 years ago. They used the land to build more houses. In my opinion, the community lost a valuable asset. It is a pity.

I remember the community pool playing an important part in my social development. I met my first girlfriend at the pool. My closest friends growing up were members of the community pool.

I felt a sense of belonging and I so enjoyed the experience that I extended it through college. I became certified as a lifeguard, swimming instructor, and pool manager and every summer until I graduated from college, I could be found at a community pool working with young kids and fostering a sense of community that is sadly missing in today's culture. It was my first job and in many ways remains my favorite job.

I recently found out that I lost a high school classmate the other day. She was an incredibly popular, attractive, and friendly person. Cheerleader co-captain. She and I worked together one summer at a local pool. We may have travelled in different circles at school and didn't have much opportunity to connect there, but high school cliques did not exist at the community pool level. We were a melting pot. And so, for one brief summer, I was able to get to know her like I never did at school. And she lived up to all the hype. She was a special individual. I'm sorry we did not stay in touch Annie. May you rest in peace.

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