



CITY OF SEBASTOPOL

PROCLAMATION

Recognizing May 2024 as DROWNING PREVENTION AND NATIONAL WATER SAFETY MONTH

WHEREAS, Swimming and aquatic-related activities play a vital role in helping people to maintain good physical and mental health and enhance the quality of life for all people; and

WHEREAS, Communicating, teaching, learning, and practicing water safety can help prevent accidental drownings and recreational water-related injuries; and

WHEREAS, As we enter the summer months, May is a good time to think about the inherent dangers associated with water, and how we can prevent senseless drownings; and

WHEREAS, Sonoma County is one of the most beautiful counties in the Western United States, due in large part because of its scenic Pacific coastline, its historic Russian River and other waterways, and;

WHEREAS, Young children and their parents do not always recognize the dangers beneath the currents of the Russian River, the surf of the ocean, and waters of Lake Sonoma; and

WHEREAS, Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional death in the United States among ages 1 to 14, and more than one in five of all drowning in the U.S. involve children under 14; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatricians has recommended that all children over the age of 1 receive swimming lessons, and that for every 100 children who receive swimming lessons, one life is saved; and

WHEREAS, to that end the Rotary Club of Sebastopol has offered a program of free swim lessons since 1984 at Ives Pool, Sebastopol, to every area second grader, teaching them not only how to swim, but also to teach them about the dangers inherent in and around the waters of Sonoma County; and

WHEREAS, The Sebastopol Rotary Learn to Swim Program, with the help of hundreds of Rotarians, community volunteers, teachers, parents, and the cooperation of Ives Pool Manager Ricardo Freitas, representing the West Sonoma County Swimmers; and Lehla Irwin, head coach of the Sebastopol Sea Serpents, and with the help of the city of Sebastopol, have taught 13000 children to be safe around the water.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT I, Mayor Diana Gardner Rich, do hereby proclaim the month of May 2024 as Drowning Prevention and National Water Safety Month and recognize our own Ives Pool and its community programs that teach children, and adults to be safe in, on, and around the water.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and the Great Seal of the City of Sebastopol this 7th day of May, 2024.

Diana Gardner Rich
Mayor
City of Sebastopol

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