



Find out what these swimmers were doing at this Roseville pool

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265 DIVE IN FOR BREAST CANCER AWARENESS



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Pink-capped swimmers – 263 women and two men – stretch out Saturday in the pool at the Roseville Aquatics Center as they try to create the world's longest floating pink ribbon, symbol of the campaign against breast cancer.

Activists get creative with area events

By SAM McMANIS
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Estrogen was overflowing – to say nothing of all that water on the pool deck – at the Roseville Aquatics Complex as 265 pink-capped synchronized swimmers were conjoined foot to neck in the shape of a giant, floating pink ribbon.

Cocktails were sloshing and finger food was scarfed down at seven midtown Sacramento watering holes, as a spirited group ate and

drank for something larger than themselves, even though they, themselves, might become larger in doing so.

Gallery patrons at J27 in midtown were sipping mocha frappés and gazing at walls adorned with photographs of breasts of all shapes, sizes and varying stages of concealment, as part of “The Boobie Show,” photo artist Monica Neumann Lunardi’s latest exhibition.

And, at sundown, businesses in the Lavender Heights neighborhood on 20th and K streets were alight in flooding pink neon, the message as unmistakable as it was bright.

Just another Saturday in the Sacramento area?

Hardly. Marking the midway point of a rite of fall, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, activists and volunteers showed their creative

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Elizabeth Price of Los Angeles, with a pink ribbon painted on her cheek, awaits the call to get in the pool at the Roseville Aquatics Center. The idea is to spread the message of early-detection and treatment to a wider audience.

Awareness: Photos aim 'to demystify' breasts

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sides in devising events – such as a Guinness World Records attempt for the largest human floating ribbon, or an Appetizers for the Cure soiree, or the viewing of tastefully evocative images – meant to raise awareness, funds and eyebrows.

By now, most people are well aware of breast-cancer awareness. Its pink-ribboned ubiquity has become a cultural touchstone and its concomitant events have extended far beyond those pedestrian charity walks. (One of which, by the way, will take place this morning at 7 a.m. at the Capitol with the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk.)

Sacramento's diverse breast-cancer lineup this weekend echoes a nationwide trend. It's possible to Raft for the Cure in Moab, Utah; Manicure for the Cure in Princeton, N.J.; Scrapbook for the Cure in Standish, Mich.; and even Sleep In for the Cure in Denver. Somewhere, a clever chef is probably organizing Curing Ham for the Cure.

Makes sense, really. No law says you have to be ambulatory to show your solidarity. As Bob Quinlan, of Appetizers for the Cure and co-owner of the business Appeteesers-USA, said: "Not everybody wants to run or walk. I'm 5-10, 250 pounds and 54 years old, so I'm not going to be running very far. But going out and eat-

ing and drinking and contributing to a worthwhile cause is something I want to be involved with."

Quinlan's wife, Chris, is a breast-cancer survivor. So, too, are Lunardi and Sonia Susac, who organized the world-record float at the U.S. Masters Synchro Championships. The appetizer and float events were held in tandem with the local chapter of the Susan G. Komen Foundation, while the photo exhibit was sponsored by Albie Aware Breast Cancer Foundation.

The idea is to spread the message of early-detection and treatment to a larger audience. Lunardi, for instance, decided to capture the sublime quality of breasts "to demystify them ... to show these wonderful breasts and (how) you need to take care of them."

More than a dozen survivors participated in the day's largest event, the floating pink ribbon, which was the brainchild of Susac, a masters synchro swimmer. It took nearly an hour to position the 263 women (and two guys secure in their manhood) just right.

"I called upon an engineer from Aerojet named James Hill to take rocket science into the pool and design a float pattern to get the right amount of people and holding the shape," Susac said. "The Komen (ribbon) shape is very challenging. It's got those two

legs pointed off at the end."

Swimmers entered the pool, lemming-like, four at a time, herded by buff Speedo-clad water polo players serving as wranglers to keep them aligned.

"Just float and relax," Susac told the swimmers, "and make sure to grab the person on your right."

Forty minutes later, all the pink caps were in place. The clock was set for five minutes, the time the Guinness arbiters said Susac's crew needed to "hold the float" to establish the record.

They accomplished it, easily. But the twin-engine plane Susac hired to take an aerial photograph was late, so the ribbon kept on floating for close to 10 minutes.

"No problem," said participant Kristina Hopkins, of Washington, D.C. "We're synchros. We're used to floating. But it did get a little cold."

Likewise, Julie Mallett and Karen Greenberg, quaffing bloody marys at the Kupros Bistro bar, were girding themselves for the challenge of six more charity pub-crawl stops.

"It's great to have a variety of activities," Mallett said, fingering the salt around her glass rim before taking a drink. "Good for the cause."

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