



A swimmingly nice life for Paul and Matt Jolliffe

Concern for the safety of their youngest children led Noreen and Bob Jolliffe to enroll each of the boys in swimming classes when they turned 3. They wanted the boys to be able to save themselves in any water emergency. Those swimming classes provided safety lessons and so much more for Paul, now 43, and Matt, 39.

Swimming has been a large part of the men's lives ever since. They've been swimming with Special Olympics since they turned eight. Now they swim once every week at the pool in Charlevoix. They live absolutely as far north as you can and still be in Area 2's geography. The tiny road that leads to their idyllic log cabin (Bob's great-great grandfather obtained the property under the home-stead provision in the 1860's and it has remained in the family since) is the border between Antrim and Charlevoix counties. That explains why they train mostly in Charlevoix, ten miles away, rather than Traverse City, a 40 mile hike.

Still, the brothers compete for Area 2 and rarely miss any competitive meet. Paul's best stroke is the breast-stroke and he also participates in the free-style and the backstroke. Matt prefers the backstroke but has lately become more-and-more proficient in the butterfly, a particularly difficult stroke. He also competes in the free-style.

Paul and Matt love to go into Charlevoix, where Paul works at the Glenn's Supermarket as a bagger and also provides some janitorial services. They participate at the Bergman Center which runs a resale store and provides a variety of classes in subjects like art and computer activities. The AKTION Club, a Kiwanis enterprise, let's Paul and Matt serve the community, helping with programs like Meals on Wheels and one that delivers staples like flour, butter and cheese to needy families in the area.

Bob, a retired General Motors die-maker, and Noreen, a retired Occupational Therapist, adopted Paul, when he was only 10 days old, and then Matt, at 10 months, as their other children grew. Barb, 55, Lee Ann, 53, Bob Jr., 51, and Nancy, 49, all have wonderful relationships with Paul and Matt, a fact made apparent when Paul, the more talkative between the two, speaks with pride of his siblings.

Congratulations to Paul and Matt Jolliffe, our February Feature Athletes of the Month!