

Beekman Recreation Swim Team (“Beekers”) - Marylou Gotsch Award

In the mid 1970's, Marylou Gotsch was one of the Recreation Directors at the Beekman Rec. She raised her three children at the Rec and, it seemed, everyone else's, too. She also went on to run the concession stand. If you did not have enough money - no problem - she would put it in for you. Marylou was involved in everything that happened down at the Rec.

With the swim team, she would donate all the stuff for their home meet concessions, and help run the stand. She also helped write up the swim team tickets (with what races the kids were swimming in), line the kids up, and run the timer sheets back and forth. At the away meets, she would always make sure that all the younger swimmers were taken care of. If you were the last kid to get picked up, Marylou would wait with you. In short, she was everyone's Mom.

When Marylou died in the early '80's, it left a big hole at the Rec. The following summer, the swim team needed help with everything that Marylou had done in the past. The older kids on the team started to pick up the slack, helping with the younger swimmers and with the concession stand. For many years now, and still some 30 years later, the Marylou Gotsch award has been presented to the swim team member that most embodies the spirit of Marylou, by helping out with the team and volunteering their time to keep the team running smoothly.

Recently, her son Tim came down to the end-of-season awards ceremony, to hand out the award in his Mom's name. He had said that his Mom believed that it was always important to give back to your community, and to do your best...you did not have to be the best swimmer, you just had to love what you were doing. Tim spoke about how his mother was a woman who was very involved in the Recreation teams as a whole (not just the swim team), and always helped with fundraising, etc., to make sure that all the kids could participate in recreational activities.

Over the years, the Swim Team coaches and leaders have interpreted the award to be meant for a team member who was an older swimmer, who was dedicated to the team, worked hard, helped the coaches out, and was a Team Leader. They have made sure that it has been awarded to someone who has been a member of the team for a number of years, and that is not just awarded to the best swimmer...it is all about good character and leadership.