

RIVERSIDE

Triathlon returns for second year

By Laura Bollin

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Riverside children will be able to run, swim and bike for their health at the second annual Cori's Kids Triathlon.

The event is named in honor of Cori Sikitch, a former Riverside resident who died at 25 after battling an eating disorder.

Laure Kosey, director of the Riverside Parks and Recreation Department, said last year's inaugural event was a hit.

"We had 80 participants, and the community was excited about it," Kosey said. "We definitely wanted to offer it again."

The money raised from the event will help fund Parks and Recreation Department programs offered throughout the year.

"The Sikitch family is helping offset the costs of the event," Kosey said. "They donated \$2,000 to have Cori's name on the triathlon."

The triathlon help to promote health and wellness, Kosey said.

"It gives them a taste of three different activities, and hopefully they'll have fun while they're doing it," Kosey said.

The distance ranges for each event based on the participant's age. Children ages 7 to 10 will swim 100 meters, bike 1.6 miles and run for half a mile. Children ages 11 to 14 will swim 150 meters, bike 3.2 miles and run for one mile. Children ages 15 to 18 will swim 300 meters, bike 4.8 miles and run 1.6 miles.

After the event, there will be a health and wellness fair at the swim club, where parents and children can get information from different health organizations.

"We want to promote health," Kosey said. "We'll have booths that offer massage therapy, information on eating disorders and how to find help if you are struggling with an eating disorder, and booths about healthy eating."

For Cori's family, the triathlon offers a special way to remember their daughter.

Susan Sikitch, Cori's mother, said she feels very blessed.

"We were blessed with her for 25 years," Sikitch said. "That's a lot more than other

Cori's Kids Triathlon

WHEN 8 a.m. Aug. 22

WHERE Starts and finishes at the Riverside Swim Club, 100 Bloomingbank Road

WHO Children ages 7 to 18. Distances differ depending on age. The race is limited to 150 participants.

COST \$35 per child on or before Friday or \$40 after Friday. The final day to submit registration forms is Aug. 14. All participants will receive a T-shirt.

HOW TO Download a registration form at riverside.il.us

MORE INFO Call Laure Kosey, (708) 442-7025

people get."

Cori attended Virginia Tech for college, where she was a business major. She developed her eating disorder at school and struggled with it for seven years.

"When she died, we had two options," Sikitch said. "We could either curl up in a corner with our grief, or we could fill our hearts that had just been torn open with good things."

The family, including Susan, her husband, John, Cori's twin sister, Megan, and sister, Sara, decided to do what Cori would have wanted them to do and turn their sadness into something positive.

Sikitch hopes the children who participate in the triathlon will see the larger picture.

"I hope they see the beauty of what you can accomplish with a strong, healthy body," Sikitch said. "I hope they realize it's not important who the winner is, but it is important to put the effort in to finish the competition — to set a goal and follow through."

On the day before the race, Aug. 21, there will be a mandatory course talk and packet pick up session held at the park across the street from the Riverside Swim Club. Packet pickup will begin at 5 p.m. and the course talk, which will last 30 minutes, will begin at 5:30 p.m.