

**SCORES ARE UP
FOR 2008 MSAs**

The county's third-through eighth-graders post gains on reading and math assessments.

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Council measure protects domestic workers from exploitation. Page A-30

Cal Ripken Sr. baseball league has the hosts with the most. Page B-18

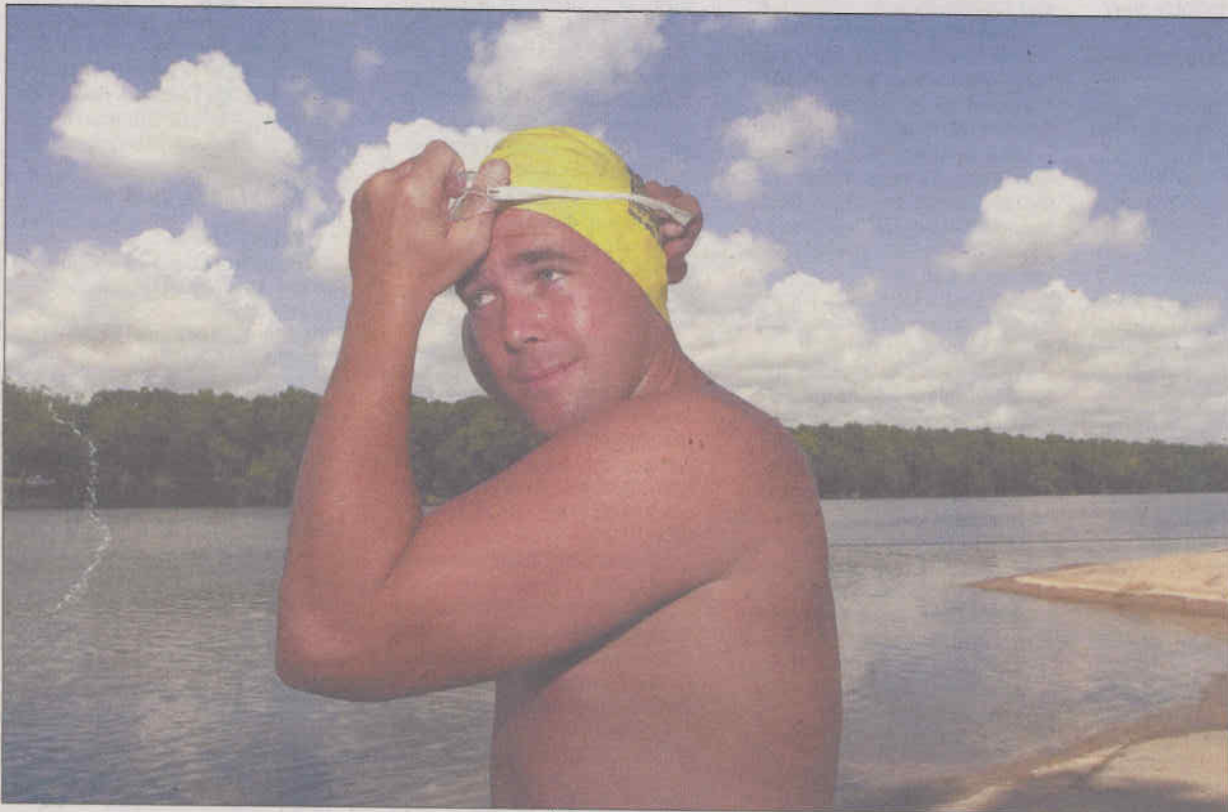
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GERMANTOWN • BOYDS • POOLESVILLE

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Going the extra mile for a good cause



MAOM BROOKNER/THE GAZETTE

Sean DeFrehn, 31, of Germantown is an avid swimmer and recently swam around Key West, Fla., to raise money for The Dwelling Place, a Gaithersburg nonprofit that provides transitional housing for the homeless. Earlier this month, DeFrehn took a swim in the Potomac River, near White's Ferry.

Fundraising athletes a boon to charities

BY PATRICIA M. MURRET
STAFF WRITER

Swimming 12.5 miles around Key West, Fla., on June 21, Sean DeFrehn of Germantown saw barracuda, dolphins and coral.

He also raised about \$1,500 for The Dwelling Place, a Gaithersburg nonprofit that provides transitional housing for the homeless.

"I could have easily just taken \$1,500 out of my bank account and given it to The Dwelling Place and say that I have given and just be done with it," said the 31-year-old former swim coach and longtime water polo player. "But doing it this way, I was able to raise about the same amount of money and raise awareness for the cause."

Talk about transitional housing, as is the goal of The Dwelling Place, has a

time and place, he said, but athletic endeavors and feats are often "a conversation starter," he said.

DeFrehn is among a growing number of people who are seeking new and creative ways to give to charitable groups. Fundraising activities involving physical exercise or endurance that also

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Barnesville returns to its

|| BREAKING IN ||

Tax b stick shoc

■ 2008 assess
property values

BY C. BEN
STAFF

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who lives in Chevy Cha

His assessment w
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See TAX,

Families n to keep ki

■ Volunteers create
Plum Gar to reach o

BY SEBASTIA
STAFF

GIVING

■ Continued from Page A-1

put a cause in the spotlight are not uncommon, said Jonathan Aiken, director of media relations for the American Red Cross. Anecdotal evidence from local chapters is that more and more, people around the country are "feeling something missing" and seeing a need to get involved, he said.

"For some people, they get more involved in their faith, others get more involved in their community, other people get involved in a cause," Aiken said.

DeFrehn, The Dwelling Place's board president, is no stranger to traditional fundraising. He founded Great Names, Great Works, a business group that raises money for local charities, in 2001. But while happy hours and dinners have been successful, he has looked for creative opportunities to raise cash that will create a buzz and put a personal stamp on giving.

In the works is a planned tubing trip for 40 on Aug. 23 on the Shenandoah River in Harper's Ferry, W.Va. Also planned is a one-day bicycle ride on Oct. 11 from Cumberland to Washington, D.C., along the C&O Canal, said DeFrehn, an investment adviser. Groups will seek sponsors through word of mouth and e-mail.

"This is a fairly new thing for us and I think it reflects the world," said Miriam Gandell, The Dwelling Place's executive director. "People nowadays are trying to both write a check but spur others to do something."

Case in point: 41-year-old Mark Young of Germantown began his "Running for Others" campaign in January. The odyssey will have him run 12 marathons in 12 months to raise cash and awareness for The Dwelling Place, the Make-A-Wish Foundation and German-

"I thought about doing it just for the heck of it, and thought: 'Well that will get old real fast.' If I can do this, it's sort of like: 'What can you do?' Average people motivated can do big things."

Mark Young of Germantown

town HELP, which provides food and emergency supplies to the needy.

The tour started Jan. 13 at the Disney World Marathon in Orlando, Fla. Young has since hit races in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Washington, D.C., Frederick, Cleveland and Coudespourt, Pa. His last marathon will be Jan. 11 — 364 days after his first, also at Disney World.

Young, a member of Cedarbrook Community Church in Clarksburg, sees completing the races as faith in action — taking a "me-oriented sport" and turning the focus outward, compelling others to act.

"I thought about doing it just for the heck of it, and thought: 'Well that will get old real fast,'" said Young, who had previously run 32 marathons. "If I can do this, it's sort of like: 'What can you do?'" he said. "Average people motivated can do big things."

So far Young, a facilities manager for a Washington, D.C., law firm, has raised \$2,500 through his Web site, www.runningforothers.com, where he tracks his progress on a blog and corresponds with the curious.



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