



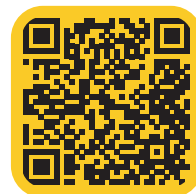
The club offers swim lessons, splash parties, basketball, tennis and aquatic fitness and other activities for community members of all ages from May–September.

In 1959, middle-class African American families living in the Philadelphia suburb of Yeadon founded a private swimming pool named the Nile Swim Club after several of them were denied membership at nearby swim clubs that had all-white memberships. “The Nile” quickly became an integral part of the social and recreational life of Yeadon’s African American community. The pool offered swim lessons and regularly hosted evening parties, synchronized swimming shows, community cookouts and dance lessons.

Sixty years later, the Nile Swim Club is still in operation, serving its membership and running “No Child Will Drown in Our Town,” a program that provides free swimming lessons to children in the community. During 2020, when all of Philadelphia’s public pools shut down due to issues related to the Covid-19 pandemic, the club instituted safety measures to keep its pool open, and also became a food distribution center for the needy. As a result, the Nile continued its long tradition as a vital haven for fun, exercise and social connection, especially for kids. In 2021, the Nile Swim Club was awarded a State Historical Marker as the oldest African American owned membership swim club.

“Back in 1957 or ‘58, when the founders applied to that other swim club and were denied, some folks would have said we could have went and marched, and protested, and forced them to make us become members. But our founders said, we’re not going to go that route. We’re going to raise our own money, we’re going to buy these four and a half acres of land, and we’ll have our own pool. And I take great pride in that. The fact that they said we’re going to have our own in our community was very powerful back in 1959.”

–Anthony Patterson, Sr., Board President, Nile Swim Club



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