

New Swim and Pool Store Opens In Irwin!

As of last Thursday, Irwin's newest store has been open for business. This store, *The Swim Shop*, fills a hole in the local economy. Previous to the opening of *The Swim Shop*, there were no pool equipment and swim gear and apparel stores for miles around. As the owner of the shop, Iyla V. Toswym said, "As long as I can remember, I felt most at home in the pool ... and since the closest swim retail shop was miles away, I decided to open one myself!" And after a year full of trial and error, she was finally able to open a brick-and-mortar store, which had been her goal all along.

About Iyla V. Toswym

Iyla is a self-declared swim nut. She claims that there is nothing more frustrating than "traveling for a half hour in the car to go try on excruciatingly tight suits, only to leave empty handed, or with only a new cap. Not that a new cap isn't exciting, it is just most definitely *not* what we came for!"

While Iyla is entering her 60's, and is long past her competitive swimming days, she still has fond memories of her old team. One of her most distinct memories, she claims, is "this one day, when we were doing a particularly hard set. Nobody, I don't think, even knew what we were doing! We were just swimming. Six laps, twelve laps, and then back to six. Sprint the first two laps, easy the next two, and then some complicated drill the rest of the way. We all thought we were doing it right, but then Coach come over and starts yelling at us. 'I'm pretty sure I told you **specifically** to use a *snorkel*! Are you using one? No, I don't think so! Put on your snorkel and go on the top [the :00]. Actually... start the whole set over. Back to round one!' Oooh, I really hated Coach that day!" she recalls.

Iyla was *quite* the swimmer back in her day. She holds five records at the high school, and three records at a regional level. Her specialty was swimming distance events, but she did have impressive times in the 50-yard freestyle. Iyla was also a great teammate, and was very supportive of her team. After high school, she continued on to swim at Stanford University in California, quite a distance away from her roots in Norwin. At Stanford, she continued to achieve straight A's, and maintained a GPA of 4.0 or higher.

When finished with college, she returned home, and worked as a project manager for Google, headquartered in Pittsburgh. Over a year ago, she quit her job to pursue her passion of opening a business. The first few months, she sold solely online, until it started "taking over the house!", at which point she took out a loan to buy a piece of property in downtown Irwin. Two months later, *The Swim Shop* opened.