

Girl slips to death from raft

By Lori Teresa Yearwood
Staff Writer

As a young girl screamed for help, her friend disappeared beneath the surface of Oneida Lake.

Tammy Joslyn drowned in 6 feet of water Saturday at Sylvan Beach. She was 10 years old.

Deputy Ronald Townsend of the Oneida County Sheriff's Department said Tammy and her friend Amber Hafele, both of Utica, slid into the water after drifting on their rafts from the shore. Neither girl knew how to swim.

Chittenango resident Edward Lee was on his boat when he saw one of the two Utica girls flailing about 100 feet from the shoreline.

"At first I thought they were kidding," he said. "But then I saw her go under, and I knew it was for real."

Lee flung himself over the side of his boat, half running, half

swimming until he reached Amber. He said her head was bobbing as he grabbed her around the waist and hauled her to shallow water. "She was yelling, 'My friend is still out here, my friend is still out there.'"

Few boaters were out on the lake, and only about 20 swimmers were in the water on the overcast day, but those who heard the commotion ran into the water to help, Lee said. Boaters radioed for police; swimmers frantically searched for Tammy.

Lee, who sails Oneida Lake almost every weekend, said a small craft advisory had been posted because of possible thunderstorms.

The water, though only about 6 feet deep, was murky. Tammy was not in sight.

"It was really frustrating," Lee said.

Screaming sirens brought police and firefighters in scuba gear. By then, about 75 beach-goers had flocked to the shores. Police told

them to join hands and wade into the lake.

Tammy's mother was one of them, said Lee.

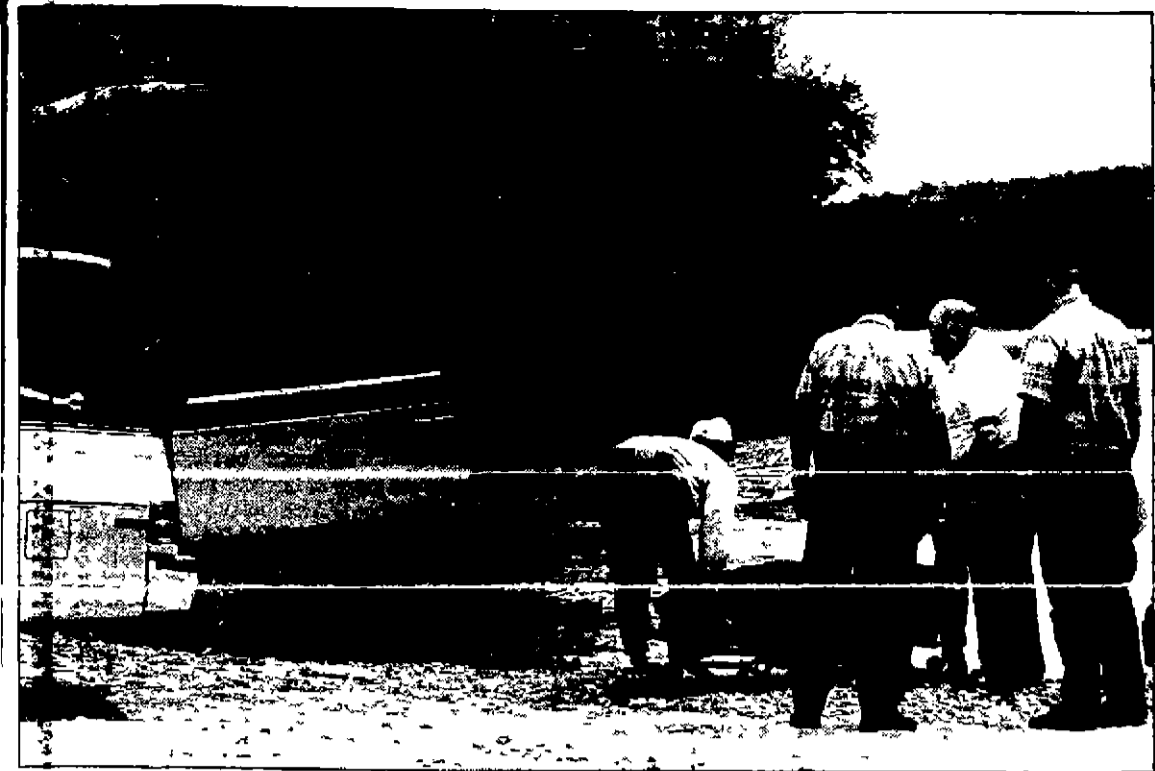
It was about 12:42 p.m. — 37 minutes after Tammy and Amber were laughing and kicking on their rafts — when someone in the chain found Tammy, said Lee.

His wife, Debra, said Tammy's mother kept saying, "I want to hold my baby, I want to hold my baby."

An Oneida County dispatcher did not know the mother's name. Neither Tammy nor Amber's parents could be reached for comment.

Tammy was taken to Oneida City Hospital, where she was pronounced dead at 1:45 p.m., said Oneida County deputies.

"It was weird, because swimmers went back onto the lake. Volleyball players went back to their games and boaters started sailing," Debra Lee said. "We left, we couldn't handle it. It was really sad."



GARY WALTE/Staff photographer

EMPLOYEES OF the Watson Funeral Home, Central Square, remove the body of Wesley B. Tanner from Dutch Pond in Oswego County.

Deputies think one died in rescue try

DEPUTIES
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an autopsy today. Mazur said he discovered money and a bottle of nitroglycerin tablets in Helen Tanner's purse. People with heart conditions use the tablets, he said. He said she was wearing a medical alert bracelet.

Irene Albright, who lives at the Simeon Dewitt Apartments, said the Tanners were avid anglers.

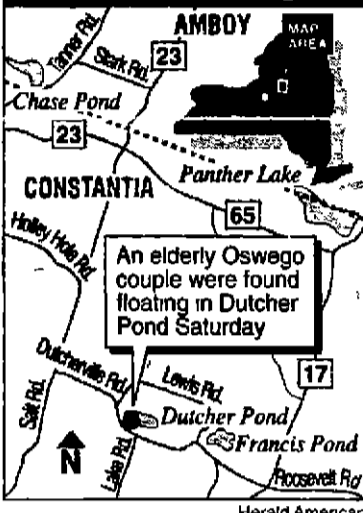
She said they were nice people, adding that the Tanners often visited Wesley's daughter in Utica on weekends.

Albright said the couple got married four years ago, and they celebrated their wedding anniversary Thursday.

As Constantia volunteer firefighters took the bodies from the water, the couple's lawn chairs, a pair of minnows, a tackle box and a large fishing net sat nearby on the shoreline.

A sloping 8-foot-wide patch separates the pond from Dutcherville

Double drowning



Road, a quiet highway that doesn't have road markings. The site is just east of Lewis Road, a private dirt road that loops around the northern edge of the half-mile-

square pond.

The nearest house is a quarter mile east on Dutcherville Road. Edward and Jeanne David, who live there, passed the Tanners on their way to McDonald's in Brewerton Friday evening.

"They were all right when we drove by there, I know that," Jeanne David said. She remembered seeing the couple's gray 1989 Mazda beside Dutcherville Road at 7:30 p.m. Friday.

The Davids returned three hours later, but took a different route home.

"I can't believe it," Jeanne David said. "I wish we were home so maybe we could have done something to help them."

She did not recall seeing the couple there before.

Poor weather has kept many people away from the water this summer. The Tanners are the first drowning victims in Oswego County since February, when a Fulton woman was killed when her car went into the state Barge Canal.

These parents, children share uncommon bonds, journeys

THESE PARENTS
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mated 3,000 American families have overcome geography, language and bureaucracy to adopt infants orphaned by Romanian families too poor to raise them.

Last year's picnic brought high-chairs and strollers. Then, some of the estimated 27 Syracuse-area families who adopted Romanian children hadn't even returned yet from Europe. Saturday, the pacifiers and rattles of 1991 had become Big Wheels and Teddy bears. Everywhere, toddlers toddled and parents hovered.

"We have really helped each other," said Syracuse City Auditor Roy Bernardi, who with wife Alice adopted son Dante in May of 1991, when he was 6 weeks old. "This has become quite an organization of families."

The Bernardis first saw their son in an orphanage in the remote town of Braila, about 15 miles from the Russian border. To get there, they survived months of background checks, including FBI fingerprinting, financial probes and home visits by service agencies. They stayed a month in Romania, waiting for paperwork to be done.

It was a story heard often Saturday of nerve-racking journeys with no guarantee of success, then to return with the child around which their lives revolve. It could cost between \$3,000 and \$20,000, depending on the situation. And it didn't always work.

Last year the Romanian government halted the adoptions after

CBS' "60 Minutes" charged that some families were selling the infants. Since then, the program has started anew, but strict regulations have slowed it.

To Neugebauer and others who gathered Saturday, the thought of orphans left behind brought sadness. She said she and husband Don had seen Luka make great strides — literally.

When the child arrived in September 1990, she couldn't even roll over, Neugebauer said. Nor would she let people hold her. She'd lie in a rocker, thumb in mouth, staring at the hand she held above her face. For several weeks, Luka was fed with an eye-dropper.

By Christmas of that year, she could hold herself in a standing position.

Today, when wanting to be held, she grabs her mother's legs and hollers, "Up up up, Mommy!" Nursery school begins this fall.

"I'm hoping these (picnics) will go on into their teens, at least," said Neugebauer, 36. "That's when they're really going to need it. Right now, for the most part, this is for the adults — to meet other families who may have even adopted children from the same town, to share stories and share how the kids are doing. It's for the parents now. But I think as they get older, when they're old enough to understand what adoption means, and what Romanian adoption means in particular, it will be for them."

Aftershock strikes Mojave Desert

The Associated Press

YUCCA VALLEY, Calif. — A moderate aftershock to a magnitude-7.5 earthquake rumbled through the Mojave Desert on Saturday, but there were no reports of damage or injuries, officials said.

The quake registered 4.3 on the Richter scale and struck at 8:37 a.m., 17 miles north of Yucca Valley, said Steve Bryant, a spokesman for the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena.

Residents in several communities, including Yucca Valley, Twentynine Palms, Palm Desert, Landers and Joshua Tree, reported feeling the quake, authorities said.

Bryant said the quake was an aftershock of the 7.5 earthquake that struck Landers, about 100 miles east of Los Angeles, on June 28.

The Landers quake caused extensive damage and killed one person. It was followed the same day by an earthquake near Big Bear that measured 6.6.

GOP plans southern strategy

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush and Vice President Dan Quayle plan to head south after the Republican National Convention in an effort to shore up their southern base against two Democrats campaigning on home turf.

As Quayle went on a summer swing through Ohio last week, Republicans put on an upbeat face despite glum news in the polls. Aides said they were eager to take on Democrats Bill Clinton and Al Gore.

"We're going to kick their liberal butts around the South," aide Jim Pitts said as Quayle gave Ohioans and the rest of the country a preview of what to expect in the fall.

Visiting a hog farm and campaigning at Republican fund-raisers, Quayle preached family values, praised small-town virtues and declared he would unmask what he called the Democrats' secret "liberal, left-wing agenda."

Indeed, Quayle and his lieutenants made it clear they are girding for the traditional vice presidential pit bull role. Baring his teeth and savaging the opponents' record.

Quayle embarks Monday on a three-day trip to California. He had planned to head back to the West Coast soon after the Aug. 17-20 Republican convention in Houston. But now both Bush and Quayle will spend much of that first week in the South, starting with a joint appearance Aug. 21 in Gulfport, Miss.

Bush was planning to campaign in Missouri after the Gulfport appearance, campaign officials said. Quayle's plans called for stops in Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

On the Ohio swing, the word was that the battle will be fought over concrete issues such as health care and taxes more than symbolic ones such as the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance.

"Normally Republicans run a symbolic campaign. You know, the flag factories of '88," Pitts said. "This time we're going to have to run a much more issue-oriented campaign."

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— Spiro Agnew,
39th U.S. vice president