

# 1939, What I wanted

by Estelle Bruno

The town I lived in built a community pool for all the townspeople. A dream for a 13 year old. I begged Mama for the two dollars it cost to join. We always took a train to the beach, but you couldn't learn to swim against those high angry waves. So this was my chance to learn to swim and dive from a diving board.

My first week I stood at the edge of the diving board and stared down at the water. The kids behind me kept yelling *jump jump!* But I couldn't do it. I felt as if I was too high up and might hit the concrete bottom. So I gave up on the diving.

One day I was standing at the edge of the pool when suddenly I was pushed from behind, smack into the deep end. I floundered, terrified, kicking and yelling and swallowing water. All of a sudden someone came to my rescue. A nice boy I would come to know for many years. When he lifted me out of the water, he went over to the laughing boy who pushed me in, and he gave the boy quite a thrashing. Throwing him into the water. That bad boy never looked my way again.

After that, my hero eased me into the water slowly, and taught me how to swim.

