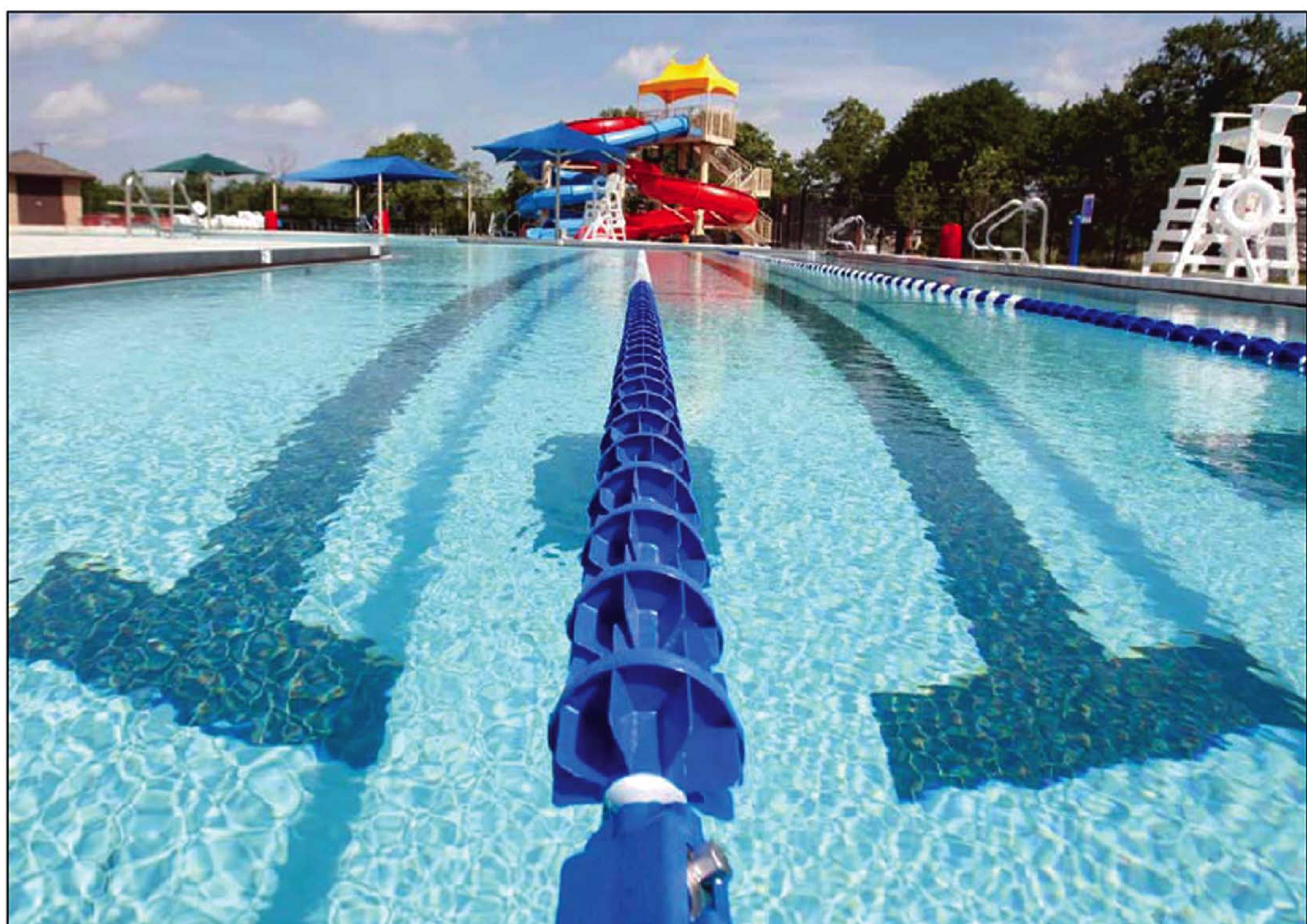


# Sapulpa's plunge pays off



People soon will be able to splash at the new Sapulpa Aquatics Center, which was financed entirely by private funds. CORY YOUNG/Tulsa World

## Aquatics center set to make a big splash

BY MANNY GAMALLO  
World Staff Writer

**S**APULPA — It's been more than 50 years since Sapulpa has had an outdoor municipal swimming pool, but that's about to change this weekend.

On Saturday, local officials will gather for an 11 a.m. ribbon-cutting for the Sapulpa Aquatics Center, at the corner of Brown Street and Cobb Avenue.

Park officials are beaming with pride over the pool, not only because it's state-of-the-art, but also because its \$1.8 million cost was funded entirely by private donations.

It was no small feat, according to Jan Allen, a Park Board member who helped spearhead the fundraising.

"I've never heard of a pool being funded like this, through private donations," she

### Sapulpa Aquatics Center

**Where:** Brown Street and Cobb Avenue  
**Admission:** \$3; children younger than 3 admitted free

**Hours:** 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday; 1 to 8 p.m. Sunday. Mondays will be set aside for group swimming from 1 to 5 p.m. and adult swimmers from 5 to 8 p.m. Season is Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.

said. "We managed to raise most of the money before the economic downturn."

The push began in late December 2007 with a \$600,000 challenge grant from the Bartlett Foundation, Allen said.

By the next spring, "We were far enough ahead in money to begin our construction

designs," she said. Construction got under way in October.

The new pool sits on land donated by the city. It features two 30-foot-tall water slides, covered picnic tables, lounge chairs, a first-aid station, a concession booth, showers and lockers, and restrooms. Still to be completed is a volleyball court. No outside food can be taken into the pool.

"All you have to do is bring a swimsuit and a smile," said Jason Sauer, aquatics supervisor.

The pool, which can accommodate 404 swimmers, is irregularly shaped. It offers a wading pool for toddlers and has varying depths up to 5 feet.

No diving will be allowed, but a separate area has been set aside for lap swimmers.

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Erin Johnson, a lifeguard at the Sapulpa Aquatics Center, tries out the lap swim area of the new pool, which is set to open Saturday. Photos by CORY YOUNG/Tulsa World

## SAPULPA:

Six lifeguards will be on duty at the pool at all times, a facility administrator says.

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The pool and its surrounding buildings, landscaping and generous parking give the new facility a club-like look.

More than 20 staff members will work at the pool, including six lifeguards, who will be on duty at all times, Sauer said.

Allen and Sauer said the anticipation for the pool has been building for some time, with scores of families visiting the site and watching its construction progress.

Sauer said no proof of residency will be required to use the pool, he said.

Allen said the last outdoor pool the city ran was near the golf course, but it was closed in the 1950s.

In a joint agreement with the school system, the city did offer an indoor pool, but that agreement ended about 15 years ago, she said.

Allen said Sapulpa's pool will be operated by the city's Parks and Recreation Department, "and we expect to break even on our costs."



Kaydence Lowe, 5 (right), and her brother Karson Lowe, 3, look into the new Sapulpa Aquatics Center.

Jan Allen (right), a Sapulpa Parks and Recreation Department board member, and Jason Sauer, aquatics supervisor of the Sapulpa Aquatics Center, walk around the new pool this week.



The pool is adjacent to Liberty Park, which has a free splash pad, although admission to the pool will be \$3 for anyone age 3 or older.

Swimming lessons will be provided from 8 to 11 a.m.

Tuesday through Friday. Sauer said a two-week swimming class will cost \$40. The lessons are for ages 6 months to adults.

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