



## Memories of Lake Owasso

by Jacci Krebsbach

**A**s a child born and raised in Shoreview, I spent many summer hours at the beaches on Lake Owasso.

During the 1950's, there were two separate beaches, the east one was called Breezy Point and was the public beach. There used to be a tavern on the north side of Lake Owasso but we children were forbidden to darken its doors. The public beach had a beautiful architectural retaining wall and parking area that was built by WPA.

Each summer my mom signed my brother and I up for American Red Cross swimming lessons, much to my terror. I recall that it was usually the week after school let out and the water wasn't warm yet and, in fact, it usually was quite cold and windy on the lake.

During this time there were two rafts in the lake and a very large slide – which was quite popular. The cool kids (read teens) would swim out to the raft in the deep part to sunbathe the day away. The concession stand was quite crude but I don't ever recall buying anything from it because our mothers would pack food for us. We would swim, rest, have

lunch – wait the regulation hour before we could return to the water, swim some more and then head home before the fathers of the neighborhood returned home.

As children we would spend hours at the lake. We had to use the buddy system, which meant pairing up and taking turns going under water. Our moms would spend the time visiting and smoking cigarettes.

The beach on the west side was fenced in and it was a private beach. For a couple of years, people were allowed to buy summer passes for this beach. The Hawaiian Nite Club was located overlooking this beach and it had dressing rooms and a dance floor.

When I became a teenager, I became a summer babysitter and would take my charges down to the lake for the day – repeating patterns of my youth. However, when a girlfriend and I were old enough to visit the lake without parents, we would walk to the beach – of course, we were too cool to ride our bikes. How times have changed!

I'm sure my story could be repeated by many of you. You can substitute Snail Lake or Turtle Lake but those memories of summer at the beach—warm kool aid, salty popcorn, peanut butter sandwiches crunchy with sand, the odor of baby oil and iodine—grow stronger each year.

