

Random and senseless at park and pool: Just be nice (please)

I'm thinking: "Clod. Sucked in high school and he's still mad."

He's thinking: "Amateurs tick me off. Lady, keep up or go home and take care of your kids."

I'm thinking: "Like he is somebody."

He's thinking: "I'm **FITNESS AFTER 40**

ting in the city. As it should be, here there is no privilege.

And for this treasure, a very modest cost: that we all learn better how to share.

Why am I even writing this?

Many, if not most, people would

think this all too obvious. But more often these days, I see people doing things that make the experiences of running, swimming, and biking in

Austin seem to resemble the experience of driving in Austin. We just can't let it come to that.

Faster, stronger, more experienced athletes may need to take it easy around novices, people with pets, and kids. Of course you're good, but maybe you could use some perspective. Someone better probably resents slowing down for you.

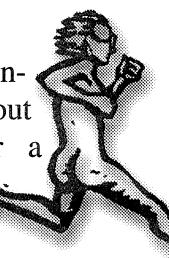
Beginners and people just out for a stroll can help by moving over and making room for the serious workout folks. Side-by-side baby joggers and middle-of-the-trail chats with long-lost buddies take up more than their share of space. If you're the slow one in a circle-swimming queue, stay right and let people pass.

Cyclists and pedestrians at the Town Lake trail would do well to stop their interminable sparring and look out for each other. Each annoys the other, yes, but both groups are here to stay. Only option: deal with it.

Dog people (yes, I am one) should honor the leash law, like it or not. Docile as they may seem to their companion humans, some dogs come across to others as fierce and savage beasts. Oh: dare I suggest you clean up after your pet?

You get the point. A lot has changed in Austin. But sophisticated technology and economy and culture count for little if a community can't get right the basics like a little mutual respect. ☺

"No staring" and "no spitting" head Dayna Finet's rules of fitness etiquette.



DAYNA FINET

Yesterday I'd almost finished this nice column about workout vacations. For a break, I went to swim laps at my beloved Stacy Pool. Lap six and whack! This burly guy in red swim trunks, who'd got in the lane after I started, slaps my right arm. No big deal. This happens. At lap eleven, he passes on his side of the lane and kicks me in the head. Not so common. I think, this can't be on purpose. I wonder. Then, lap seventeen, and the guy veers into my side of the lap lane and pushes me up against the rope. I'd move to another lane, but what is it we tell our kids about giving in to bullies and boors?

So my column on workout vacations will wait.

While here I ascend my pulpit for a sermon: Fitness common courtesy is fitness common sense.

Most everyone who's been around here awhile says that Austin's changed, lost some of the old easy friendliness that helped us, for all our differences, to get along so well. The city's got some harder, ruder edges now. Case in point: the burly man in the red swim trunks. The fitness equivalent of road rage or oafishness plain and simple? Doesn't matter. All of us who use the generous recreational resources of Austin have an active obligation to respect the rights of everyone else who uses them, too. Even ignorance and carelessness are no defense.

It's easy to take for granted Austin's plentiful, wonderful parks and pools, available for free, or nearly so, to everyone. People of every age, economic situation, level of experience and skill share equal access to these places. Men and women, people of all races, families, singles, groups of friends mingle more here, perhaps, than at any other public set-

VOTE Danny Thomas

for Austin City Council Place 6

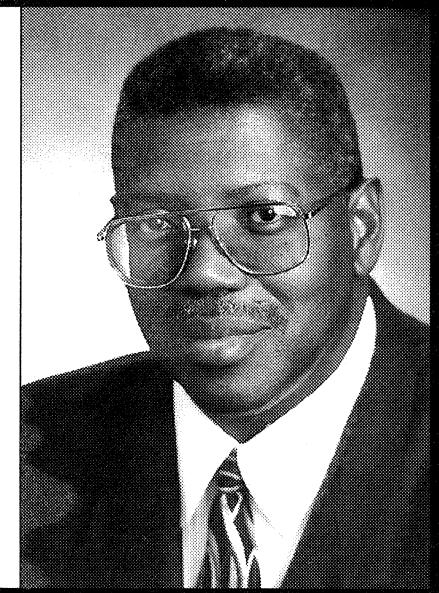
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