

YMCA Heartland Area Meet in Edwardsville Has 'Huge Economic and Family/Youth Impact

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Chuck Fruit Aquatic Center has had an enormous economic on the Edwardsville area in recent years, with several large swim meets held at the facility. Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the Edwardsville YMCA Breakers will host the Heartland Area Meet at Chuck Fruit.

It has been the dream of Bob Rettle, the Chuck Fruit Aquatic Center general manager and Breakers' head coach, and many of the volunteers to host meets of this nature. Because of his and the volunteers' hard work and the significant donation by the Chuck Fruit family, the dream has been fulfilled in the state-of-art swim facility.

The Edwardsville YMCA Breakers rarely have to travel through the club season because of the pool.

This meet is a huge economic impact and youth/family impact," Coach Rettle said. "This is another example of how a community co-operative effort can benefit thousands of people in our community and the region. This event is far-reaching. Edwardsville School District Seven Superintendent Dr. Lynda Andre and Superintendent of Finance Dave Courtney teamed with the Edwardsville YMCA's Executive Director Tom Verheyen and Niebur Center Branch Director Monica Schnuck, and Edwardsville YMCA Breakers major volunteers like Dana Levasseur, Trish Grant, and Brooke Osborn to make this happen. Everyone wins in this situation."

Coach Rettle said the swimming community is excited about the Heartland event as well as many events coming to the Chuck Fruit Aquatic Center.

“With the 2020 Olympic Games on the horizon many events are planned,” Coach Rettle said. “USA swimming’s Central Zone will host their Diversity and inclusion championships here, USA Ozark Swimming will hold their Long Course Champs here in July, the 2020 USA Swimming National convention will utilize the facility as a training site for up and coming athlete representatives during the 2020 convention held in St. Louis. All this combined with the Southern Illinois Regional Special Olympics Championships March 23, and the St. Louis Masters Short Course Championships held the following week.

“The Chuck Fruit Aquatic Center is an amazing asset to the Edwardsville community. We continue to serve every aspect of competitive swimming. The Fruit Foundation's Gift continues to shine through out the Midwest.”

Specifics For the meet this weekend:

A total of 575 YMCA swimmers from 27 teams throughout Southern Illinois and all of Missouri will converge on the CFAC this weekend.

The swimmers will hit the water nearly 2,500 times over the course of the weekend. Edwardsville YMCA leads the field with nearly 700 qualifying swims. YMCA of O'Fallon, Missouri, comes in next with 273 swims.

Coach Rettle said: "What an amazing cooperative effort by the entire local community. The Edwardsville YMCA, Edwardsville School District, and the Edwardsville business community have all teamed together to make this an amazing event for the youth of the Midwest it's a privilege to play a part in this.”

