

Secrets of a Senior Olympian

By Michelle Solomon

She's been in the icy waters of Alcatraz and ranks among top women swimmers in the National Senior Olympics. After working at Ford, she received a 30-year pin and has raised six boys.

She has a boxes full of ribbons and a many trophies from her wins at swim competitions across the country. Mary Williams is 74, but has the energy of someone half her age.

"Sharks weren't the problem," she said of swimming Alcatraz on May 31, 1998. "The temperature was 54 degrees. I didn't have a full wet suit on and swam a mile and a half in choppy waters."

Williams of Redford believes that she was always competitive and always had vitality, but when she discovered one doctor's prescription for keeping energetic, her life improved.

She met Dr. Edward Lichten in 1986 after finding out from a friend that the gynecologist could help her with a problem that would require her to get a hysterectomy. "He was treating me for different things because I had fibroid tumors," said Williams.

Lichten then put Williams on Estraderm. "I've been wearing the Estraderm patch. I don't know if I would be doing the things that I have done if it wasn't for that," said Williams.

Williams talks about how the doctor explained to her that there were many things hormones did to give you energy. "If you have something like a total hysterectomy, you have to have something to replace your hormones," she said.

Lichten believes age-depleted hormones need to be replaced and that HGH or human growth hormone is natural and plentiful in the human body during youth. In fact, Lichten says, it is a substance that actually retains the properties of youth, but that it lessens with age.

Williams said that Lichten's anti-aging program has given her strength, energy and vitality. People feel tired in old age because of the lack of previously "bountiful hormones of youth. You had great energy when you were young and you had good nutrition and you had great levels of hormones," said Lichten.

It is logical that if you want to have the same energy you had then, it would make sense to "optimize your nutrition and hormones."

Williams said that Lichten also discovered she was "thyroid deficient." "I take a low dose of synthroid now and it helps," she said.

She said since "day one" of Lichten's treatments, she's been able to do things that she didn't think would be possible at her age. A competitive swimmer, Williams said she doesn't like to miss a day of getting in the

pool and urges everyone to take on some sort of competition, even if it's "just for fun."

"I have managed to participate actively in swimming competitively. Even if you're not that kind of person you should take up some type of competitive sport, just for the fitness aspect of it. Even if you don't end up No. 1 or in the top 10, the physical advantages are priceless. It's your health. It gives you what you need in your life, in order to enjoy it fully" said Williams.

But being competitive may not be for everyone, Williams says. "It's something you're born with." Her father was the swim coach at Wayne State University. "Leo Maas. He's in the Wayne State sports hall of fame. He probably had the best swim team they ever had and it was during the 1940s," she said.

Williams said she learned how to swim when she was very young, but "at the time there weren't any girls' teams. I swam for fitness and I'd cheer on my father's 'boys.' "

"Swimming is what I always wanted to do. It's been my preferred form of exercise. Biking, running, you get injuries." For Williams, Lichten's program is as important a part of her daily regimen as swimming.

"My husband got sick and I had to take care of him. I didn't swim for a whole year. I didn't keep up with my treatments or therapy with Dr. Lichten. It really did make a difference. My whole energy level was down," said Williams.

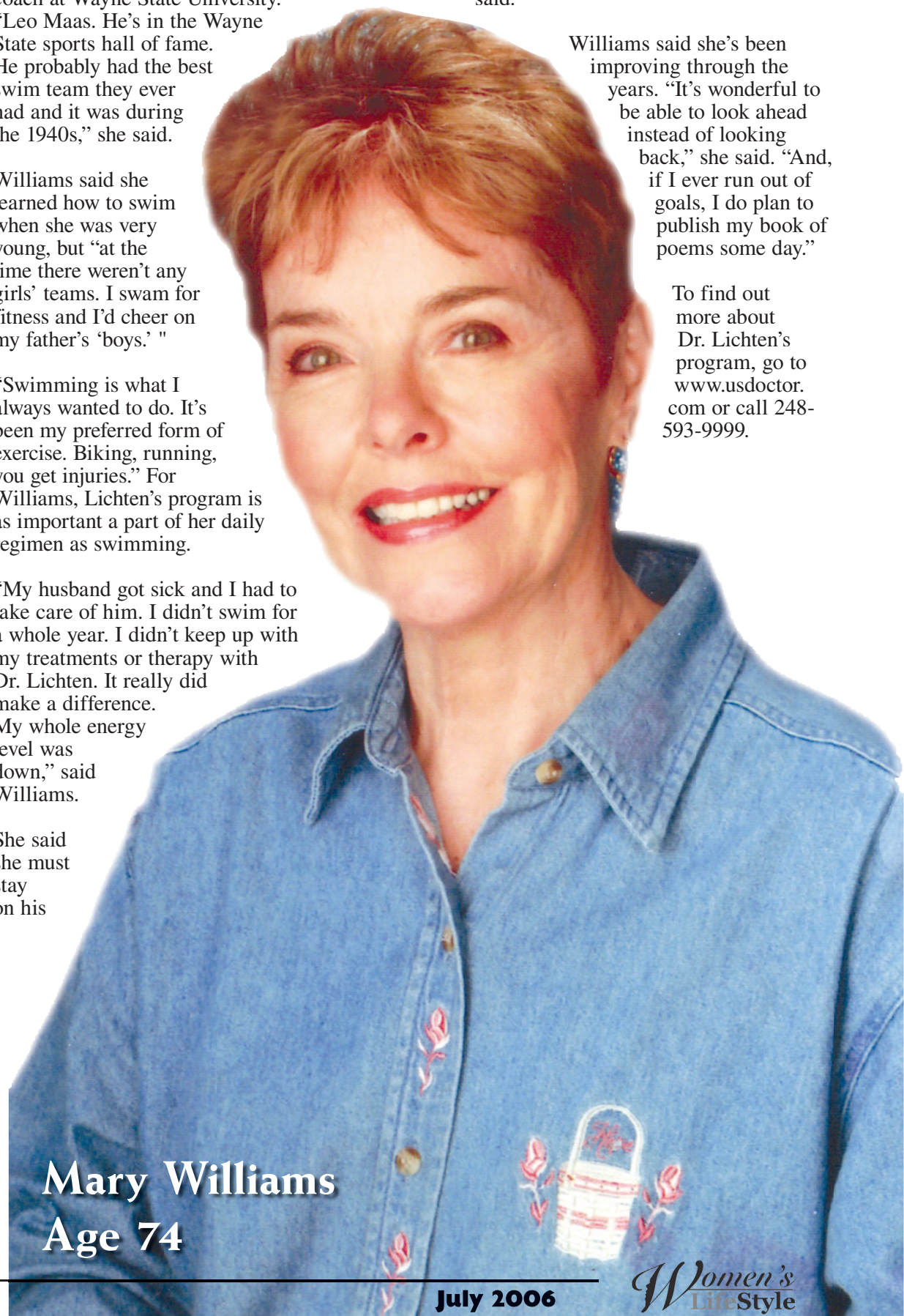
She said she must stay on his

program and "follow what he prescribes. He studies so much on his own and he's a very bright man and he cares about everyone. He believes in what he's doing and has the scientific evidence to back it up. He's a great motivator and knows how to encourage people."

Williams says there are a lot of motivators in her life. One of them is the Michigan Master's Swimming group. "This year I will be moving into a new age bracket. Every five years, you age up. You're ranked according to people in your age group. I'm in the 70 to 74 group. I've been in the United States Masters Swimming Top 10 nationally since 1990," she said.

Williams said she's been improving through the years. "It's wonderful to be able to look ahead instead of looking back," she said. "And, if I ever run out of goals, I do plan to publish my book of poems some day."

To find out more about Dr. Lichten's program, go to www.usdoctor.com or call 248-593-9999.



Mary Williams
Age 74