

rom saving to saving:

78-year-old retired priest may be world's oldest lifeguard

By Lee Nelson

He twists his tanned waist and arms in the crystal blue water. The lyrics, "Rock and roll is here to stax" plays from the cassette player nearby. "OK, ladies Let's do jumping jacks now," James "Jay" Janssen says to the women in the pool. "Push the water down with your hands." His sunglasses and baseball cap guard but from the harsh sun rays as he

sunglasses and baseball cap guaru
him from the harsh sun rays as he
gracefully leaps in the pool.

Janssen recorded many of the
oldies but goodies music himself
from his large collection of 45 RPM
records. He loves the old rock and roll
and the sun such as
Chock Berry and

'He's a scream to be around. I've had both hips replaced, and this helps so much. I love it' Defitta

Jerry Lee Lewis because they have a fervent beat. The music helps him and his water aero-bics' class got into a spirited mood to tighten and tune their

and tone their bodies.
It's 8 am., and James is full of energy already.
That might be difficult for many people his age. In three months, he'll turn 79. According to the "Guinness Book of

World Records" the oldest lifeguard is a 77-year-old man from North Car-olins

But being a water aerobles instruc-tor and a lifeguard has kept Janssen feeling much younger. It's not about

feeling much younger. It's not about records.

"Just need to keep active. I don't want to just sit around."

Many in his classes still call him "Father." But retired priest James Janssen doesn't don a collar anymore. He's more into swimming trunks and a beach towel. He works this summer at the Davenport Outing Club's new pool. The rest of the year, he lifeguards and teaches a water course for those with arthritis at the Scott County Family Y in Davenport. "He's a scream to be around," says DeEtts Montgomery of Davenport. She and seven other ladies join Janssen three days a week for classes at the Outing Club. "Twe had both hipe replaced, and this halps so much. I love it."

Another classmate, Sue Schwab of Bettendorf, says the women talk.

— LIFEGUARD

se by Larry P

Retired priest James Jamesen Bieguards at the Davenport Outing Club pool. He is almost 79 years old and also teaches water serobics.

RECORD HOLDER?

A recent story from North Carolina, which ran in the Oued-City Times July 11, stated a 77-year-old man there received his there received his certificate from the Cautiness Book of World Records' saying he is the world's cides! Beguard.
"He's just a kid," Davenports James Janssen sald. "I can

best that record."
Jamesen, who turn
79 in three months, To an under more and provided the Scott County Family Y.

To become eligible for the record, Janzsen must make his case to the people in London who sufficient in London who sufficient in London who sufficient in tact, he can use this newspaper article to plead his case. An independent corrobo ration in the form of media coverage must be provided to verify any claim, according to the official Guinness Record guide

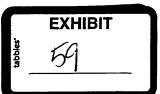
Of the 60,000 cale-

records around the world, only about 4,000 ever make it in to the yearly book. But for now, Jameson is just enjoying the sunshine and his ability to do what he does at his age. "OK, ladies, LeCs do the rocking horse the water," he saw."

in the water," he says as he finishes up the serobics part of his lessons at the Outing

Club pool. He won't settle for a







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Lifeguard: Swimming helps ease arthritis pain

Continued from Page B1 about recipes and other things while Janssen gets them moving in the water.

"My husband had him as a Scout leader," she adds. "He's really helping me. I can feel a difference in my clothes."

Janssen retired in 1991 as a priest in the Catholic Diocese of Davenport, where he had served since 1948. He served in more than a dozen parishes around the area. His health wasn't that great. He was having problems with arthritis in his knees.

He never dreamed at that time that his second career would be in lifeguarding.

But swimming has been a passion of his since he was an Eagle Scout at Camp Abe Lincoln and as a scout leader. Even during his priesthood in churches in and around the Quad-City area, he dabbled in lifeguarding including a stint in 1954 at the pool in Newton, Iowa. He keeps the billfold-sized card certifying him in lifesav.

ing techniques from that year.

During the Senior Olympics in the 1980s, Janssen took first place in all the swimming events.

"I was up and down the pool before the others even were down one lane. I decided to drop out in 1988 and let other people have a chance."

But he just kind of fell into the job of lifeguard.

"My knee was bothering me with arthritis. By taking a water class at the Y, I felt better. I didn't have to have surgery."

He decided to get re-certified, and then was asked if he wanted to teach a class.

"I like people. And this is something I really like to do. Plus, people don't think that I'm that old."

Kari Basler, interim aquatic director at the Y, enjoys working with Janssen.

"He gets along with everybody. He is incredibly caring. He may forget your name, but he always recognizes people."