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METRO CHAPTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF POOL AND SPA PROFESSIONALS DONATING SWIMMING POOL TO CRITICALLY INJURED AFGHANISTAN VETERAN

Howell, NJ war hero hopes to be swimming laps by Memorial Day

LAKEHURST, NJ, MAY 15, 2009 – The Metro New York – New Jersey Chapter of the Association of Pool and Spa Professionals is getting ready to break ground on a 16-ft. x 32-ft. Grecian-style in-ground pool that the group is donating to a local war hero in



Making final plans for U. S. Army 1st Lt. Brian Brennan's new swimming pool are (l to r): Lt. Brennan, Bob Blanda, President of Mill Bergen Pools and Metro New York – New Jersey Chapter President, and Steve Gorlin, President of Gorlin Pools and Spas.

recognition of his service above-and-beyond the call of duty.

The Chapter is providing the pool to U.S. Army 1st Lt. Brian Brennan, a 24-year old Howell, NJ resident who was severely injured on May 7, 2008 from an IED explosion under the Humvee that he and four other men were traveling in while leading a patrol in Afghanistan.

Only 45 days into his tour of duty, Lt. Brennan sustained an acute brain injury, a collapsed lung, internal bleeding, a ruptured spleen, multiple compound fractures of his left arm, and a shattered femur bone. As a result, both of his legs were amputated and he has spent months in rehabilitation therapy at both James A. Haley

Veterans Hospital in Tampa, Florida and currently at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC.

As fate would have it, members of the Metro Chapter were invited to speak last November at a luncheon hosted by the Association of Code Enforcement Officials in Central New Jersey. Jack McNaboe, Middlesex County Code Enforcer, approached Bob Blanda, President of the Metro New York – New Jersey Chapter, telling him how he and his team of volunteers had constructed a 1,000 sq. ft. handicap-accessible apartment at the Brennan's home to accommodate Brian's needs. McNaboe wondered aloud if the Metro Chapter would consider donating a pool to complete the project. Blanda responded with an immediate and resounding, "Yes!" and assigned Steve Gorlin, President of Gorlin Pools and Spas in Lakehurst, NJ, as committee chairman.

Memorial Day Pool Opening

Valued at \$70,000, The Metro Chapter donation includes excavation, installation, backfill, the pool, rails, ladders and swim-out as well as hydraulics, electricity, cement work, a solar cover and maintenance equipment. It will have a depth from 4-feet to 8-feet and include bench seats around the side that will allow Lt. Brennan to easily pull himself up from the water. A special handicap chair lift will be made available, although Lt. Brennan has indicated he probably won't be using it.

“Brian is not interested in having anything that symbolizes a disability,” said Steve Gorlin. “It is incomprehensible to imagine what he has been through but he plans to use the pool as yet another tool to continue his rehabilitation, to help him strengthen his upper body to improve his ability to walk with prosthetic legs.”

Currently Lt. Brennan is receiving aquatic therapy one day a week at Walter Reed, learning how to swim with, and without, prosthetics. This summer he plans to work with a hometown aquatic therapist in his own pool.

“Everyone is telling me how far I've come since last May,” said Lt. Brennan. “But I'm not pleased with my progress. I just want to be able to do everything with prosthetics that I was able to do before the injury. I'm so excited and grateful that the new pool will help me reach this goal even faster.”

The pool is expected to be ready to enjoy by Memorial Day, when the Brennan Family is planning to host a poolside “thank you party” for all the family, friends, neighbors and volunteers who have supported Brian and his family since his return to Howell.

Donating Members

The Metro New York – New Jersey Chapter members who are donating their time and services to the Lt. Brennan pool donation are: Gorlin Pools and Spas (Lakehurst, NJ); Digioia Construction and Digioia Construction Employees (Howell, NJ); Seaboard Industries (Lakewood, NJ); B & B Pools (Chestnut Ridge, NY); Midstate Engineering (Freehold, NJ); Jetline Distributors (Lakewood, NJ); Baron Pool Service (Ramsey, NJ); LBI Pools (New Rochelle, NY); Bel-Aqua (New Rochelle, NY); Electric Experts (Toms River, NJ); Suffolk Concrete (South Toms River, NJ); Mr. Pools + Masonry (Jackson, NY); Good Friend Electric (Toms River, NJ); East Coast Pool Products (Freehold, NJ); S.R. Smith (Haledon, NJ); Latham International (Latham, NY); Merlin Industries (Trenton, NJ), Hayward Industries (Elizabeth, NJ), Zodiac Pool Product, Pentair Water Pool and Spa, Inc., Custom Pool Safety (Chester, NJ), SCP-Lakewood, (Lakewood, NJ), Warm Water Sales, CMI Industries, and Reha Med International.

About The Metro New York – New Jersey Chapter

The Metro New York - New Jersey Chapter of the Association of Pool and Spa Professionals (APSP) represents members in Southern New York, North Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey. The Chapter is responsible for bringing the national programs to the local members of the organization to promote growth in the pool and spa industry. It is part of the Northeast Spa and Pool Association (NESPA).

About NESPA

NESPA is the Northeast Affiliate of the Association of Pool & Spa Professionals (APSP), a worldwide professional trade association. NESPA, founded in 1958, represents the pool and spa industry in the Northeast and serves

APSP members through education, promotion and representation. NESPA consist of five chapters, Capital, CONSPA, Long Island, Metro NY-NJ and PennJersey. Members include service companies, builders/installers, distributors, retail stores, manufacturer's agents, manufacturers, independent pool and spa service companies and sub-contractors.

About APSP

The Association of Pool & Spa Professionals (APSP) is the world's largest international trade association and leading industry advocate representing the swimming pool, spa, and hot tub industry, with a mission to enhance the business success of its members. APSP members adhere to a code of business ethics and share a commitment to public health and safety. Member companies include manufacturers, manufacturers' agents, distributors, designers, builders, installers, retailers, and service professionals. APSP promotes professional best practices through education, certification, standards, research, and safety.

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