

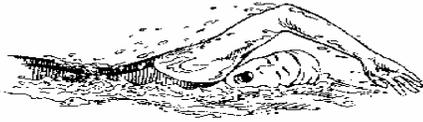


# Water Digest

San Diego Chapter

www.Spa.and Pool.org

July 2000



## Calendar of Events

Jul 11	CHAPTER MEETING - David Hawes	Quality Resorts
Aug 25	Deadline for Pool Awards Entries	Carlton Oaks Country Club
Sept 6,7	CPO Course - Novato	
Sept 29	San Diego Golf Tournament and Pool Awards Dinner	Carlton Oaks Country Club

## PRESIDENTS LETTER

Summer 2000!

Wow? Pools are popping everywhere. This is the best of times and the worst of times. Buyers are plentiful. Financing is good. Prices are good. But, contract completions are dragging out. Skilled labor is in short supply. Litigation and regulatory discipline are increasing as well. New builders and owner builders will be appearing in greater numbers.

Good times can't and won't last forever. Keep your standards high. The temptation to take shortcuts will be there. Don't give in. When business and/or weather cool down, you'll be glad that you have kept your quality level up. The referrals will keep coming and the lawsuits will not.

Hat's off to Mike Galloway again. We are going to have a great meeting this month. The price is once again a great big zero. All you have to do is call in a reservation. This won't be a fancy, dress-up meeting. We'll be getting some real hands-on tips about running a business in our industry. David Hawes will have lots to say. Bring your notepad, pencil and appetite.

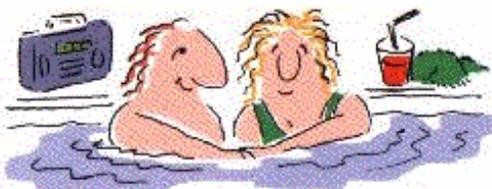
The combination of the golf tournament and the awards banquet is proving to be a hit with everyone. Mike Ramey and Red Barrett have been out talking to builders about participation. Some of the old timers that haven't participated in years are out taking pictures right now. The sponsorships, gifts and the rest of the event planning are going very well.

I asked Rick English to give you a brief summary, in this newsletter, of the goings on at Region XI of NSPI. I should have more for you at the meeting.

*Phil Grider*, NSPI San Diego President

## San Diego NSPI Board of Directors

	Name	Company	Address (Snail Mail) Address (E-Mail)	Phone Fax Pager/Mobile
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	Lisa Adams	Fiberkote	206 Walsh Street Oceanside, CA 92054	760-754-4552 760-754-4552 760-535-4015
	Kim "Red" Barrett	SCP, Inc	566 North Tulip Escondido, CA 92025	760-737-7655 760-737-7663 619-998-7328
	Matthew Gardiner	Caldera Spas	7092 Miramar Road Suite 125 San Diego, CA 92121 matthewgardner@email.msn.com	858-586-1125 858-586-7737
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	Rob West	Trendwest Pools	P.O. Box 20624 El Cajon, CA 92021	619-442-6889 619-447-1815
NEWSLETTER WEBMASTER	Rick English	English Pool Consulting	1445 Twenty Eighth Street San Diego, CA 92102 rick@english.net	619-338-9197 619-338-9167 619-331-8389





# The Seven Habits of Highly Annoying Customers

By Steve Smith condensed by Rick English

Customers! Can't live with 'em, can't live without 'em. Most are easy to work with. But what about the ones who yell like drill sergeants? The ones who lecture on how to do your job? The ones, who laugh at your bad jokes, agree with your ideas — and then never do what they promised?

Probability dictates that you will encounter these folks. Annoying customers stack the deck in their favor. You've got to return the favor by responding differently from the way they've "programmed" you to answer. In the short-run, the following counter-strategies may turn annoying customers into somewhat reasonable people, and allow you both to get on with the business at hand.

## The Holy Terror

Abrasive, hostile and just plain mean, Holy Terrors may be the first annoying customers to come to mind. Unrelenting in their criticism, they not only don't like what you just said, they apparently don't care much for you either.

Holy Terrors are self-righteous types who possess a strong desire to prove themselves right. They also have an unequivocally strong sense of what you "should" be doing — and gang way when you don't follow suit.

It's not easy to stand up to this, but that's what you must do. Holy Terrors expect you to cut and run. It is a bit easier to accomplish if you let the Holy Terror's energy drain down. Nobody can yell forever. When they lose momentum, get their attention. Saying their name clearly, loudly, non-judgmentally, might help. If you're both standing, try to get the Holy Terror to sit down with you. Next, describe your point of view in terms of language that is forceful without directly attacking what the Holy Terror just said. Keep the following diplomatic phrases in mind: "In my opinion..." "I'm going to have to disagree." "I can see you don't think much about it, but my experience has been different."

The key is walking the fine line between defense and offense. If you can do this, Holy Terrors can become quite friendly. A head-on fight must be avoided by all means. You're surely an amateur at waging war with someone who embodies a conviction that "I'm right; you're wrong." And in the rare instance that you do out-shout a Holy Terror, do you think that "will teach him a lesson?" Just wait until your next encounter. Don't count on any repeat business or referrals— that is, if you're still alive.

## The Know-It-All-Who-Doesn't

Phony know-it-alls are the types who can scan the headlines

over morning coffee, and then preach with complete sincerity on any event of the day anywhere on the face of the earth by the time they get to work. They may be so gifted with words that you won't even know the difference. Just ask 'em. They're positive!

Phony know-it-alls are also the easiest to deal with. They may be full of hot air, but you needn't view them as windbags. Be patient. Allow them to tell you everything they think you need to know.

Humbly present your facts as an alternative set of facts rather than the only set of facts. In the meantime you've got to provide a means for the phony know-it-all to save face. A catch-all phrase in this regard might be, "I think the situation might be different today." As further means of face-saving, it's best to face the phony know-it-all one-on-one.

## The Not So Strong, But Silent Anyway Type

You've just asked one of your customers a question. It's only human nature to expect an answer. But what you get is a "yep," or "nope," if that much. Not So Strong, But Silent Anyway Types are much more than simply quiet, shy people. There's no better way of controlling others than by withholding conversation.

Silent Types want to be maddening, too. The only way you'll ever be able to cope is to get these types to talk. The best questions are open-ended ones, the kind that require more than a "yep" or a "nope" to answer. For example, instead of asking, "Do you have any questions?" try asking, "What do you think?"

An added nonverbal skill to throw in is a facial expression that illustrates that you expect an answer. The idea is to raise your eyebrows and open your eyes a bit wider than normal. It may feel odd, but while you're standing there with this face, you've got to stop talking yourself. Here's a chance to fight silence with silence.

Your silent customer might start a real conversation. Pay attention to what's being said, and emphasize that you're doing so. Nod your head, repeat back what you think you've just heard, and ask if, in fact, that's what the customer meant.

## The Smiling Back Stabber

Smiling Back Stabbers agree with everything you say and do in a friendly manner. But turn your back after a job you thought was well-done ... or just try to get them to hold up what you could have sworn they agreed to the day before.

Smiling Back Stabbers truly want to please all of the people all of the time. They tell you what they think you want to hear. They make promises they won't keep. They agree to actions on which

*(Continued on page 7)*

**English Consulting**  
**Richard J. English**  
Swimming Pool Consultant  
1445 Twenty Eighth Street  
San Diego, CA 92102

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## 2000 Design Awards Categories

❖ Awards Banquet will be held Friday, September 29, 2000 ❖

A	Concrete Pool	0 - 400 square feet
B	Concrete Pool	401 - 500 square feet
C	Concrete Pool	501 - 600 square feet
D	Concrete Pool	601 - 700 square feet
E	Concrete Pool	over 700 square feet
F	Concrete Pool	Commercial Project
G	Concrete Pool	Natural Design
H	Concrete Pool	Unique Design
I	Water Feature	Must have separate plumbing and be a separate entity
J	Concrete Spa	Must have separate plumbing and be a separate entity
K	Manufactured Spa	Spa manufacturer must be listed on entry form under "Equipment"
L	Remodel	Before and After photos must be submitted
M	Vinyl Liner Pool	Liner manufacturer must be listed on entry form under "Equipment"
N	Safety Cover Pool	Cover manufacturer must be listed on entry form under "Equipment"



San Diego Chapter  
National Spa & Pool  
Institute  
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## Entry Submissions

Each entry must contain the following:

- Completed Entry Form - Both pg.A & pg. B
- Entry fee of \$45.00 per entry
- Two 8x10 or 8x12 color photographs, showing two views of the project (To be used for judging). In the event your project wins and you have a preference which view should be used for your award plaque, mark it with a "P" on the reverse side of the photo.
- Four color photographs of each view, any size. (To be submitted for publication in magazines and/or newspapers) [optional]

## Entry Qualifications

- ☞ Builder submitting entry must be a member of the San Diego Chapter NSPI.
- ☞ Entered project must be located in San Diego County.
- ☞ You may submit a maximum of two entries in each category.
- ☞ Each entry must be entered in the proper category
- ☞ A project may be resubmitted in subsequent competitions if it meets all the qualifications and has not won an award in previous years' competitions.

**Deadline for Entries: Friday, August 25, 2000**

Entries are to be dropped off with the Branch Manager at either SCP Location:

**SCP ~ San Diego**  
9540 Chesapeake Drive, #101,  
San Diego, CA 92123  
858-467-9495

**SCP ~ Escondido**  
566 N. Tulip Street  
Escondido, CA 92025  
760-737-7655



# ATTENTION POOL PROFESSIONALS

The NSPI San Diego Chapter invites you to attend our next general meeting

Enjoy a buffet dinner and learn from our featured speaker:

**DAVID HAWES**

Mr. Hawes is president of H&H Pool Services, Inc. in the San Francisco Bay area. He has been teaching business seminars for pool professionals for over 12 years and has been featured in *POOL & SPA NEWS*. He has served on the IPSSA Board of Regional Directors and is in his 4<sup>th</sup> year of serving on the NSPI National Service Council.

At this seminar, you'll learn tips on how to work smarter in these busy times, manage your time better and be more profitable.

**DATE:** Tuesday, July 11<sup>th</sup>

**TIME:** 6:30 to 9:00pm

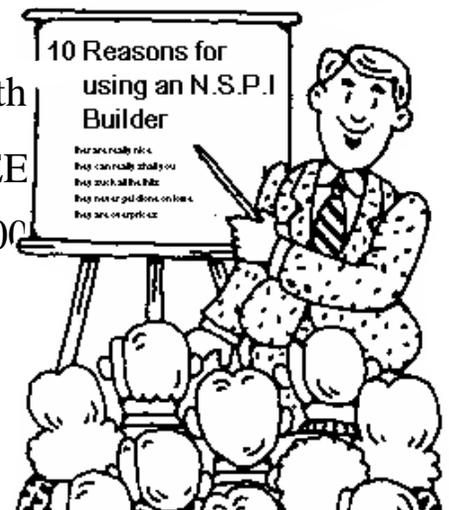
**LOCATION:** Quality Resorts  
875 Hotel Circle South

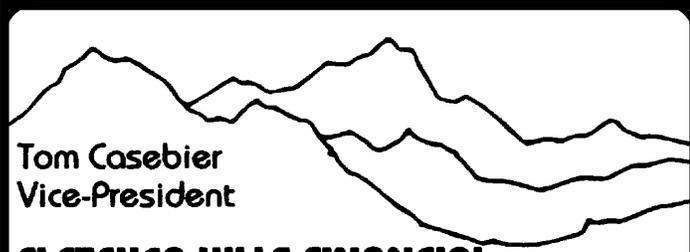
**COST:** NSPI members : FREE  
Non-members - \$10.00

**FOR RESERVATIONS CALL** 888-269-1589

**LAST DAY TO RESERVE** Friday, July 11

**INFORMATION TO LEAVE** Company Name





**Tom Casebier**  
Vice-President

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*(Continued from page 4)*

they will not follow through. What they view as kindness, you ultimately recognize as subterfuge.

Sometimes all that's needed is a straightforward request for honest information. Just point out that you want to hear the truth, which would help you understand the situation better. They are more likely to spill the beans if they know that criticism won't be viewed negatively. It's easier to get them to talk about what's "*not as good as it could be*", rather than what's "*bad*."

Smiling Back Stabbers are easier to deal with if you keep in mind that any dilemma that they feel anxious about is probably no big deal to you. Once the facts are on the table, you can both find a solution to the crisis that the Smiling Back Stabber would never face and you would never know about.

#### **The Staller**

Unlike wishy-washy types who eventually come to a decision, Stallers put off making any decision until the need to make the decision goes away.

Stallers are usually quite friendly and will leave you with the impression that they agreed with you. Stallers procrastinate because they know that any decision means good news for someone and bad news for someone else.

For all their hair-splitting, Stallers do want to be honest and helpful. Your first challenge is to find out exactly what's on their minds. Just be prepared to crack the code of a Staller's evasive choice of indirect language. If they say, "That sounds generally right," ask them what they mean by "generally." If they say, "I can see why you'd want to do that," ask them if there's a reason why they wouldn't do it." Clarify, clarify, and clarify.

After describing the problem comes decision time. Whenever possible, link your solution to quality, and the benefits it can bring. Stallers hold altruistic views and apply the same heroic standards to you.

#### **The Cry-Baby**

Babies cry for good reasons: Without a cry for help, any number of life-threatening maladies would befall them. Alas, some Cry-Babies haven't slept in a crib for decades. The disguised message behind their adult whining is that "someone" (namely YOU) should be doing something.

Your challenge is showing them constructive problem solving without pointing out the hypocrisy of their supposed helplessness.

The first step in dealing with Cry-Babies is to hear them out. That shouldn't be too hard to do. Acknowledge what was

just said by paraphrasing them. It will also help if you "paraphrase" the emotional content of what the Cry-Baby must be feeling like after describing such a horrible chain of events. Acknowledging doesn't mean apologizing. If you apologize, you may confirm the Cry-Baby's suspicion — that you're the one responsible.

Next ask very simple descriptive questions to make the Cry-Baby describe the problem more matter-of-factly. For example ask, "When does the problem occur?" or "At what times is it worse or better?" Don't expect this information gathering to work right off the bat. You may endure more complaints. Keep the question, "Can we get back to the question I was asking before?" in reserve.

It's also valuable to fill in the gap between their concerns over a problem and their perceived helplessness. Do so by getting the Cry-Baby personally involved in the fact-gathering process. Perhaps, the Cry-Baby can help you measure or evaluate. Like a baby crying in the crib, Cry-Babies are usually on to something. Supporting anything constructive that they can do will be worth the effort.

#### **The Wet Blanket**

A cousin to the Cry-Baby is the Wet Blanket. These pessimists don't believe that there's much they can do about a problem. So what on earth makes you think you've got the answer?

Logical skepticism isn't at work here. So have an alarm go off in your head anytime you hear such emphatically stated sentiments as: "There's no sense trying that ... There's nothing that can be done ... That will never work." To avoid drowning in this negativism, express your own optimistic, but realistic views on how to solve the problem at hand. The Wet Blankets' biggest blind spot is the inability to see other ways around roadblocks. Perhaps you've got an example from the past on exactly how you fixed this problem before. The path to succeeding with a Wet Blanket is similar to that of a Cry-Baby. The emphasis should be on moving these types from endless carping to solving problems. Ask the Wet Blanket to describe the problem at hand by specifically asking what, where, why and how questions. By all means, avoid an argument. Keep in mind that the Wet Blanket firmly believes that nothing you can do will work. Any debate will just put the Wet Blanket on the defensive. Concentrate instead on showing that there are some alternatives at least worth trying.

Take your time asking questions before offering a solution. Given the tedious nature of Wet Blankets, this really shouldn't be a problem. When you finally do get around to proposing a course of action, it's a good idea if you yourself bring up what could go wrong. This will put the Wet Blanket off-guard, particularly if you emphasize that some additional troubleshooting is commonly needed to make your plan work.

## News From SPEC Updated 6/26/2000

**SB 1524 (Contractor Bonds):** This legislation to allow a claim against a contractor's license bond to be perfected without showing that the contractor "willfully and deliberately" violated contractor law was killed Tuesday afternoon. You will recall that originally, the bill would have eliminated the license bond for all contractors, other than swimming pool contractors, requiring instead that all contractors, including pool contractors, maintain a million dollar comprehensive general liability insurance policy. SPEC effectively opposed this provision in the legislation and it was removed. However, the bill's sponsors stated that they would reinsert the insurance or-bond provision later in the legislative process. Based on this, SPEC opposed SB 1424 and it was laid to rest this week.

**AB 2113 (Mechanic's Liens):** AB 2113: This year's legislative battle over the elimination of mechanic's liens is now over. There is insufficient time remaining in the current legislative year to breathe life into this bill. SPEC has successfully fought Assemblyman Mike Honda's efforts to kill this contractor's "failure to pay" remedy provision for the past two years. However, the Law Revision Commission is continuing its hearings on the subject. Today the Commission is considering several recommended law changes for possible presentation to the Legislature next year. One provision is to abolish mechanic's liens outright. The Commission's staff has come to the conclusion that a change in the state's Constitution is not required for the Legislature to change this important law. Our special counsel, construction law specialist Sam Abdulaziz, and other constitutional experts, disagree. It is anticipated that the Commission will put off any decision as to its recommendations to the Legislature for several more months. Today's hearing took testimony, as will be the case at next month's hearing. We do predict that legislative changes of some sort to weaken a contractor's lien rights will be offered to the Legislature in 2001. This will result in a prolonged baffle by SPEC and other contractor interests. Should legislation be successful, you can expect a lengthy legal fight. Mechanic's lien law has been enshrined in the California Constitution for more than 100 years. We believe that the only way to change the law is to amend the Constitution.

**SB 2029 (CSLB Sunset):** The Assembly Consumer Protection Committee refused to pass this legislation which would extend the 'Sunset' date when the Contractors State License Board (CSLB) to 7/1/05. They will reconsider this again on July 5<sup>th</sup>. The reason the bill failed this week was the "reconstitution" of the CSLB in the measure. The governor's office is pushing this. The Assembly committee (and SPEC) members were uncomfortable with provisions in this revision. The bill would add two public members to the CSLB's membership. The Senate would appointment one. The Assembly would appoint the other.

A provision which SPEC vigorously opposes requires that the selection of a Registrar of Contractors be approved by the Dept. of Consumer Affairs (read: "Governor") The Registrar is now hired by the CSLB. We oppose making the Registrar's job political. Should SB 2029 not be signed into law, the functions of the' CSLB would be transferred to the Dept. of Consumer Affairs on 1/1/02. Most industry groups and organized labor prefer to retain the Board and Registrar rather than start over under Consumer Affairs. Today's consensus was to amend the bill to strike out all of the reorganization language except for the two new board appointees and extend the Sunset date until 1/1/04. (The appointees would be left to the Governor - not the Legislature.) This would allow two years time to study and consider any needed reorganization. SPEC will actively support this action.

**AB 2370 (Contractor Fingerprinting):** set for a Senate Business and Professions Committee hearing Monday, June 26th. The bill would allow checking all contractor applications (past and future) and catch anyone who may have lied about having had previous criminal convictions.

SPEC today took an ACTIVE OPPOSE position on the bill. The CSLB's legislative representative told us this morning that the chances of the Board's revoking an existing license based on an untruthful conviction statement would be nil. "The passage of time must be considered when evaluating rehabilitation," Some 225,000 individuals would have to be fingerprinted! The cost to the contractors would be \$60+ each. Many in the construction trades predict that those who have lied on their applications, or would lie in the future hoping to hide a previous criminal conviction, would move into the underground economy as an unlicensed contractor. Any real benefit to California consumers would be hard to find. Incidentally, the legislation would exempt any contractor who received less than 10% of annual contracting income from home improvement work. Such a contractor would self-certify, BUT would be required to annually file an independent CPA's audit with the CSLB stating that the 10% figure is accurate. The costs to comply with this requirement would be significant. SPEC filed a letter of opposition with the committee today and will testify Monday

**Overtime Regulation for Contractors:** The Industrial Welfare Commission's (IWC) Wage Board Committee which is considering on-site construction overtime rules distributed a proposed Order which would require overtime pay for construction employees when the eight-hour work day is exceeded. SPEC has been lobbying for an exemption for on-site construction. Prior to enactment of AB 60(1999) which reversed Governor Wilson's order relaxing overtime requirements, on-site construction was not covered by such IWC wage orders. For example, a swimming pool contractor could require gunite workers to continue working an hour past eight hours in a given day to complete a job. The contractor would not be required to pay time-and-a-half overtime wages, provided that the extra hour was reduced from a subsequent day's work and the 40-hour work week was not breached. Tuesday's proposed order was the first any interested party had been allowed to see the recommendation. No testimony or comment was allowed and only the Wage Board Committee members could speak. The Committee is expected to review objections to the order, such as that filed by SPEC, over the next several weeks. It can amend the proposed order or send it on to the IWC for further consideration and action. There remains a large legal question as to whether last year's AB 60 even applies to on-site construction, given that such work was not previously covered by the wage and hours law being considered today. SPEC will continue its efforts to exempt swimming pool construction from the strict eight-hour-day overtime wage order. (For a copy of the proposed wage order; please call 1-800-991-SPEC.)

**AB 2111 Fire Ants:** Southern California infestations of this extremely unpleasant pest have caused the state's Department of Food and Agriculture to employ heroic efforts to contain and destroy the insect. The invasion is of major concern to swimming pool contractors. If disturbed during a pool excavation, major problems for everyone around the project result. Jobs can be quickly shut down while major official hand wringing takes over. Treatment and disposal of contaminated dirt can become a major problem. SPEC has supported AB 2111 as well as other efforts by the state to address the fire ant problem. The bill is expected to be on the Governor's desk within two weeks. With his signature, the \$5 Million will become available immediately. Should the little beast become a California-wide pain, the costs to the pool and spa industry could be major.

## ARTISAN PAK

In 1681, on the outskirts of London, in a small coffeehouse known as Lloyd's, several men put up their capital to ensure the safe voyage of the vessels at sea. A promise to ensure was drafted, and the men signed their names under this promise.

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HDR Insurance Services, in cooperation with INSCORP and our agents around the state, is committed to offering our insureds the highest quality insurance program available. Customer focus will be our first priority as we continually strive to satisfy our policyholder's insurance-related needs.

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*Michelle Storey*  
*Nancy Froediger*

For further information, please contact Mike Galloway at Wateridge Agency 1-800-223-6756.

## Big Web Presence Announced

Pool & Spa Living Magazine, PoolSearch.com and Poolandspa.com target upscale consumers in a \$30 billion marketplace

FEASTERVILLE, Pa.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--June 5, 2000—PoolandSpaNetwork was announced today by Pool & Spa Living Magazine, PoolSearch.com and Poolandspa.com -- founders of the enterprise.

The Network will offer four advertising programs. They expect up to three million impressions per year. The annual costs of ad packages range from \$8,937 to \$43,875, depending upon the size and placement of the print and Web ads and the total number of impressions.

Pool & Spa Living Magazine -- the only national consumer newsstand magazine

PoolSearch.com -- the premier search, information and builder referral site

Poolandspa.com -- the world's largest online resource for pool and spa owners

Poolspaliving.com -- the home of Pool & Spa Living Magazine Online

Over the next year, it is estimated that more than

three million people will spend an average of 15-20 minutes each viewing a total of more than 50 million pages of information at PoolandSpaNetwork sites. Most of them will be college-educated, married homeowners with household incomes of approximately \$70,000 per year. Over 90 percent will either already own a swimming pool or spa or be planning to purchase one during the year.



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## Summer drowning season arrives

The drowning death of 2-year old Jared Romero is a tragic reminder that warm weather is upon us, according to child safety experts.

66% of all drownings occur between May and August, according to the National Safe Kids Campaign, an organization that advocates for child safety awareness.

"Most drownings occur at the outset of spring," said Inge Garrison, trauma center nurse at Presbyterian Hospital. Captain Rob Brisley of the Charlotte Fire Department said that there have been two drowning deaths in the city this year, both of them children.

The first death came in May when 15-year-old Brandon Henderson of Charlotte drowned at Mountain Island Lake. The second was last week, when Jared fell into a swimming pool at his northwest Charlotte home

### Five People Die In North Texas

At least five North Texans have drowned over the long Memorial Day weekend, including two children in backyard swimming pools.

One 3-year-old girl drowned in a family swimming pool in Garland. A 5-year-old boy died in a backyard pool in Colleyville.

The girl went under at about 5:30 p.m. Monday and was not seen for about 15 minutes.

Attempts to revive the girl were not successful and she was taken to Baylor Medical Center in Garland where she was pronounced dead.

Also on Memorial Day, a 60-year-old man drowned in Lake Ray Hubbard, another man's body was found in a rock quarry outside Red Oak. A 23-year-old man drowned near Lake Grapevine.

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### Fort Worth girl drowns in pool in nearby yard

June 08, 2000. A 5-year-old girl drowned in her neighbors' murky backyard swimming pool yesterday afternoon, apparently after

getting into the yard through a hole in the wooden privacy fence, authorities said.

The homeowners' teen-age son was home and helped search for the girl. But his parents were attending the funeral of two children who died in a Fort Worth fire last week.

Destinee Davis was pulled from the pool, which was heavily clouded with algae, by Police Chief Randy Sanders. After paramedics tried to revive her, she was taken to Cook Children's Medical Center, where she was pronounced dead at 3:41 p.m.

Destinee's mother, Barbara Davis, called police at 2:21 p.m., saying her daughter was missing from their home in the 400 block of Andenwood Drive, Sanders said. She thought the child was in the pool of a neighboring home in the 400 block of Deer Creek Road, he said.

### Two boys save life of child at pool

June 11, 2000, Two Uniontown youths are being credited with saving a 7-year-old Akron boy from drowning yesterday in a swimming pool.

Clifton Glass of Baldwin Road was listed in serious condition last night at Children's Hospital Medical Center of Akron several hours after being pulled from the bottom of the pool at the private Eastwood Park Swim Club near the city's northeast limits.

Casey Rife, 9, and neighborhood friend Joey Peters, 12, were swimming and relaxing in the heat when Casey saw the boy curled in a ball and not moving.

"When I saw him on the bottom, I was terrified," said Casey, who just finished third grade at Uniontown Elementary School. "I screamed to my cousin, Jason Gardiner, that I saw this boy on the bottom and he said to go down and check him out."

Casey and Joey went down together and brought the child to the surface and screamed for the lifeguard on duty and then for Gardiner.

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# Regional Crisis

This is easily the most boring thing I've had to write for this newsletter. Unfortunately it is also important to all members of NSPI in Region XI. By the way, that's us.

We all supposed to know that NSPI is a national organization. There is a national headquarters with all the attendant staff and goodies needed to provide us with benefits and programs. What may make our minds murky is the fact that we also belong to a regional organization. It would seem logical that our regional organization would provide us with benefits and programs that are tailored to our region.

Well our region has an Executive Committee that meets regularly. Members of that committee, like our chapter board of directors, are unpaid volunteers. Our region also has a paid administrator.

Early this year, the paid regional administrator submitted a budget for our region. Our region was to get money through several devices. First, a portion of the dues that each of us pays to national comes back to the chapter. All of the chapters in our region elected to give a portion of those funds to our region. Second, HDR Insurance contributes money to our region based upon a formula. The contribution is a function of the amount of premium that is paid to HDR. The contribution is also a function of the losses that HDR had to pay out against our policies. There are other ways to obtain money for our region but these two are the most significant.

The past few years have been pretty good for our region. Most of us use HDR insurance. In fact, HDR insurance has been our best source of new members. So, dues are flowing to national. The number of dollars that was our share of those dues grew. Naturally, our region's dollars from dues grew. HDR's contribution also grew.

The snake-in-the-skimmer showed up this year. Our members are not immune to litigation. Business went up. Claims and lawsuits went up. Settlements, judgements and other valid claims were paid out. HDR's losses skyrocketed.

At a meeting in March, HDR informed those in attendance that our region would not receive any more royalty payments for the remainder of the calendar year, due to loss control ratios exceeding the contractual agreement.

This put our region in a dire financial situation. Region-hosted dinners or lunches at Council meetings were halted.

## SCP Gets Superior

NORWALK, CT-(BUSINESS WIRE)--June 19, 2000--Arch Chemicals, Inc. announced that it has signed an agreement to sell the assets of its subsidiary, Superior Pool Products, Inc., a distributor of swimming pool equipment, parts and supplies to SCP Pool Corporation, based in Covington, LA. The sale is subject to certain conditions, including government regulatory approvals.

The Superior distribution network encompasses 19 service centers in California, Arizona and Nevada with 1999 sales exceeding \$80 million

Funding for chapter programs was eliminated. Donations to SPEC and the Muto Foundation got the old axe. Even with these cuts, our region looked like it was headed for bankruptcy.

Our region did not notify very many people about this slight problem. They felt that they needed time to assess the long-term impact. Unfortunately, that's not the way it works. The press (Pool and Spa News) broke the story.

Members of NSPI were outraged to find out about this situation via the news media. (It's not the crime. It's the cover-up.) Even the chairman of our region's insurance committee was in the dark until he read the article in Pool and Spa News.

So what's going on. Well a few people are meeting with HDR in the hope that the losses could be recalculated. There will be discussions on how we can cut our losses. The simple fact is that our region will be broke this summer.

San Diego NSPI's heroic president, Phil Grider, sent an acerbic e-mail. "The San Diego Chapter and its Board are disappointed in the way this situation is being handled. Our specific concern is our region's inability to share information about the current financial problems with our members. We are trying to focus our attention on member recruitment, per our region's request. It is extremely difficult to retain and recruit members when they are informed of Region's problems via Pool and Spa News." Phil went on and said that many of us members did not even understand the benefits of having a regional organization. He said that we could address claims if we knew about them.

In the response that he received from Ty Pearce said "the mission of our region has always been 'to assist the Chapter's to achieve their mission'" (You show me yours and I'll show you mine).

The response also said, "the region, under the direction of Bud Weisbrod, put together an insurance program for the benefit of the Chapters." It sounds like, to date, the region has been amply compensated. But, our region's assumptions about the perpetuity of this very program is at the heart of the problem. Confused? So am I! Bored? Same here! What next? Come to the July meeting. We'll give you the latest and suggest some alternatives.

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