

Pools move indoors for year-round exercise and comfort

BY TOM TRACEY
Special to the Record-Eagle

Summer fun needn't end with winter snow. Even now, some area residents continue to enjoy swimming in a pool — the one inside their home.

Why do they go that extra lap to not only have a pool, but an indoor pool?

"Due to the fact they can exercise and swim year-round," said Larry Stephenson, owner of Larry's Pool and Spa in Traverse City. "More people are buying indoor pools for therapeutic, recreational and health issues."

"Convenience," said Pat Beckman, owner of Northern Paradise Billiards and Spa (soon-to-be Northern Paradise Bubble Spa). "Many of my customers were into swimming in their collegiate years. Now they don't have to drive to a pool — they can exercise whenever it fits into their schedules."

Types

Indoor pools are available in two distinct versions; a full-size lap pool, or a swim-in-place spa (also called a swim spa).

Both Stephenson and Beckman install full-size lap pools inside homes. The dimensions of a full-size

pool start at about 10- by-40- feet and up. Primarily used for swimming laps and aerobic exercising, full-size lap pools are also ideal for recreational use, such as team water sports.

"Just about any game you can think of can be done in a lap pool; volleyball to tennis to golf to basketball, they've got it all," said Stephenson.

Along with the full-size lap pool itself, provisions are necessary for the housing (a room addition, for example), ventilation, dehumidification and ongoing maintenance of the pool.

Swim spas, on the other hand, work by providing current via adjustable swim jets, allowing users to literally "swim in place." Swimming in place, exercising and hydrotherapy can all be undertaken in the heated, filtered swim spa.

Previously used in rehabilitation applications, swim spas are now finding their way into homes. According to Stephenson and Beckman, between 80 and 90 percent of swim spas are in residential use.

Choosing an indoor pool

Lap pool or swim spa: Which is the way to go?

A traditional full-size lap pool allows diving and "full court" recreational activi-

ties, such as water tennis, volleyball, etc. A lap pool also accommodates a number of occupants (depending on size), as well as a roomy surrounding deck area for entertaining guests.

Installation starts at about \$15,000.

Lack the space or money for a full size lap pool? Swim spas can be had for as little as 14 feet in length; some models even combine a pool and hot tub. Cleaning, heating, dehumidifying and maintenance costs are proportionately lower.

Installation starts at about \$3,000.

Who buys indoor pools?

Locally, indoor pool buyers don't necessarily fit the category of the young and famous lounging idly pool-side with umbrella drinks in their hand.

"Mostly, my customers are from 45 to 60 years old, and they use their pool for exercise," said Beckman.

Seeking the convenience and consistency of in-home exercise, these active, mature owners are willing to do what it takes to house and maintain an indoor pool.

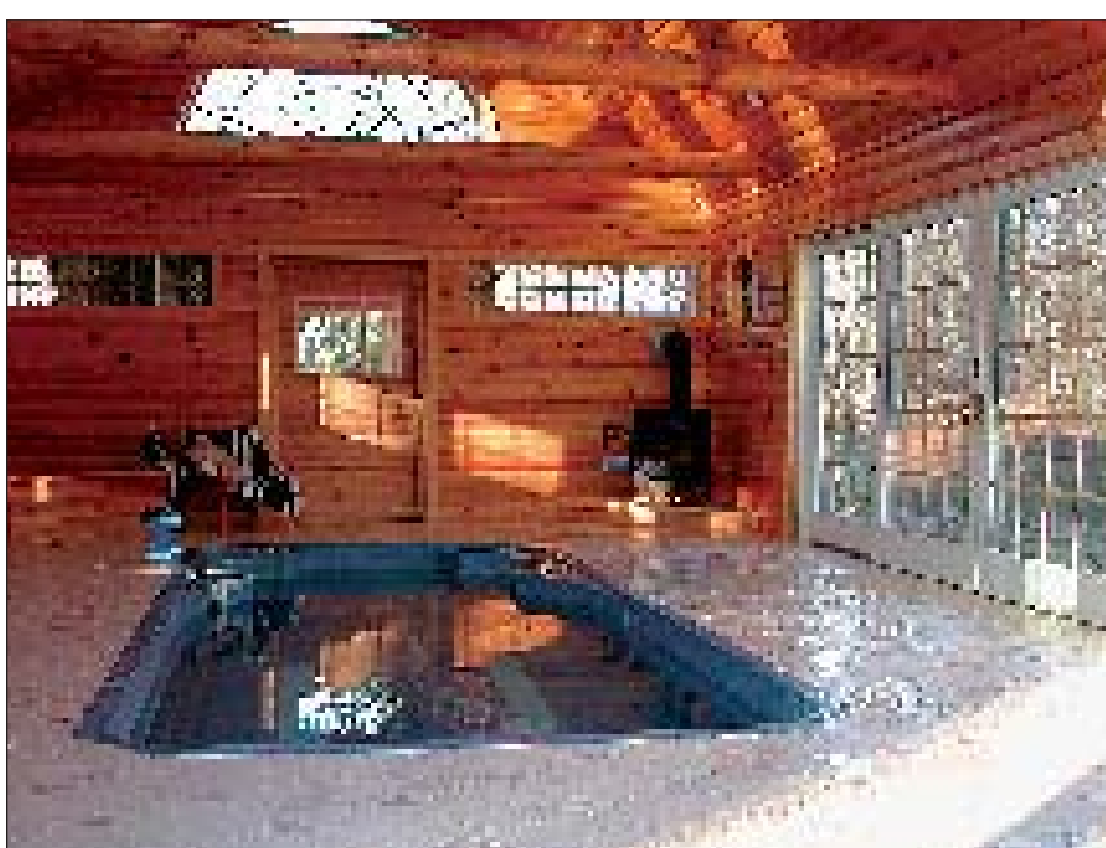
One such person is Elizabeth Munro of Northport. Her pool is 75 feet long and 8 feet wide (half the size of an Olympic long course pool), and she had it installed for a variety of reasons. The biggest?

"Because I love swimming," said Munro. "It's my first love. I have been a swimmer my entire life, and later became a competitive swimmer. The social and health activity of it is wonderful, and you can do it until the day you die."

Munro had tried using public pools before, but ran into some roadblocks.

"To swim competitively, you really have to swim in an environment that has less chlorine and less warmth than a public pool, due to the elevated body temperature produced when swimming for exercise," she said. "Also, they just don't have room for the kind of swimming I want to do."

Munro had thought about



Swim-in-place pools like the Hydropool line at Traverse City's Northern Paradise Billiards and Spa are becoming more popular for exercise.

sharing her love of swimming with the younger generation by giving lessons at her home, but the required insurance was prohibitive.

"If I had to say there was a con to owning an indoor pool, that would be it," said Munro.

As for cost, the use of geothermal energy "really helps keep the heating costs down," she said.

"Our home is going to be the center of our life now, and I just love my pool," said Munro.

Health benefits

Just about any injury except broken skin can benefit from indoor pools, according to the Munson Community Health Center Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Department in Traverse City.

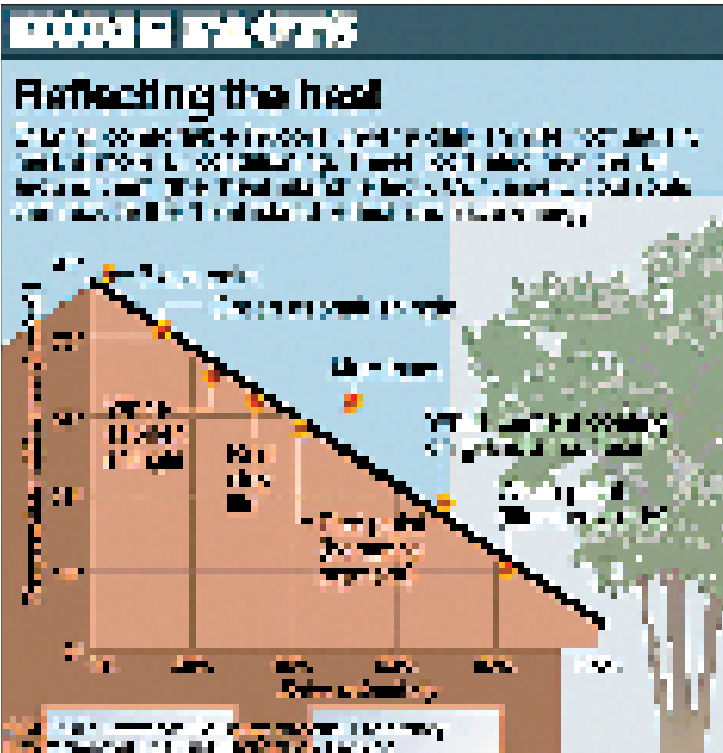
Indoor lap pools are traditionally used for general aerobic exercise and muscle conditioning. Therapeutic pools — swim-in-place style spas heated to 84 to 88 degrees — are used for specific physical therapy.

Benefits of using a thera-

peutic pool include reduced pain, swelling and compression at the site of the injury. Medically supervised use of the pool also aids in the recovery of cardiovascular, muscular and movement disorders.

Whether a lap pool or swim spa is used, measurable physical results can be achieved from immersing in the warmth, buoyancy and constant resistance of a heated pool.

Tom Tracey is a local freelance writer.



Access the money in your home with a TBA Home Equity Line of Credit.

3.19% Annual Percentage Rate

With an intro rate as low as **3.19%** for the first 6 months there is no time like the present to get started on your savings.

Call or stop in for additional details.

TBA CREDIT UNION
Large enough to serve you, small enough to care.

537 Bay Street
3033 Cedar Valley Drive
746 Munson Avenue
924 East 8th Street

946-7090

NCUA LENDER

Wool Area Rugs and Runners

Home Cottage

Interior Decorating

STEWART-ZACKS
118 East Front
Downtown, T.C.
273-735489-HI

BUSTER'S BLIND FACTORY

FREE Measure, Install, 5 Year Service

SHOP AT HOME

FACTORY OUTLET PRICES

WE MAKE

- Wood Blinds
- Pleated Cellular Blinds
- Verticals

SERVING NORTHERN MICHIGAN
Traverse City • Suttons Bay
935-4336 • 1-888-286-6185 • 271-4740

The Art of Furnishing Your Home

BETSIE BAY FURNITURE

Well worth the drive.

Over 10,000 square feet of uniquely displayed furnishings and accessories. Interior design services available. Closed Wednesdays.

311 Main Street, Frankfort, MI 49635 • (231) 352-4202 • (800) 652-4202

Take a virtual tour at www.betsiebayfurniture.com

öKf 'flng'vq'cum{ qw' 'c's wguqpp(00-

Y jcv'kh"K" c o dw{kpi'c'pgy'ect*"K' y km"pggf"vq'mpqy'vjku' uqogfc{+A'Cpf'y jcv'kh"K'hkpf'v y q'ectu'v jcv'ctg'gzcevn{ cknmg.'gzegr'v'ppg' i gvu'42' o kngu' rgt' i cmmq'cpf'v jg'qv jgt' i gvu'62' o kngu' rgt' i cmmq.'dw'equvu' o qtgA""Qpg'ect'equvu' o qtg'v jg' fc{ {qw'dw{ "kv.'dw'v jg'qv jgt'equvu' o qtg'gxtg{ "vk o g" {qw'ftkxg'kv" Y jke j'ppg'uj qwnf"K" dw{A"K"v jkpm"K" mpqy" y jcv'o { 'lymi' y qwnf'uc{0

Q0M0.'v jgp' jgtgu'v jg'tecn' swguqpp0' y j { "fq'rgqrng'dw{ "v jg'hwtpeeg'v jcv'equvu'ngu'u'v jg'fc{ "v jg'g' dw{ "kv.'dw'equvu' c"nq" o qtg'vq'qrtevg'gxtg{ "vk o g'kv'u' jgcvkpi'v jgt' j qwugA' Fqgupiv'v jg'öect'twng-z'cr rn{ " jgtg.'vqqa'Qxgt'hkhvggp" {gctu.'kupiv'v jg'qv jgt'hwtpeeg'tgcm{ "c'dgwgt'fgcna

0 ¶ Úz äfi ¶ - ¶ b Úä z Úä%00¶ 2

GEOFURNACE
HEATING & COOLING, LLC

äëëä äb > äë ¶ ä ¶ i äëä ä äÜöz Úz äfi äëä 3' èj ¶pppää ö ö È z ¶%0¶ Qz Èg ¶ -

24/7 SERVICE GUARANTEE