

Viking Pools (Calif.): Building a whale of a pool

WHEN IT COMES to unique installations, you have to include Viking Pools, Williams, Calif.

Take the 8-foot x 40-foot lap pool the company installed on the third floor gallery/living quarters for noted artist Wyland, says Todd Stahl, Viking vice president.

Wyland is best known for the more than five dozen nearly life-size whale murals he's painted on buildings across the world, including his Laguna Beach gallery. Although equally as visually impressive, Stahl says the pool installation was not difficult.

"It takes a lot anymore (to be considered unusual)," Stahl says. "Floating on a lake is no big deal, but helicopters still are exciting."

For the most part, Viking only receives two to three requests each year that could be called unusual. For example, the company produced a specially engineered pool for an Alaskan family to install in their basement.

Viking takes special pools on a case-by-case basis for manufacturing and installation and can provide blueprints for installing pools in tricky settings.

"You always have the ones where you walk out (on the site) and you know it'll be an award-winning pool," Stahl says. "The setting's just perfect."

"You ask yourself 'How on the earth will you install a pool' ... then figure out a way — those are the neat ones."

out, it always turns out to be easier than you thought. And when one customer wanted a pool raised 14 feet to match the elevation of his new home, Erdelac figured out how.

Unfortunately, the cost turned out to be prohibitive.

Hawaiian Pools provides engineering assistance as necessary. This includes how to construct supports for the fiberglass pool or the best ways to float, tow, crane or helicopter it.

Erdelac places great faith in his fellow pool builders to provide insight on difficult projects. He also keeps a file on interesting pool projects.

Viking Pools of California installed a pool for mural painter Wyland on the third floor of his gallery.

