

**The original documents are located in Box 24, folder “Swimming Pool at White House” of the Loen and Leppert Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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SUBJECT -- SWIMMING POOL AT WHITE HOUSE

Meet with following Congressman at earliest convenience and brief them on the building of the White House Swimming Pool

- 1 - Chairman Jack Brooks Government Operations  
General Counsel - William M. Jones

X 2:00 p.m. - Tuesday, May 20, 1975 2449 Rayburn (Sharon Matts -AA  
x 6565

2 - Cong. Frank Horton Ranking Minority Member  
Minority Counsel - Phil Carlson

Ruby Moy will call Monday after Cong. returns to town x 4916

X 11:30 a.m. - Tuesday, May 20, 1975 2229 Rayburn

3 - Chairman James A. Haley Interior and Insular Affairs  
Staff Director - Charles Conklin

X Drop by anytime to see the Congressman - 1236 Longworth

4 - Cong. Joe Skubitz Ranking Minority Member  
Counsel - Mike Marden

Garnette Jones will call Monday and let us know. He has busy schedule  
when he returns sometime Monday afternoon.

Joe Bentlett  
Bar. Wethers

## White House Swimming Pool

1. Announced that preliminary work started May 14 - workmen there May 15. to July 1.
2. Size of Pool: 22' wide x 54.83' long / Place: South lawn off west wing
3. Cost: \$52,417 to construct  
$$\begin{array}{r} \$52,417 \\ - 9,000 \\ \hline \$43,417 \end{array}$$
 Landscaping  
$$\begin{array}{r} \$43,417 \\ + 7,000 \\ \hline \$60,417 \end{array}$$
 TOTAL
4. Funding: Private donations - suggestion put by the President  
NO FEDERAL FUNDS USED IN ANY FORM.
5. WH swimming pool Com. set up to supervise receipt & collection of public donations.  
Chair - A. J. Schorn, Hayward, Calif  
Vice Chair. U.S. Olympic Swimmers  
Treas. Wm. J. Schuring, Wash., D.C.  
Chair. Financial General Bankers



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Pool

length 54' 10"

width 22'

depth 3-5-9'

perimeter 162'

gallon capacity 45,623

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[May 1975?])

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May 14, 1975

SWIMMING POOL

ANNOUNCEMENT

Preliminary work has started on the construction of a White House swimming pool. The pool, which will be slightly larger than the one the Fords had at their home in Alexandria, will be built on the South Lawn in an area just south of the West Wing. The contractor will be National Construction Co., Inc., of Washington, the same contractor that built the President's pool on Crown View Drive. The cost is estimated at \$52,417 for construction, with an additional \$9,000 for landscaping.

The funds will be raised through private donations and the President has laid down very strict guidelines for these donations--the most important of which is that no Federal funds will be used in any form.

Here are the guidelines for donations:

1. No Federal funds will be expended in connection with the project.
2. The maximum donation permitted is \$1,000 for any one person.
3. Donations of equipment or services will be limited to \$1,000 in value (wholesale cost).
4. No donations for any corporation or union will be accepted.
5. Contributions in excess of those required to complete the project will go to other National Park Foundation projects.

A Committee has been established to supervise receipt and collection of public donations. The Chairman is A. J. Sehorn of Hayward, California, who is vice chairman of the U. S. Olympic Swimming Committee. The treasurer is William J. Schuiling, <sup>Book</sup> Chairman of Financial General Shareholders, Inc. of Washington, D. C.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Q: Can you give some exact costs and specifications on the pool?

A: The pool will be 22 feet wide by 54.83 feet long. Here is a breakdown on specific cost:

Excavation	\$ 2,500.00
Pool (22 x 54.83')	24,250.00
Deck	8,000.00
Filter Vault	2,500.00
Metal Door (Situation Room)	1,800.00
Steps & Retaining Wall (To Situation Room)	3,000.00
Electric (Allowance)	3,500.00
Water (Allowance)	1,625.00
Filter & Drain Plumbing (Allowance)	1,242.00
Temporary Fence (Allowance)	2,500.00
Heater (54 KW)	<u>1,500.00</u>
	\$52,417.00

Q: What about the landscaping?

A: It will cost not more than \$9,000. It will be done under a separate contract. The landscaping plan has taken into consideration security requirements imposed by the Secret Service.

Q: When will actual construction start?

A: Some equipment is being moved in today. I think they will be putting up some construction fences shortly. The contract calls for work to begin on or about May 15 and be concluded by July 1--so that is a minimum of 30 days and a maximum of 45 days.

Q: Why didn't we know about it until the bulldozers showed up on the South Lawn?

A: As you know, this project has been under consideration almost from the day the President came into office. It was thoroughly considered and widely discussed last fall.

The project was laid aside for awhile, but most of the preliminary work on plans and specifications, the legal work with the National Park Foundation and plans for the collection of funds had been completed during the initial period of consideration. When it was decided to go ahead with the project about a week ago, it required very little time to get work started. We are announcing it today--which is as early as we could get all of the details together to give to you.

Q: Was there bidding on this project?

A: There is no requirement that the bidding processes be utilized in a project of this type. There are no Federal funds. There is no Federal agency involved in the construction. The National Construction Co., Inc. (Gordon Rudd, President) is a reputable firm which has done business for a number of years in the Washington area. And, as I say, this is the same builder that built the President's pool.

Q: What about cost overruns?

A: The contract specifies the total cost of the pool and lays out what each item will cost. Should the White House ask for changes and issue a change order, the cost of the pool would go up accordingly. However, I do not anticipate any requests for changes during this construction period.

FUND RAISING PROCEDURES

Q: What is the National Park Foundation?

A: As I have said, it is a charitable, non-profit corporation established by public law 90-209 to accept and administer gifts in connection with the activities and services of the National Park Service. As I understand it, the Foundation's activities in the most recent past have been limited mainly to acquiring land and holding it until it can be purchased and used as park land by the National Park Service.

Q: Why did they decide to take on this project?

A: They did it by resolution of their board. As you know, the White House grounds are administered by the National Park Service and I presume the National Park Foundation thought this would be a worthy project.

Q: Are contributions tax exempt?

A: There is a letter dated December 31, 1970, from the Internal Revenue Service to the Foundation which says that contributions are, to the extent allowed by law, can be used as tax deductions for individuals. (The letter is three pages long and quite detailed. I would suggest an answer from the Foundation's legal office could be a lot more specific.)

Q: What is the committee that you say is set up to collect funds?

A: It is called the White House Swimming Pool Committee. When this matter was first under discussion here, a group of people interested in the swimming pool formed a Committee to raise funds for this project. The Committee totaled about a dozen people and consisted mostly of people who had some ties to amateur swimming teams--Olympic Swimming Committee members, Olympic coaches, the Swimming Hall of Fame, college swimming coaches, and some people from the Amateur Athletic Union. I don't have all of the names, since this was a non-White House group--but I will try to get them for you.

When the project was put aside at the White House, the Committee was not especially active in collecting funds. However, the interest in the project remained. And, when it was decided to pursue the swimming pool again, the Committee was there and ready to go.

Q: Who is A. J. Sehorn?

A: Mr. Sehorn is associated with the CarboLine Marine Corporation, which is a firm in Hayward, California. It is a subsidiary of CarboLine Corporation of St. Louise. Mr. Sehorn is 57 and is widely known in Olympic circles for his 30 years of work with the U. S. Olympic Committee. He has served as Financial Chairman for the states of Oregon and California. He has been National Olympic Swimming Committee Chairman. A Delegate to the Olympic Games, manager of the U. S. Olympic Swimming team at the Tokoyo games in 1964. He has been active with the Amateur Athletic Union as National Swimming Chairman and AAU President for Oregon.

CarboLine Corporation is a worldwide company which manufacturers all types of marine and industrial paints and some kinds of rough coatings and floor coatings. They have offices in Australia, Japan, and Hawaii and manufacturing plants all over the U. S. including Ohio and Louisiana.

Q: Who is Schuiling?

A: He is a Washington businessman, who is originally from Grand Rapids and was a friend and classmate of the President's at South High. I understand the Financial General Shareholders, Inc. firm is the holding company for the First National Bank of Washington.

Q: How much money has been collected so far?

A: Very little. Some has been collected by various committees that were formed last fall. Some came to the White House in the mail. All that came to the White House amounts to less than \$1,000. None of it has been officially accepted and turned over to the National Park Foundation.

(FYI: Stiles says cash and pledges so far amount to about one-third of the total cost. The White House Swimming Pool Committee--the Olympic group--has checks for about \$5,000. The Swimming Pool Institute has about \$4,000. The White House has less than \$1,000.)

MISCELLANEOUS

Q: Who may use the pool?

A: The Foundation's resolution uses the words "The President, his family and guests..."

Q: Does that mean the White House staff or newsmen or welfare kids?

A: We will have to cross that bridge when we get to it. But it does say "guests."

Q: Has the Fine Arts Commission approved this?

A: Yes.

Q: Is there provision for expansion of the facilities, such as a cover?

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A: 20' x 40'.

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A: From the inception of the idea, the National Swimming Pool Institute, a Washington-based association of manufacturers of pool products, has been interested in the idea. They have expressed an interest in donating some money from their members and some equipment. However, the details have not been worked out.

## JUSTIFICATION

Q: How can you justify building a swimming pool with the economy in the state that it is?

A: This is, as you can see, not an elaborate swimming facility. It is not much larger--nor any more plush--than the pools owned by many families in the Washington area and in many areas all over the country.

The President is a swimming enthusiast. He obviously enjoys it. I think Dr. Lukash has spoken very explicitly about the benefits of swimming to the President's health. We spend a lot of money for the protection of the President physically; there seems to be obvious justification to spend money for the President's health.

This is not a pool for President Ford. It is a pool for the White House. It can be used by this President and Presidents for years to come.

And, finally; although the President is very pleased that a swimming pool will be built, this was a project that was begun by a group of people who have an interest in swimming and the benefits derived from it. The funds are being raised outside the White House and purely on a public contribution basis.

May 16, 1975

SWIMMING POOL

Q: The NEW YORK TIMES says the President's swimming pool will be built with tax free funds channeled through the National Park Foundation. Is that true, and, if so, why?

A: Yes, it is true. As you know, the White House and the White House grounds are actually under control of the National Park Service. The Park Service has been closely involved in all discussions and the planning of the White House pool since the idea was conceived last summer. The National Park Foundation, logically, was the proper organization to receive donations for the pool.

Q: Why didn't you tell us earlier? Why all the secrecy about this whole thing?

A: There was no secret. The agreement with the National Park Foundation was just completed last night--at 6 p.m. <sup>(MAY 15)</sup> to be exact. I believe the idea of working with the Foundation in this manner ~~was~~ as a possible way to handle contributions was reported last fall when the pool proposition was fully discussed in the press. However, there were certain details that had to be worked out and we didn't want to make an announcement until the agreements were finalized. Also, the Foundation has a Board of Directors which they wanted to notify prior to any press announcement. So, we are announcing it today--which is as early as we conceivably could.

Q: Why didn't you just have the contributions come to the National Park Service?

A: We could have. The Park Service donations, as I understand it, would have the same tax free status. However, the Foundation seemed the logical recipient since its purpose basically is to acquire property for use by the Park Service. It has been established to receive donations.

Also, by utilizing the National Park Foundation we can be absolutely certain that no appropriated funds are used for construction. (Statement attached.)

Q: What is the National Park Foundation?

A: The National Park Foundation has agreed to assist in the project by accepting public donations to the extent necessary to complete construction of the pool. The National Park Foundation is a charitable, non-profit corporation established by law to accept and administer gifts in connection with the activities and services of the National Park Service. By a resolution of its Board of Trustees, the Foundation will accept the donations for a swimming pool on the White House grounds which will be used by the President, his family and guests. The Foundation will make a full and public accounting of the use of all funds received for the project.

As I understand it, the Foundation's activities in the most recent past have been limited mainly to acquiring land and holding it until it can be purchased and used as park land by the National Park Service.

Q: Why did they decide to take on this project?

A: They did it by resolution of their board. As you know, the White House grounds are administered by the National Park Service and I presume the National Park Foundation thought this would be a worthy project.

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Q: The TIMES says this tax exempt business will cost the government a quarter of the \$61,000 cost of the pool. Is that true?

A: ~~Correct~~<sup>not</sup>, I have calculated the figure to be certain the TIMES is correct. However, it is probably true that if donors paid taxes on this money, it would have meant some additional tax money for the treasury. But I believe it is

quite common for contributions of this type to be received by organizations which enjoy a tax exempt status.

Q: What about Jack Stiles? Is he still on the payroll?

A: He is a consultant at the rate of \$125 per day.

Q: How often does he work and what does he do?

A: I have not checked his work record with the Personnel Office. (FYI: He works every day.) He works on various assignments given him by the President. Since I have not talked with Jack lately, I don't know exactly what he is working on now.

Q: Is this pool business what he is paid \$125 per day to do?

A: I don't really think so. He is an old friend of the President's as you know. I know Jack is concerned about having a healthy President and he knows that having a swimming pool is one way to insure the President's continued good health. I think Jack has been interested in this pool business since the time when President Ford was Vice President. But I wouldn't characterize this as the reason Jack Stiles is on the payroll.

# Gifts to Ford's Swimming Pool Tax Free

By WALLACE TURNER

*Special to The New York Times*

SAN FRANCISCO, May 15.—President Ford's swimming pool on the White House grounds will be built with tax-free contributions channeled through the National Parks Foundation.

This will have the effect of tapping the Federal Treasury for more than a quarter of the cost, which is estimated at \$81,000, because people giving the money will not be taxed on it, as they might be if the funds were not passed through the tax-exempt foundation.

If the President were to build his pool with Federal tax funds directly, the plan and the project would be subject to Congressional review, either in the appropriation process or in a subsequent review of how uncommitted funds had been spent.

The money would probably come from the National Parks Service budget, and the project would need to be carried out with competitive bids asked on plans that had been approved by various levels of the Federal bureaucracy.

Building the pool with gifts would save all this time and

financing," said Mr. Markert, and was told that Mr. Ford But because of architectural was worried about the public's consideration. Secret Service reaction to such spending, even security demands and other from donated funds, at a time matters the costs ran to more when he was urging his WIN than \$100,000. program to combat inflation. A. J. Sehorn, executive in Hayward, Calif., of an anticorrosive paint company, said in plan for the pool.

a telephone interview that a group he had organized among coaches and members of the Ford in the hospital, I asked, "Can't we build you a pool at \$81,000, because people of the United States Olympic like the one in the back yard giving the money will not be swimming committee started at your place in Alexandria?" He said, "Fine" and I told the Park Service we're not going when Mr. Ford became alarmed to build an edifice. We even at the cost of the project. talked about not having a heating system.

"I got a nice letter from the President which said can get a solar heater for it." Thanks, but put it on the back burner," Mr. Sehorn said. His used by the White House press group has a bank account with office Tuesday as the principal about \$300 in it, he said, and collector of donations, said yes he understands that a group terday that he was drawn into in Michigan has about \$4,000, the plan last winter while at

The latter group probably a Washington meeting of the Friends of President Ford's A.A.U. swimming committee of Grand Rapids, Mich., Mr. and the United States Olympic Stiles said. That group, together with the swimming pool manufacturers and Mr. Sehorn's group, will raise the

"We Talked It Over" money, the Presidential assistant said. "I invited about 10 or 15 people over to the White House annex, and we talked it over

The pool will be built, Mr. Markert said, by the National Ney," he said.

Some items in this folder were not digitized because it contains copyrighted materials. Please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library for access to these materials.

Habets - spoke yesterday phone 5-19-75, 9:30 am.  
Stated he didn't care about the jail.  
But objected to them, advised after  
the fact that construction began.  
Also wanted to know how much the  
Court robes being paid - \$40,000.  
Remarked that jail should be contracted  
so next time we pick greenhouse out  
of it.



May 14, 1975

SWIMMING POOL

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A: They did it by resolution of their board. As you know, the White House grounds are administered by the National Park Service and I presume the National Park Foundation thought this would be a worthy project.

Q: Are contributions tax exempt?

A: There is a letter dated December 31, 1970, from the Internal Revenue Service to the Foundation which says that contributions are, to the extent allowed by law, can be used as tax deductions for individuals. (The letter is three pages long and quite detailed. I would suggest an answer from the Foundation's legal office could be a lot more specific.)

Q: The TIMES says this tax exempt business will cost the government a quarter of the \$61,000 cost of the pool. Is that true?

A: ~~not~~, I have <sup>not</sup> calculated the figure to be certain the TIMES is correct. However, it is probably true that if donors paid taxes on this money, it would have meant some additional tax money for the treasury. But I believe it is

quite common for contributions of this type to be received by organizations which enjoy a tax exempt status.

Q: What about Jack Stiles? Is he still on the payroll?

A: He is a consultant at the rate of \$125 per day.

Q: How often does he work and what does he do?

A: I have not checked his work record with the Personnel Office. (FYI: He works every day.) He works on various assignments given him by the President. Since I have not talked with Jack lately, I don't know exactly what he is working on now.

Q: Is this pool business what he is paid \$125 per day to do?

A: I don't really think so. He is an old friend of the President's as you know. I know Jack is concerned about having a healthy President and he knows that having a swimming pool is one way to insure the President's continued good health. I think Jack has been interested in this pool business since the time when President Ford was Vice President. But I wouldn't characterize this as the reason Jack Stiles is on the payroll.

# Gifts to Ford's Swimming Pool Tax Free

By WALLACE TURNER  
Special to The New York Times

SAN FRANCISCO, May 15—President Ford's swimming pool on the White House grounds will be built with tax-free contributions channeled through the National Parks Foundation.

This will have the effect of bypassing the Federal Treasury group for more than a quarter of the cost, which is estimated at \$51,000, because people of the United States Olympic Committee gave the money, will not be taxed on it, as they might if the funds were not passed through the tax-exempt foundation.

If the President were to build his pool with Federal tax funds directly, the plan and the project would be subject to Congressional review, either in the appropriation process or in a subsequent review of how uncommitted funds had been spent.

The money would probably come from the National Parks Service budget, and the project would need to be carried out with competitive bids asked on plans that had been approved by various levels of the Federal bureaucracy.

Building the pool with gifts would save all this time and trouble.

### Staff Aide Interviewed

Three separate groups will solicit the gifts and pass the money along to William Schuiling, a Washington banker who was a high school classmate of President Ford's.

Mr. Schuiling is treasurer of

financing," said Mr. Markert, and was told that Mr. Ford but because of architectural was worried about the public's consideration. Secret Service reaction to such spending, even security demands and other from donated funds, at a time matters the costs ran to more than \$100,000. program to combat inflation.

A. J. Sehorn, executive in Hayward, Calif., of an anticorrosive paint company, said in plan for the pool.

A telephone interview that a He said, "One night as we stepping the Federal Treasury group he had organized among coaches and members of the Ford in the hospital, I asked, for more than a quarter of the cost, which is estimated Amateur Athletic Union and 'Can't we build you a pool at \$51,000, be because people of the United States Olympic like the one in the back yard giving the money will not be swimming committee started at your place in Alexandria?' taxed on it, as they might raising money last fall. However, the effort was called off. He said, 'Fine' and I told the be if the funds were not passed through the tax-exempt foundation.

"I got a nice letter from the President which said can get a solar heater for it." Thanks, but put it on the back burner," Mr. Sehorn said. His used by the White House press group has a bank account with office Tuesday as the principal about \$300 in it, he said, and collector of donations, said yes he understands that a group terday that he was drawn into in Michigan has about \$4,000. the plan last winter while at

The latter group probably a Washington meeting of the Friends of President Ford's A.A.U. swimming committee of Grand Rapids, Mich., Mr. and the United States Olympic Stiles said. That group, together with the swimming pool manufacturers and Mr. Sehorn's group, will raise the money, the Presidential assistant said.

The pool will be built, Mr. Markert said, by the National Construction Company of Alexandria, Va., which built the facility for the President, he pool Mr. Ford used when he lived there. That pool was 25 by 40 feet, and Mr. Ford customarily swam 20 laps each morning and night.

### Pool to Be Heated

The White House pool will emphasized that donors should

### 'We Talked It Over'

"I invited about 10 or 15 people over to the White House annex, and we talked it over

and decided to raise the money," he said. The plan was for an exercise room, sauna bath and exercise equipment.

That was the plan that was abandoned as too costly. Now, the problem is to finance the less expensive pool. Mr. Sehorn

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON.

May 23, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: WILLIAM CASSELMAN

THRU: MAX FRIEDERSDORF  
VERN LOEN

FROM: CHARLES LEPPERT, JR. *CLJ*.

SUBJECT: White House Swimming Pool

Bill, in the course of briefing Rep. Frank Horton (R-NY) on the construction and funding of the new White House swimming pool, Horton raised questions concerning the amount of \$52,417.00 being spent for a "typical backyard pool" and wanted to know why the existing White House pool which was covered up for a press briefing room cannot be reactivated?

Can you supply me with the information necessary to brief Rep. Horton on the reasons why the decision was not to reactivate the old White House pool versus construction of the new outdoor pool?

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 23, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: MAX FRIEDERSDORF

THRU: VERN LOEN

FROM: CHARLES LEPPERT, JR. *CJr.*

SUBJECT: White House Swimming Pool

An informational briefing on the construction of the White House swimming pool was provided the Chairmen and Ranking Minority Members of the House Committees on Government Operations and Interior and Insular Affairs along with their principal committee assistants.

A brief summary of the Members comments are as follows:

Chairman Jack Brooks - Had no objections to construction of the pool for the President. He wanted the President to know that he was pleased that no federal funds were being used for the construction of the pool.

Rep. Frank Horton - Expressed no objections to the construction of the pool or the funding. He did raise questions regarding the amount of money to be spent on a "typical backyard pool." Horton felt that \$52,417.00 was not the typical backyard swimming pool. Horton further questioned why the old White House pool below the Press briefing room was not resurrected and requested to be informed as to why the old pool was not being put back into use and what the possibility is for doing so? Horton was informed that the information would be made available to him.

Chairman James Haley - Was informed by telephone and stated that there was no need to come to his office for a briefing. He was pleased that a pool was being built for the President and wanted the President to have it. Mr. Haley was then read the general announcement on press release of May 14.

Rep. Joe Skubitz - Raised no objection to the construction of the pool in our telephone conversation but did object to being informed after the fact that construction had started.

The staff members, Bill Jones and Phil Carlson of Government Operations, and Charles Conklin and Mike Marden of the Interior Committee were present for the briefing or the press release of May 14 was given to them personally or dropped off at their office.



THE WHITE HOUSE

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