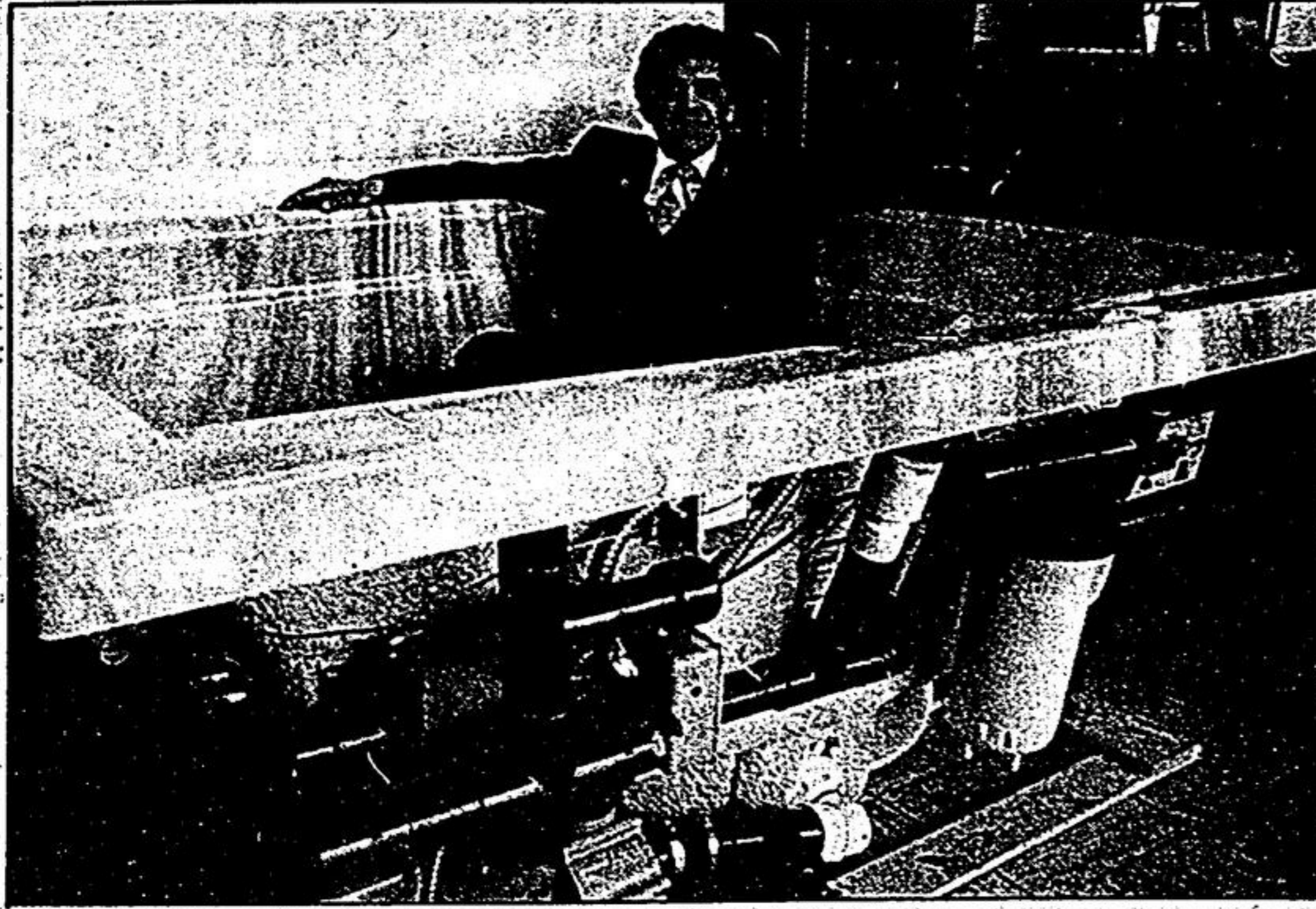


Home and Garden '83



Gary Walters of Seaway Pools tries out the new whirlpool spa now on the market. The self-contained unit is portable and inexpensive to install. — Francis King

It's available here

Whirlpool 'first' for sale

Markham residents now have a chance to purchase the only Canadian-made self contained whirlpool.

Seaway Pools Ltd., on Heritage Road is now selling Jacuzzi Canada's self contained Sierra II whirlpool bath.

"It's the only plumbed bath that's CSA approved and manufactured in Canada," said Seaway Pools owner

Gary Walter.

The bath, selling for less than \$3,000, comes factory tested and assembled with a built in water heater, filter, and a programmable timer to make the unit automatically turn on and off over a seven-day period.

Mr. Walter, who spent 13 years with Jacuzzi Canada, noted the Sierra II was first introduced at a wholesale show last December. Previous Jacuzzi baths had solid acrylic finishes, but this new model features a new, marble finish that won't blister, peel or fade.

The Sierra II has several other advantages as well. "It doesn't need any support," explained Mr. Walter. "The bath has its own supports built in and the owner would just have to put an enclosure around it."

A ground fault circuit interrupter is a safety feature that helped the unit gain the CSA (Canadian Standards Association) approval. The interrupter is a safety device that automatically shuts off the whirlpool if there's any problem with the electrical connection.

By the way, all that's needed to power the bath is a 115 volt, 20 amp circuit line, which can be connected to the built-in circuit box by an electrician for about \$100.

Each whirlpool (which seats four people) comes with a thermal blanket that cuts down on water temperature loss when the unit is not in use. As for usage, the Sierra II is portable, and can be brought indoors during the winter. It is designed to fit through a 30-inch door opening.

Feeding the soil key to organics

The secret to growing fruits and vegetables without chemicals is to feed the soil, not the plants, says Doug Green, program co-ordinator at Kemptville College of Agricultural Technology and a commercial Mr. Greenhouse operator.

Good gardening soil is one in which micro-organisms and worms thrive. To enrich the soil, home gardeners can add a layer of manure or compost (decomposed organic matter such as leaves) every spring. "It takes a few years to get good healthy soil — so have patience. As your soil improves, so will your plants and yields."

Weeds are a problem in most gardens. But early and persistent cultivation will kill most weeds, Mr. Green says. Some gardeners spread very deep layers of mulch (leaves, old newspapers) around their plants to keep the weeds down and retain soil moisture. Mr. Green says this further enriches the soil because the mulch partially rots over the winter.

Many organic gardeners have devised creative ways to control insect problems without chemical sprays, Mr. Green says. Some grow a few extra plants so losses will be unnoticed. Others use herbs and companion plants to enhance the growth of plants nearby.

Many gardening magazines list companion plant combinations. One common combination is a planting of marigolds, basil and tomatoes in the same area. Mr. Green says the basil helps the tomatoes grow and the marigolds repel nematodes and tomato hornworms.

Organic gardeners have also invented special sprays to control insects. Combinations of hot peppers, garlic, soap and dead insects are often suggested in gardening columns, Mr. Green says.

Bacillus Thuringiensis is a bacteria that is very effective for killing caterpillars and potato beetles. Used on broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage, it ensures there will be no "surprise" in the cooking pot. Follow the directions and use it at the recommended times.

"The majority of insects in the garden are actually helping you," he said. "Learn to recognize these predators and don't spray with this bacteria until you know what you are trying to kill. In most gardens beneficial predators will control the 'bad' bugs; selected handpicking or organic controls will catch the rest."

Growing your own food organically is possible. By doing so, you work closely with nature and learn what really goes on in the crowded life cycles of your garden.

Bright spot of color

Nasturtiums, sown in the vegetable garden will be a bright spot of color all summer and provide a continuous harvest of tangy peppery-flavored leaves and seeds for summer salads.

Fertile soil is needed

The most important ingredient for successful container gardening is a moderately fertile, coarse textured soil with plenty of organic matter.

Equal parts of a good loam soil, coarse sand or perlite, along with some leaf mould or peat moss make a good mixture for most planters. Regular light feedings of a liquid plant food are essential for healthy growth of all container-grown plants.

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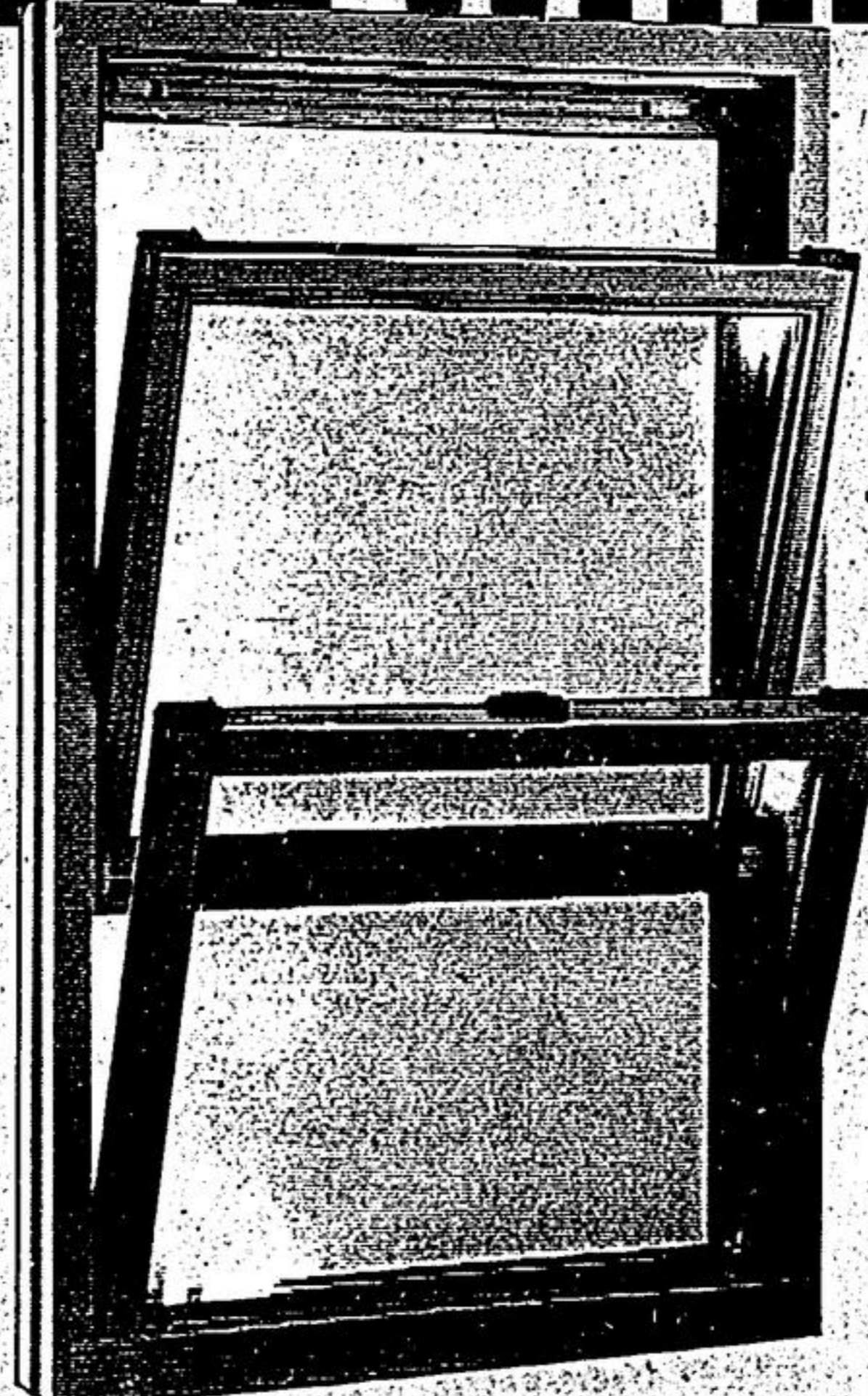


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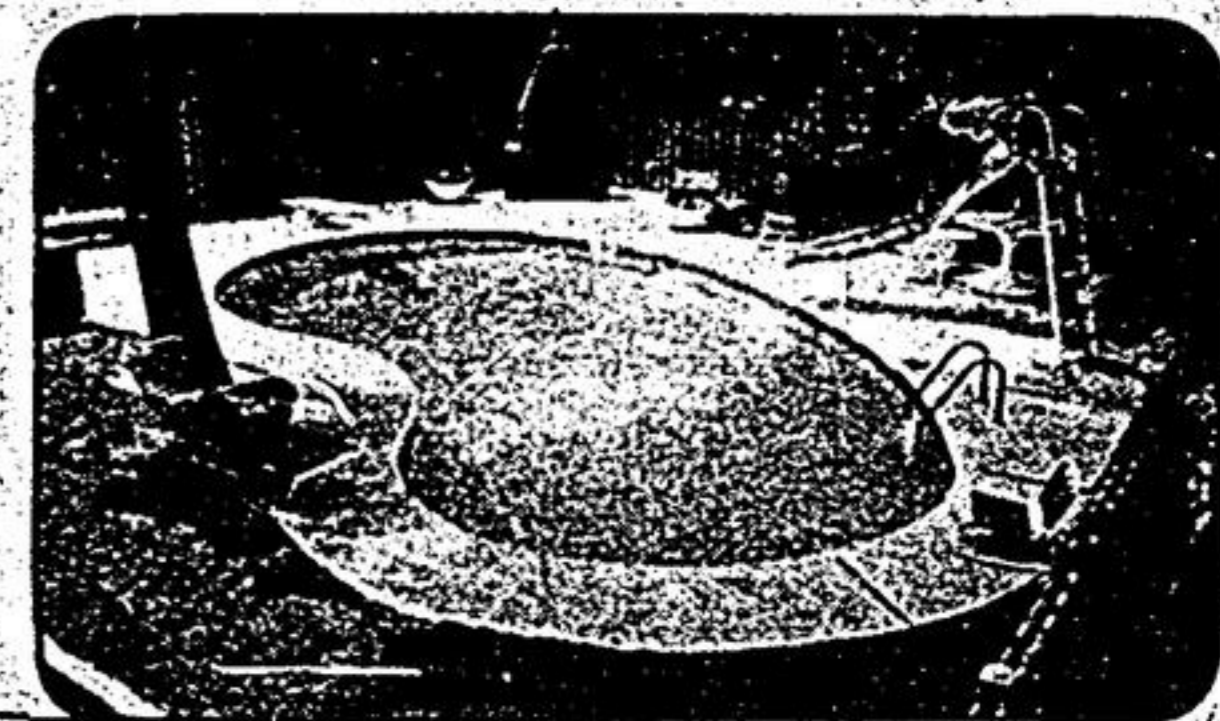
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