FAMILY RECREATION AREA

This invention relates to a family recreation area, and more particularly, to a family recreation area that may include facilities for swimming in the summer, ice skating in the winter, as well as providing an outdoor patio and barbeque for use in the spring and fall.

As is well known, swimming pools are becoming increasingly popular, even in the more northern parts of the country where water freezing temperatures are encountered in the winter. In order to install swimming pools in these areas, special precautions must be taken with regard to the strength and thickness of the side walls of these pools to withstand the freezing and heating of the earth that occurs in winter.

To avoid the cost of this type of permanent installation, numerous portable swimming pools have become available that rest on top of the ground. Generally, these pools are comprised of corrugated metal support walls that contain and support a plastic film that acts as a water retaining liner to form the swimming pool. While these portable pools are useful in that they may readily be stored during winter months, they are somewhat unsightly and difficult to enter and leave due to the fact that the pool, as well as auxiliary equipment such as pumps, filters and the like, are positioned entirely above ground. Further, when these portable pools are used for any appreciable length of time in the summer months, all vegetation under them will be killed and an unsightly area is left in the lawn when they are stored away. Not only is this area unattractive, but it is generally not useful for other purposes.

I have now found that by a novel means of installation, portable pools may be installed in such a manner so as to provide an attractive appearance and simplified means to enter and leave the portable pool. Furthermore, when a portable pool is installed in accordance with my invention, the appearance of the yard at the place where the pool was being used will not be destroyed, but rather the area will be attractive and adapted for further recreational facilities of the family after the swimming season is over.

These additional uses may include that of a terrace or patio, a barbeque area, and, in the winter months, an ice skating rink.

Accordingly, it is an object of this invention to provide simple and economical means with regard to the cost of labor, materials and the like, whereby portable pools may be removable installed in yards.

Another object of this invention is to provide methods and means for installing portable pools which do not interfere with, but actually enhance, the attractiveness of a yard.

Still another object of this invention is to provide methods and means whereby portable pools may be installed in such a manner that easy access may be had into and out of the pool.

Yet another object of this invention is to provide methods and means whereby a portable pool may be mounted in such a manner that when it is removed during the off season, an attractive area will remain that may be used for other recreational activities.

These and other objects of this invention will become more readily apparent from the following description of the drawings in which:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view, partially cut away, of a family recreation area suitable for installing a swimming pool in accordance with this invention;

FIGURE 2 is a side elevation of the family recreation area constructed in accordance with this invention including an installed swimming pool and:

FIGURE 3 is a perspective view of a family recreation area constructed in accordance with this invention illustrating a pool and certain auxiliary features.

With reference to FIGURE 1, there is shown an excavation that has been dug below the level of the ground 1. This excavation has sloping side walls 4 and a flat bottom 3. A concrete base 6 is poured over a substantial portion of the bottom 4 and may contain a manhole or other detachable cover 7 to provide access to a barbeque pit 5.

Human access is provided to the bottom of the pit by a removable staircase 3. Alternatively, permanent steps can be provided in the sloping side walls 4, or if the slope of the side walls is not too great, no steps need be used. As a general rule, it will be advantageous to provide steps, as the slope of the side walls will be selected to be slightly less than the natural angle of repose of the soil in which the excavation is dug. By this means, the slope will be stable and may be planted with ground cover that will help retain the soil and give a pleasant appearance to the side walls. As will become apparent in the following description, this ground cover should be selected from those plants that do not need a great deal of sunlight during the summer months, and preferably, retain their foliage a major portion of the year.

Referring to FIGURE 2, a swimming pool 12 is shown installed in the excavation. Swimming pool 12 rests on the concrete base 6 and is comprised of a plastic liner held within and supported by tank walls 11. The concrete base 6 has a curb or upturned portion 10 around its perimeter.

A substantially ground level platform or deck 13 bridges the distance between the side walls of the tank 11 and the side walls of the excavation 2. Generally, it is advantageous to include support members 14 to provide support for the deck 13 adjacent the side walls of the tank. If the side walls of the tank are sufficiently strong, and the distance between the side walls of the tank and the excavation 2 is not too great, the need for these supports 14 may be eliminated.

It is frequently useful to provide a downturned lip 17 on the deck 13 where it engages the ground. While not necessary, it is preferred to provide a trough 16 that will secure the lip 17 from horizontal movement. Not only does this help secure the deck 13 in relationship to the swimming pool 12 and the ground 1, but also the trough 18 will function as a drainage ditch to prevent excess surface water from entering the excavation.

In FIGURE 2, certain other features are also illustrated, such as the barbeque pit 8, provision for a filter, pump, heater and other auxiliary equipment as at 16, and ground cover 15.

Referring to FIGURE 3, there is shown a plan view of the swimming pool 12 with the deck 13 installed. The deck 13 should have a sufficient open area to provide access for water, light and air. This conveniently may be done by making the deck 13 of wood slats held together as individual sectors, or sectors of expanded metal or grating, that may readily be removed at the end of the swimming season. The purpose of providing a deck with an open area of this sort is to provide for drainage. First, this open area will provide drainage for any water, and, second, air and light may pass through this deck to enable ground cover to grow on the side walls of the excavation even during the summer months when the pool is installed.

From the above description of the drawings, it may
readily be understood that the entire assembly may be dismantled in off season. The various sectors of the decking, the water may be drained from the pool, the side walls of the pool may be taken down, and, if required, access stairs installed. When cleared of the swimming pool equipment in this manner, a pleasant patio is provided. Further, if desired, a barbeque pit may be installed under the floor of this patio.

When the weather becomes sufficiently cold and an outdoor patio is no longer used, the concrete base may be flooded with water to a few inches in depth, suitable to provide an ice skating rink.

With reference to FIGURE 3, it may be noted that the excavation need not surround the entire perimeter of the swimming pool area. For example, if the land on which the swimming pool is to be located has a natural slope, the excavation may be cut into the slope rather than straight down entirely from above. This will provide a substantial portion at upper ground level for the deck while also providing access to the pit as during the time the swimming pool is not installed as by the lower ground level.

Although certain embodiments of this invention have been shown in the drawings and described in the specification, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited thereto, is capable of modification, and can be rearranged without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

1. A family recreation area comprising
   (A) an excavation in the ground having sloping sidewalls extending substantially therearound and wherein the slope of said sidewalls does not exceed the angle of repose of the ground, said excavation having a substantially level bottom portion;
   (B) access means into said excavation;
   (C) a cement floor extending over a substantial portion of the bottom of said excavation, the outer periphery of said cement floor having a raised lip suitable for containing water;
   (D) a removable swimming pool resting on said floor, said swimming pool comprised of removably mounted support walls extending substantially vertically from said floor to ground level;

   (E) a removable horizontal ground level deck bridging the space between the sidewalls of said excavation and the sidewalks of said pool;
   (F) a recreation area in the absence of said swimming pool and its associated deck serving as an outdoor patio.

2. A family recreation area according to claim 1 in which said access means comprise steps.

3. A family recreation area according to claim 1 in which said swimming pool includes a plastic water-containing film contained within and supported by said removably mounted support walls.

4. A family recreation area according to claim 1 in which said pit contains a grate and is adapted to be used as a barbeque pit.

5. A family recreation area according to claim 1 in which said cement floor includes a removably mounted cover plate to provide access to a pit extending under a minor portion of said cement floor.

6. A family recreation area according to claim 1 in which said horizontal deck is comprised of a plurality of elements, which elements have a substantial open area between them to enable the passage of water, air and light into the space between the side walls of said excavation and the side walls of said pool.

7. A family recreation area according to claim 1 in which said deck is supported at its one end by the ground and at its other end by vertical supports mounted within said excavation but exterior of said swimming pool.

8. A family recreation area according to claim 1 in which said ground support for said deck includes a channel for the flow of water.

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SAMUEL ROTHBERG, Primary Examiner.

H. K. ARTIS, Assistant Examiner.