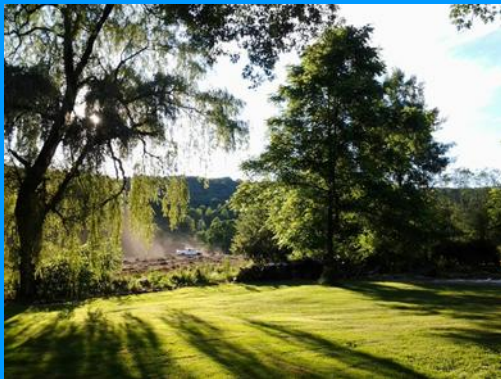


# The Pool Misadventures of Shannon and Michele

By Michele Brazie ( Constructed Summer 2016 )

**Not since Mister Blandings Built His Dream House has there been such a venture into the lands of unintended consequences!**



This is a perfectly lovely view for the smooth fox terriers from one of the grassy dog yards. Why would anyone tamper with it? Well some of us can't leave well enough alone. As Stephen Covey might say, some of us have to attempt to "sharpen the saw."

On a hot summer day while painting the gazebo, Shannon mentioned she would like to get a pool for the boys to cool off in--perhaps an inexpensive Intex pool. No, says Michele. Steve won't like that on his well-manicured lawn. We might as well use the old volleyball court and do something more substantial. Next thing you know, Shannon and Michele have located a 30 foot above ground pool that is being sold because a family is moving. \$500.00



Then the revelations began! Liners cannot be reused and must be replaced. Add an extra \$400. 00.

Oops, the pump requires electricity! The electrical service that we had used for over a decade for our in ground pool was no longer considered up to code. That meant a trench had to be dug across my lawn in which to bury the conduit and wiring! No you do not run an above ground extension cord or use shallow buried cable to operate your pool pump. Materials alone for the wiring were over \$500—that did **NOT include equipment and manpower for the trench.**



Continued...



Next, the dog yard had to come down to enable the tree service access to the tree sized limbs that must be removed because they were a safety hazard. The limbs shown would have been lurking above the



pool--most assuredly awaiting an unsuspecting victim. Given our history with tree incidents, I knew this had to be nipped in the branches. It looked like a logging site. Yep, another \$650.00



Look at the size of these "limbs"!





Now for the tough stuff!

The initial clearing of the pool location

This ground will have to be **level to within 1 inch** before the sand, pavers, and pool ring can be installed. Yes, it must be that close.



All the sod that required renting a rototiller in order to spread it and reseed grass.

\$60.

**The roughing out of the level pool site.**

Next we get to fine tune it and bury each paver level with the ground and each other. All the sand must then be carted in.





## The Battleground.



Research will reveal so many ways to prepare the ground and level it for the proper installation of a pool. **NONE of them are easy when dealing with stoney soil. The only consistent fact is that you are NOT to back fill the base and Everything must be level.** Pick your lowest point and grade everything to it. Unless you have done something like this using boards, levels, string levels, now laser transits and the like you will have no appreciation for the sweat and tedium involved. This quite literally became a battle ground. Whiney kids, angry spouses, and thoroughly frustrated co-conspirators would have made a great cast for a Neighbors Build A Pool Reality Show. Chances are you would have



been attacked by pick ax, hoe, or shovel had you attempted to video during the heat of the day and the height of irritability!

## CRUSHED STONE!

The fun just continues unabated.

Yesterday the stone delivery stood me up and never showed. I waited a good 3 hours before I gave up. They never called. When I called this morning, no one apologized but simply said they would get it here by today. Then it arrives..... and is not what we ordered. Now I have 15 tons to haggle about with the stone company! **\$400.**



## SAND!!

Who knew there was a **mason sand shortage!** The sandy fill has arrived and is awaiting our shovels, wheel barrows, and people power to activate its purpose for the foreseeable future. 15 tons/ 10 cubic yards = **\$309.00**





Dig a trench removing all the large round rocks that sabotaged leveling.



Backfill with crushed stone around the pavers that will be a base for wall uprights. Lots of trips to the stone pile with the wheel barrow and more shoveling to unload.



Tamp the crushed stone between pavers.



Check for level



Cover with soil and tamp again.



Brush soil away from paver. Place wall track.





The center was now ready for basic raking and landscape fabric. After the fabric, we hauled sand to the center and put up the walls. How can 30 foot diameter look so small?

The landscape fabric went down. Chuck, Isaac, Shannon, and I loaded the wheel barrows. Then our beast of burden, Chuck, hauled them around what will be the pool floor. Shannon began raking and tamping while the rest of us finished loading. Still more sand to move on another day. The board was our screed.



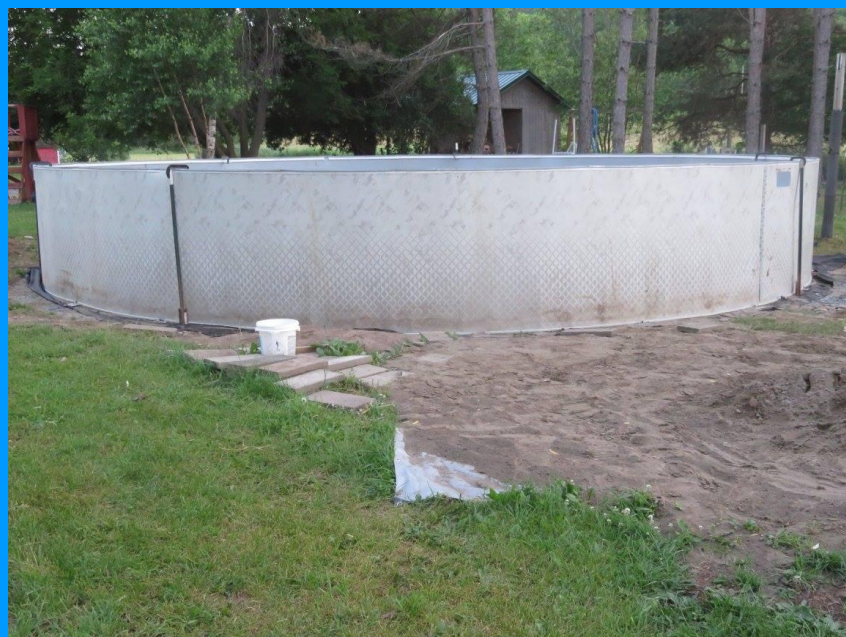
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There was our base awaiting the walls...



Wall panel up; stabilizers and temporary stakes are in place. Uprights, finalizing sand, and adding base cove before gorilla pad went in are all parts of the next stage prior to liner install.







I assembled and installed the upright supports yesterday and Chuck attached them at the base. Top plates went on once the pool was filled. A good cleaning, stones around the perimeter, some

landscaping, and eventually a deck were called for.

Shannon raked and smoothed the surface after Chuck tossed in the final batch of sand and I back filled the borders near the wall.



Once the sand was leveled and tamped in place, the gorilla pad was installed. \$200.

Brooming out the wrinkles in the gorilla pad.







Shannon and Michele installed the felt gorilla pad, trimmed and then added the foam cove. To get a tight fit, Chuck used a shop vac to suction the liner. The results are fantastic!!





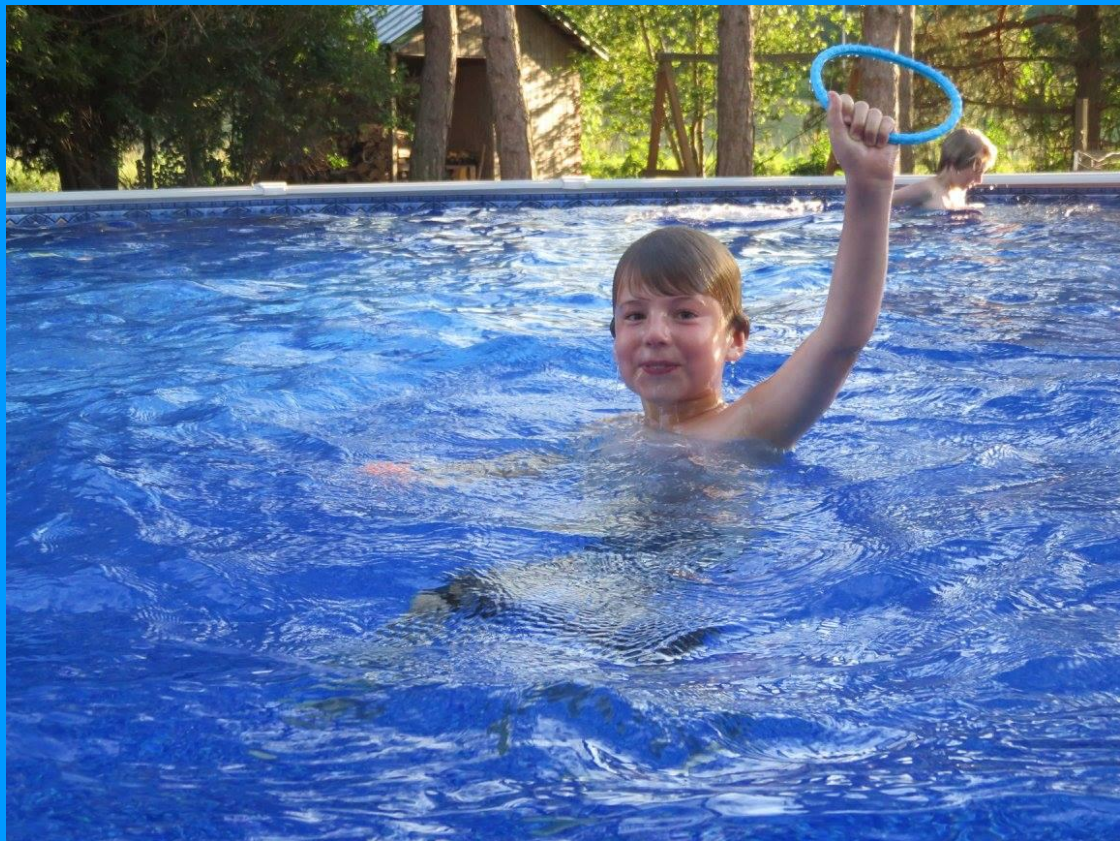
Yes, it was finally fully installed. We passed the electrical inspection for \$125.00. Now a \$200 alarm system and \$90 timer are required by NYS. \$150 chlorinator, \$50 skimmer, \$150 used high end ladder ( for use until there is a deck) and roughly \$200 in chemicals/supplies and we should be good to go. But wait, we need the lights upgraded for night swimming and about the deck.....

The deck will need a self-closing hinge in the gate!

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The point of all this was not to bore anyone with the details, but to provide some real insight into all that is involved with reconstructing an above ground pool in our region. It is not a cheap or easy process particularly due to the stony soil in the Newark Valley area. Likewise, the codes established for safe operation are not always easily anticipated given evolving standards. For example, grounding the pool is very significant—particularly since we had an electrical strike about 20 feet from the pool after it was installed.

### Cost review:

Used pool:	\$500
New Liner:	\$400
Electrical parts:	\$550
Tree Trim:	\$650
Sand:	\$309
Stone:	\$400
Gorilla Pad:	\$200
Rototiller:	\$60
Electrical Inspection:	\$125
Alarm:	\$200
Timer:	\$90
Chlorinator:	\$150
Skimmer:	\$50
Chemicals:	\$200
Used ladder:	\$150
Permit:	\$25
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