

# suburban life



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# Making a Splash

For more than 20 years, **KS Pools & Patios** has been creating elegant outdoor living spaces for clients centered around pools the whole family can enjoy.

**W**ITH CLOSE TO THREE DECADES OF EXPERIENCE IN THE SWIMMING POOL INDUSTRY, ERIC KONYVES HAS SEEN TRENDS COME AND GO. Exciting new amenities hit the market, and technological advancements once unimaginable come to pass. Through it all, he has come to realize some things never go out of style—namely, the bond between a company and its clients, which he describes as the backbone of any successful project.

So, while some contractors inevitably get busy trying to keep up with the next job, Konyves and his team at KS Pools & Patios have always made it a priority to stay connected with past clients. In addition to addressing any questions they may have down the line, he finds it incredibly rewarding when clients reach out, often years after the pool's installation, to share stories about how much their friends and

families enjoy their dream backyard.

“We still talk to a lot of our clients from years ago just because of the relationships we’ve made,” Konyves says. “They’ll tell us, ‘We just had our daughter’s birthday party in the backyard and everyone loved it.’ That always makes you feel good. It’s definitely not an easy business, but that makes it worth the struggle.”

Konyves had a background in landscaping and hardscaping when he started doing excavation work for pool companies early in his career. He eventually decided to start his own business. The founding of KS Pools & Patios more than 20 years ago coincided with an explosion in popularity of outdoor living spaces, which have been in high demand ever since.

KS Pools & Patios has evolved into a one-stop shop handling all aspects of a backyard oasis, from design to construction.

In addition to pools, the design-build company offers custom patios, decks, cabanas, shade structures, outdoor kitchens, fire features, and landscaping.

“We just kept progressing with what the people want, and the next thing we knew, we did it all,” Konyves says. “When we do design work, we try not to limit it to just a pool with a pool deck around it. We show the homeowners a swimming pool, a patio, and a cabana that you can cook or sit under when the pool is not usable.”

Instead of dealing with multiple companies for each phase of the project, homeowners get the convenience of one point of contact, which leads to clear communication throughout the process and an organized schedule. Of course, the pool usually remains the centerpiece, and KS Pools & Patios offers both gunite

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and fiberglass options, each with its distinct benefits.

A gunite pool requires digging a hole, adding steel framework and plumbing, shooting the gunite into the ground to create a shell, and then putting on tile and plaster before filling it with water. The process requires months of planning, and Konyves explains that most projects start in August, September, or October in order to be ready the following spring.

With fiberglass, homeowners can pick from a variety of pre-existing sizes, shapes, and depth profiles to fit their backyard space and family needs. Depending on how quickly permits can be obtained from their township, they may even be able to have it installed within weeks. In fact, commuters driving on the busy stretch of Route 295 near the Scudder Falls Bridge and the Oxford Valley Mall pass right by KS Pools & Patios' Langhorne headquarters, where they can see a wide range of fiberglass pools.

"One type of pool is getting built in their backyard, and the other is getting built in a factory and being put in their backyard," Konyves says. "If the client doesn't want to have a long construction process, fiberglass is much quicker because the pools come in already built."

While Konyves emphasizes the durability of both options, he adds that gunite pools may need to be renovated in about 20 years. The major upside to gunite, though, is that it can be tailor made to a client's wants and needs.

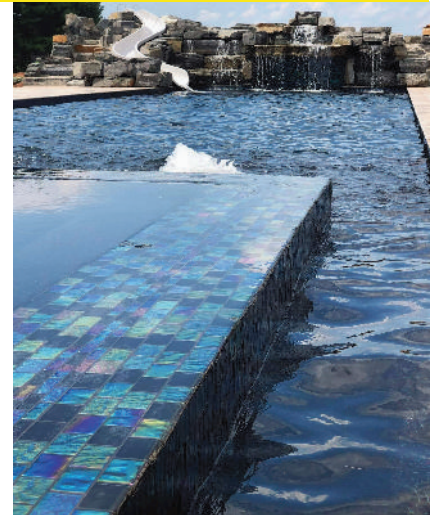
"Fiberglass has a specific mold that the manufacturer makes, so you then have to find one to fit your needs, such as depth, length, having a bench here and a seat there," he says. "If all of that doesn't fit and the customer feels very strongly about what they want, then a gunite pool is the way to go because we can custom make it. You can really customize the pool to the specifics of what you want."

Other popular features include slides, deck jets, colored lights, and bubblers. With either type of pool, Konyves says about 95 percent of all clients opt for a saltwater system.

"It's a burden to buy chlorine, store it in your shed, and maintain the pool," he adds. "A salt system creates chlorine gas and when you test the water, it says it has chlorine even though you didn't put any chlorine in it and didn't handle any chlorine. It's a lot less chemical work that you have to do once you have a salt chlorination system. The water is definitely softer, too, like what you have in your house."



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KS Pools & Patios is a true family business. Konyves' wife, Franny, handles the accounting and human resources, and all three of their children also work under them in various roles. The rest of the staff, meanwhile, has been with the company so long that they feel like relatives.

"It's nice working with family; they definitely have your best interests in mind," Konyves says. "We have about five crews that are running now, and most of those guys have been with us for 10 or 15 years. We strive for respecting the client's property and making sure it's clean, and quality of work is one of the biggest comments we get back from clients."

Every project is different. Some may incorporate add-ons during the construction phase based on suggestions from the com-

pany or ideas from the homeowner. The completed space almost always exceeds the customer's wildest dreams, no matter the journey required to get there.

"That's the part that makes you feel like it was worth it, when a homeowner says it came out better than they expected," Konyves says. "We do 3D design with a CAD program to show the client what the project is going to look like. When they're seeing an end result that is really close or even better, it's a great feeling." ■



## KS Pools & Patio

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