

The increase of diabetes is linked to the increase of those who are overweight.
Dr. David, 3D

Remo Cesare Jacuzzi



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/STEPHEN B. THORNTON

People are often surprised to learn that Jacuzzi is not an Italian or Japanese word for "swirling water."

Necessity was the mother of invention of the first Jacuzzi whirlpool. Now Remo Jacuzzi's Jason International takes the bath into the realm of fine therapeutic bathing.

BY HELAINE R. WILLIAMS
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

"For me, a Jacuzzi is a person, not a machine. A Jacuzzi is a member of my family."

So begins *Spirit, Wind & Water: The Untold Story of the Jacuzzi Family*, the new book by Remo Jacuzzi.

Jacuzzi? You mean, Jacuzzi as in those cozy hot tubs? Yes, Remo is associated with that Jacuzzi family. But as he is quick to point out — because so many have gotten the information wrong — the name Jacuzzi goes far beyond hydrotherapy baths and spas.

As a matter of fact, the family's former business, Jacuzzi Bros. Inc., didn't even start out in hydrotherapy. And no, the company head quarters didn't start out in Little Rock.

The story of the Jacuzzi family, Jacuzzi business and Jacuzzi legacy begins in northern Italy. In the case of Remo Jacuzzi, it extends to North Little Rock, where he is president of 25-year-old Jason International, which carries on the

family's legacy by producing luxury hydrotherapy products.

Jacuzzi, 71, points this out in his recently published book, which is richly interspersed with nearly a century of family photos, as well as line drawings of all the products invented and sold by Jacuzzi Bros. and Jason International. Even the book's cover was a family effort: Jacuzzi's nephew, Shawn-Ian Bruce, fashioned its design, which bears the wedding photo of one of Remo Jacuzzi's uncles and the line drawings.

In the book, from Welcome Rain Publishers, "I try to be as truthful as possible, and I think I do it in a way that is positive," Jacuzzi said. "Things that happened, happen in all families. We've had our share of tragedies," but overall, the Jacuzzis were the quintessential big, close-knit Italian family that worked hard, loved much, overcame adversity and found strength in their religious faith and their fierce loyalty. The family's story, along with the story of Jacuzzi Bros. and Jason International, is skillfully entwined in the nearly 300-

page volume.

Spirit, Wind & Water was a labor of love that took Jacuzzi roughly a decade as he built Jason International into the respected entity it is today — product by product.

"There is a lot that goes into the manufacture of a high-quality bathtub, and it starts with the molds that we use to form the acrylic surface," Jacuzzi says, adding, "Whirlpool baths are not all the same. You get what you pay for. If the mold isn't well-made, the final product won't be a quality product."

"We make sure that all of the jets that we put in the bath, and the controls, are placed in the area where they do the most good," he said. "The placement of the jets is very important. Most people needing hydrotherapy, for example, have problems in their back. And so we make sure that we have good back jets. Also, it's very nice to have foot jets."

Jacuzzi's high standards have not gone unnoticed by his satisfied customers and business associates.

"He's been a great business partner

[to] my company," says Steve Singer, co-president and co-owner of Pipeline Supply in Hopkins, Minn. "He is one of the true gentlemen in the industry — one of the true icons in the industry. I have a lot of admiration for him."

"He's certainly one of the guys that really made [Jacuzzi Bros.] work during the later years," Singer adds. "A lot of people could learn a lot of good things about life and about how to do business from Remo Jacuzzi."

Jason International offers five product lines: Home Spa, Carrera, forma, Designer and Integrity. The products include soaking baths with no added equipment at all; air baths (air blowing through the water); combination baths (air and jets); lavatories; and shower bases; prices range from about \$1,500 to \$13,000.

The "granddaddy" of all the Jason baths is the \$2,900 Model No. JC63F, introduced in spring 2006. The translucent, free-standing soaking bath, which comes in Glacier Green, Arctic Blue or See **JACUZZI**, Page 4D



BY KYLE BRAZZEL

An indie whoop of a show

Haunted, daunted and drenched

White hair, White House, ditto, ditto

The Boondogs describe their sound, at least in the MySpace idiom, as Indie/Folk Rock/Ambient; it is something of a coincidence that one-half of their lead duo is actually named Indy. (Names of her fellow members are Jason, Charles, Chris and Isaac; sadly, this Little Rock band has failed to recruit any musicians named Folk, Rock or Ambient.)

Indy Grotto is a native of Australia with a cheezy, lilting speaking voice and a gauzy but baleful singing voice, like a pixie who's seen too much. It seemed nothing of a coincidence that for the band's recent visit to the Conway soundstage of the Arkansas Educational Telecommunications Network for a taping of the music showcase *AETN Presents: Front Row With ...* that Indy did most of the talking between songs.

But before she talked, she whooped — "Whoop!" — as a vocal spasm of nervous energy. Then she leaned into the microphone. See **ROCK**, Page 8D

Mother aids in families' child cancer fight

BY SAMANTHA FRIEDMAN
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

As a high school student at Mount St. Mary Academy, Melissa Ortega volunteered in the playroom at Arkansas Children's Hospital. It never occurred to her that years later she'd return as a social worker.

Now, she works as an evening social worker for the hospital and serves on the board of directors for Candlelighters of Central Arkansas. The nonprofit provides services for child cancer patients and their families. Because the majority of the children receive treatment at Children's Hospital, Ortega's two roles dovetail.

"We're so lucky we have something like this in our state," Ortega said, referring to the hospital. "Children's is a very supportive environment. The social work department here is such a valued thing all through the hospital, whether it's going in and talking to a parent that's upset because their child is critically or terminally ill or helping talk to a parent that for whatever reason needs a place to stay. You just have your hands in a bunch of different areas, and I really like that. It's great for the families to know that someone here at the hospital can help them through these things."

Candlelighters serves a similar function for families. The organization provides emotional, educational and social services, including a new-diagnosis survival kit with See **ORTEGA**, Page 5D



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/STEVE KEESEE

Melissa Ortega, chairman of Candlelighters of Central Arkansas' second annual Gallery of Hope art auction, shows off paintings created by patients at Arkansas Children's Hospital. Along with other works by Arkansas artists, the art will be auctioned at the Sept. 7 Candlelighters fundraiser.

Jacuzzi

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Frost, is made of 10mm-thick acrylic and supported by a stainless-steel frame. The company has a patent on the construction.

"We're always on the lookout for new products, new ways of making our products, and new technology is always very important," Jacuzzi says.

It was early-20th-century technology that started his personal journey ... a journey defined by a family that — along with its self-named company — has "a very complex history."

OUT OF ITALY

Jacuzzi's father, Valeriano, was born in northern Italy, the second of Giovanni and Teresa Jacuzzi's 13 children. He emigrated to the United States in 1907 with a younger brother, Francesco "Frank" Jacuzzi; gradually, the other siblings and extended family members joined them. This migration went on until 1920.

In 1915, Remo Jacuzzi's father and six brothers formed Jacuzzi Bros., which started with an aviation bent. The Jacuzzi entered the manufacturing arena thanks to an invention by eldest brother Rachele. The invention was the toothpick propeller. Thousands of these were made during World War I. A brass-tipped, wooden toothpick propeller hanging in the conference room of Jason International shows the workmanship that harkens back to the cabinet-making skills of Remo Jacuzzi's great-grandfather.

In 1920, Rachele and his brothers developed the first totally enclosed cabin, high-wing monoplane in the United States. The plane, named the J-7 ("J" for Jacuzzi; "7" for the number of passengers it could carry) crashed July 14, 1921, during a return trip from Yosemite National Park to Oakland, Calif. All four occupants of the plane were killed — including Giocondo Jacuzzi, Rachele's brother and Remo's uncle.

(The cover of *Spirit, Wind & Water* shows Giocondo and his wife, Mary, on their April 1919 wedding day in California. The back cover of the book shows Giocondo and the plane's other three occupants with the plane in Yosemite National Park shortly before takeoff. The photo came from a camera found in the wreckage.)

The brothers had planned to create a passenger airline service. Instead, they found themselves facing debt due to the J-7's costs and loss, along with lawsuits from survivors of the crash victims. The brothers were forced to give up their aviation dreams in favor of working odd jobs. Some of them, including Remo's father, left for a time and got into farming. Remo's father and Uncle Gelindo bought adjoining ranches in Antioch, Calif.

But Rachele Jacuzzi kept experimenting and inventing, coming up with the deep-well injector pump in 1926. This pump led to the development of Jacuzzi Bros. as a powerhouse company with plants all over the world.

"For years I did not understand how the Jacuzzi company went from propellers and aircraft to pumps. I asked everybody I could," Remo Jacuzzi says. Uncle Rachele, his godfather, had died the year after he was born. "I couldn't ask him, and he was the inventor of the jet pump. But I figured it out. There was a product between the aircraft and the jet pump that contributed to the technology he used."

The product, called the Frostifugo, was used to blow warm air over the citrus groves in California to keep them from freezing. Work on the Frostifugo contributed to the development of the jet pump.

Jacuzzi Bros. manufactured a number of other products, from water boilers and wine filters



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"We make sure that all of the jets that we put in the bath, and the controls, are placed in the area where they do [the] most good."

to gas grills. The hydrotherapy products were actually among the last to be developed and made up the smallest division of Jacuzzi Bros. at the time of its sale by the family.

This part of the business came about because a cousin, Kenneth Jacuzzi, developed rheumatoid arthritis. His only relief came from the hydrotherapy baths at Herrick Hospital in Berkeley, Calif. Kenneth's father, Candido Jacuzzi, consulted two engineers with Jacuzzi Bros. The men put together a portable whirlpool pump unit for home use. Kenneth's doctor urged Candido to mass-produce the unit and market it to elderly and arthritic people.

As Jacuzzi Bros. already made commercial water pumps, the leap to hydrotherapy baths was not large. It was in 1954 that the first portable whirlpool pump, or hydromassage, was introduced for home use. The pump had a long electrical cord to plug into the wall. The regulators didn't like the thought of electricity and water so close together, so later inventions came along, perfecting the product.

"People are often surprised to learn that Jacuzzi is not an Italian or Japanese word for 'swirling water,'" Remo Jacuzzi writes in the book.

He was the seventh of eight children born to Valeriano and Giuseppina Jacuzzi. He grew up on the ranch in Antioch. "I recall the Japanese word for 'swirling water,'" Remo Jacuzzi writes in the book.

What more can I do besides apologize? I love my children and grandchildren. I hate seeing them repeat the cycle of abuse. They blame me, saying they learned it from me. I have tried telling my daughter she must learn how to break the cycle and make things better for her children, but this has only

pushed her further away. How can I mend my broken family and my broken heart?

— Filled With Regret in Indiana

DEAR FILLED WITH REGRET: You can't. You planted this crop, and this is the harvest. However, if the child who is still speaking with you can prevent upon his siblings to reconsider what they are doing, there is a chance that with counseling the pattern of abuse can be broken. It's a long shot. And if it doesn't work, then you must seriously evaluate whether child protective services should intervene for the sake of your grandchildren's safety.

As Jacuzzi Bros. continued to prosper, Remo Jacuzzi served as Western region sales manager, traveling extensively and tending to special projects, among other duties. In 1967, he was asked to transfer to Sao Paulo, Brazil, to manage the family plant there. He and his family moved the following year, and Jacuzzi took on his new role as president of Jacuzzi do Brasil. His last child, Paulo, was born in that country. "We liked Brazil very much," Jacuzzi says of his 12-year stay. "It was a good experience for the whole family." The Jacuzzi plant, located in a city adjoining Sao Paulo, was so successful that a new plant was later built for the

expanding enterprise.

But in 1979 — "after some troublesome years and an acrimonious lawsuit" that pitted family members against one another, Remo Jacuzzi writes in the book — the Jacuzzi sold Jacuzzi Bros. to Walter Kidde Inc. Remo Jacuzzi was still in Brazil at the time. He was asked to come back and take over as president of the Jacuzzi Bros. plant in Little Rock, which had been dedicated in 1962 and which had become the headquarters of Jacuzzi Bros.

Remo Jacuzzi writes that he was "not very happy" with the sale of Jacuzzi Bros. in 1979. Having worked years for the company, "I saw that it could be much more successful than what we had been." Jacuzzi do Brasil was very profitable. "And I felt we had a tremendous future as a company," not only there, but in general. But the majority of the family had voted to sell, and that was that.

Jacuzzi at first didn't know what he would do after the sale. In Brazil, he'd worked with water pumps and swimming pool equipment; the company had been the first manufacturer of swimming pool equipment and whirlpool baths in Brazil.

After the sale, Jacuzzi Bros. was divided up. The hydrotherapy operation stayed in California. Remo Jacuzzi continued to work for Jacuzzi Bros. until 1981, but now that the company wasn't family-owned, things were no longer the same.

In 1982 — after having worked for Jacuzzi Bros. for more than 23 years, Remo founded his own

SELF PORTRAIT

Remo Jacuzzi

- **DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH** Jan. 6, 1936, Antioch, Calif.
- **MY FANTASY DINNER GUESTS WOULD BE** My maternal and paternal grandparents, several generations back; apostles Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Peter; and George Washington.
- **MY MOST NOTABLE READING MATERIAL IS** *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?*; by Rick Warren; *The Maker's Diet*, by Jordan S. Rubin; *Let Them Eat Cake: Marketing Luxury to the Masses — As Well as the Classes*, by Pamela Danziger; and *The Final Move Behind Iraq: The Final Solution While the World Sleeps*, by Mike Evans.
- **THE HYDROTHERAPY BATH IN MY HOME IS** Jason International's MA-635, a combination bath with water jets and 43 air jets.
- **MY SECRET PLEASURE IS** A piece of property in Conway, through which I like to relive fond memories of farming.
- **THE BEST ADVICE MY DAD GAVE ME WAS** Learn as much as you can, because nobody can take it away from you.
- **LIFE IS LIKE A HYDROTHERAPY BATH IN THAT** People strive to make it better.
- **ONE WORD TO SUM ME UP** Actually, two words: Passionate and blessed.

whirlpool hydrotherapy company, Jason International. The company was first located near Colonel Glenn Road in Little Rock. In 1989, the company moved to its present location on MacArthur Drive in North Little Rock. The name "Jason" is coined from "Jacuzzi son."

As had Jacuzzi Bros., Jason International has grown and prospered. The company has customers in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Central America, Spain and the Far East. The company also serves its community with contributions to nonprofit projects and other good causes. Jacuzzi, meanwhile, has received numerous honors and awards for his life's work, the most recent of which was induction into The Haas School of Business Hall of Fame at the University of California at Berkeley.

Jacuzzi's faith is also important to him. He attends two churches: one on Saturday evenings and another on Sunday mornings. He also meets twice a month with a group of businessmen under the Fellowship of Companies for Christ International umbrella. During these meetings, the group discusses such issues as how to apply Christian principles in running their businesses.

Among that group is Ivo Phelps, a Jason International board member and president and chief executive officer of Phelps Industries in east Little Rock. Phelps met Jacuzzi shortly after he moved here from Brazil; the men have worked, socialized and traveled together ever since — as well as worshipped together. "I think he's worn out a couple of Bibles since I've known him," Phelps says.

Phelps cherishes his friendship with Jacuzzi for many reasons. "I've got something I need to discuss. I can go sit down with him and tell him about it — and we can talk ... through any situation that comes up, either business or personal," he says.

In addition to being close to his family — "which is important this day and time" — Jacuzzi is close to his employees, Phelps said. "He's highly respected by those who work for him, and he goes on a limb for them when other employers won't." In fact, Phelps concludes, one doesn't find many people in Jacuzzi's position "who has as an heart for everybody who's around them."

BLESSED BE THE TIES

Jacuzzi also cherishes his family: wife Paula, with whom he recently celebrated his 50th wedding anniversary; children Remo Valerian Jacuzzi, Jennifer Bergrin, Loreta Stewart, Gretchen Rose, Matthew Jacuzzi and Paulo Jacuzzi; and 14 grandchildren. Remo V. Jacuzzi serves

as vice president of manufacturing for Jason International. Jennifer is vice president of operations for the company and Paulo is the inside sales manager.

It was during the mid-1990s that Jacuzzi began to think about writing his family history. He began interviewing several elderly aunts, along with cousins and family business associates, and recalling the things his parents had told him. In the book's acknowledgments, he thanks these contributors, who include his oldest brother, Virgil.

"I had a lot of family input, but not as much as I had hoped," he says. "Some members of the family were very open, wanting to share and others didn't have the same passion, so to speak, of wanting [to know] more about our family."

He also began doing a lot of research, especially about the jet pump. Then he began writing. Some years he left the project alone because he had a business to run. But, finally, he was able to put the story together smoothly. And luckily, he has always been a collector of photos.

After the book was completed, it needed a publisher. A chance meeting with a reporter in northern Italy, who'd contacted him with the desire to tell a story, led to his mother, put him in contact with Welcome Rain Publishing Co. The book is available at local bookstores.

As the "untold story of the Jacuzzi family" is revealed to readers, his entrepreneurial men have worked, socialized and traveled together ever since — as well as worshipped together. "I think he's worn out a couple of Bibles since I've known him," Phelps says.

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"The same glorious stars and moon that grandparents Giovanni and Teresa used to inspire the earliest dreams of Uncle Rachele, my father, and their brothers and sisters still illuminate our sky, no matter who we are. "I still follow those stars. I am blessed to be a Jacuzzi."

DEAR ABBY

Mother's heart breaks to see daughter repeating her abuse

DEAR ABBY: At 16, I married a man I didn't love. No excuses, but the stress of that marriage kept me an angry person. I was an abusive mother when my children were growing up. I have apologized to them more than once and changed who I am. Last year, my second husband and I opened our home to my oldest daughter and her two children. (She had her third baby while living with us.)

Sadly, my daughter is perpetuating the abusive behavior she grew up with. I tried to gently bring it to her attention while she was living here, but she quickly blamed it all on me. She moved out, separated herself

and her children from me, and through telephone conversations has also alienated her sister and brother from me. She has lied to them about me, and they have shared their horror stories about childhood abuse with each other. Now, only one out of four of my grown children will even speak to me.

What more can I do besides apologize? I love my children and grandchildren. I hate seeing them repeat the cycle of abuse. They blame me, saying they learned it from me. I have tried telling my daughter she must learn how to break the cycle and make things better for her children, but this has only

pushed her further away. How can I mend my broken family and my broken heart?

— Filled With Regret in Indiana

DEAR FILLED WITH REGRET: You can't. You planted this crop, and this is the harvest. However, if the child who is still speaking with you can prevent upon his siblings to reconsider what they are doing, there is a chance that with counseling the pattern of abuse can be broken. It's a long shot. And if it doesn't work, then you must seriously evaluate whether child protective services should intervene for the sake of your grandchildren's safety.

DEAR ABBY: I need your advice on how to deny my granddaughter the right to live with me. My parents divorced when I was 11. I was the eldest of eight children and was sent to a foster home, where I was also their baby sitter.

When I graduated from high school, I immediately married a boy from school whom I was friendly with. It got me out of the system, but I worked hard on that marriage. We had five children in six years, plus both of my elderly in-laws lived with us.

For the last two years I have been alone. (Both of my parents died shortly after my husband was killed in an auto accident.) I

have been taking care of others all my life, so now I feel I deserve some alone time.

Because I owned my home (which I earned myself), my granddaughter thinks it is her right to move in with her two girls as "you have more space than you need." I love "Mary," but I feel she won't move out once she's in. I don't want to alienate her, but I want her to stand on her own two feet, not mine.

— Feeling Trapped and Guilty

DEAR FEELING TRAPPED AND GUILTY: Stand your ground. You are not trapped and you should not feel guilty. Your alarm bells are going off with good

reason. The statement that you "have more space than you need" is presumptuous, and shows that your granddaughter has an exaggerated sense of entitlement. And you might, indeed, have a hard time getting rid of her once she gets comfortable.

My advice is to "remin" your granddaughter of the facts of your life, just as you related them to me. You are entitled to peace of mind and a life of your own because you have definitely "served your time."

Dear Abby is written by Jeanne Phillips and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, Calif. 90069