

## 2025 Outstanding Pool & Recreational Project



*Finished pool*

# Southern Living Pools

## YATES PROJECT

*By Juanjose Armenta-Aguirre*

The phone rings: “Junior, come bring us a truck.”

This is nothing out of the ordinary for me. I drive a truck when needed, and that call was no exception, especially with the jobsite out in the Marble Falls/Horseshoe Bay area of Central Texas. Considering the time of day, I would be the last truck arriving and would have to bring an empty truck back — this way the crew wouldn’t have to wait for material.

I arrived and got off the truck, but before I had a chance to prep it, Trent Dalton (Field Supervisor for Southern Living Pools) came up from behind me and put his hand on my shoulder. “Junior, you got a minute? I want to show you something.”

I followed him in a pickup truck to a spot in the Escondido Lago gated community of Horseshoe Bay. After we arrived, Dalton asked me, “What do you see?”

Very confused, I offered: “Well, I see beautiful homes and the lake.”

“What’s missing?”

“Let me guess, a pool?” I was being humorous.

“Exactly!” Then Dalton talked with me about a new project they had just acquired, and we began to plan for something that neither one of us had done, either in size or location.

This residential project of Southern Living Pools is

located on Apache Tears Road in the gated community of Escondido Lago. The lake that the project is in (yes “in”) is Lake LBJ, a man-made, controlled lake on the Colorado River — one of the most unique aspects of the pool is that at least two-thirds of the pool is suspended directly above the lake, off the shoreline.

It was 18 months in the making, from the beginning of the project to the start of shotcrete placement. We worked as a team with the engineering firm, the home builder, and of course, our pool builder, Southern Living Pools, and its owner and operator, Brent Dalton.

Since the house was under construction when we did our first site visit (they had to drill the piers in granite and then form-and-pour the slab that the pool would sit on), we knew it wouldn't be a 'next week' kind of situation. This gave us plenty of time to plan and evaluate how we would shoot this project.

We had plenty of time to stockpile sand from the Collier Materials plant in Llano and let it dry, and to fill our silos with cement from Texas Lehigh in Buda. We decided not to move our material and delivery equipment to a closer site in Marble Falls as we had done in the past, but load out of our plant in Liberty Hill instead, roughly 60 mi (97 km) from the project. Since we use dry-mix shotcrete (the old tradename “gunite”), we were able to deliver the dry concrete materials and then mix them on-site. This gave us the maximum time to shoot the material. We also ensured our work stayed within the per-day time frame and noise production parameters stipulated by the HOA.

This project was completed in 2 overall phases. The first phase took 6 days of shooting (including 2 weather



*Layout of pool on concrete slab suspended above water*



*The pool formed with reinforcing bar and plumbing installed*



*Dry-mix shotcrete placement complete*

delays), and we shot 156 yd<sup>3</sup> (119 m<sup>3</sup>) of mainly footers. The second phase was over 5 days where we shotcreted the pool and ancillary features. This phase totaled 230 yd<sup>3</sup> (176 m<sup>3</sup>) of concrete. This was all shot in August of 2023 in the awesome Texas heat with the added humidity of the adjacent lake. The outside perimeter of this pool includes:

- A lazy river (or channel)
- A spa
- A sitting area with a fire pit
- A tanning ledge/beach area
- Planters
- Bar stools overlooking the infinity edge and the lake
- A catch basin for the overflow of the infinity edge
- Columns

Since minimal forms were used, we saved not only lumber but also significant materials and labor costs. Because minimal forms were erected, we were able to create the curvature as rendered, producing the stunning visual this pool demanded.

We used a 4:1 (sand:cement) concrete mixture design yielding a compressive strength over 4000 psi (28 MPa) with ASTM-C33 and TXDOT-certified sand and a Type I Cement. We had 8 crew members inside the pool and one outside running the Putzmeister AG-15 dry-mix gun. Compressed air was provided by an Ingersoll Rand HP915 and the dry-mix materials delivered from a truck-mounted volumetric mixer by Strong Industries, along with its driver. We were unable to set up next to the pool, so we set the gun in the front of the house, which was under construction at the time, and ran the dry-mix delivery hose through the house with all preventive safety measures in place. We reduced our carbon footprint by using on-site volumetric mixers rather than loading premixed concrete from a ready-mix plant.

The interior of the pool was finished with an exposed pebble aggregate by Centex Plaster, and the pool was completed in October of 2025. This pool was an opportunity to showcase the various ways shotcrete routinely translates a vision into a concrete reality.

## 2025 OUTSTANDING POOL & RECREATIONAL PROJECT

*Project:*

**Southern Living Pools – Yates Project**

*Project Location:*

**Horseshoe Bay, TX**

*Shotcrete Contractor Company:*

**Texan Concrete Construction Solutions,  
LLC dba - Texan Gunite\***

*Architect Company:*

**Smith Engineering – Austin, TX**

*Materials Supplier Company:*

**Texan Concrete Construction Solutions,  
LLC dba - Texan Gunite\***

*Equipment Manufacturer Company:*

**Putzmeister America\***

*General Contractor:*

**Jeff Jackson Homes**

*Owner:*

**Southern Living Pools**

\*ASA Sustaining Corporate or Corporate Member



**Juanjose Armenta-Aguirre** is a second-generation 'gunite guy'. He's been in the dry process shotcrete industry since 1999 alongside his father, Juan Armenta. In 2012, he co-founded Texan Gunite and is the COO. Juanjose is an ACI-Certified Shotcreter and has several other certificates through ACI.

He's an active member of ACI 304, 524, 506, & 322, serving as the subcommittee chair for materials and durability. He's on the American Shotcrete Association Board of Directors and is an active member of several ASA committees. Juanjose is also the current President for the PHTA Central Texas Chapter, as well as on the Board of Directors for the PHTA Builders Council. He is a PHTA Certified Pool Inspector and a Certified Pool Operator. His undergraduate degree is from the University of Houston, and his graduate studies are from Cardinal Stritch University and St. Francis de Sales Seminary, both in Milwaukee, WI.