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JAN NORMAN ON SMALL BUSINESS

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Half-acre O.C. basement wins award

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Ekdal Masonry & Concrete Inc. in Newport Beach has won Basement of the Year honors for the third straight year for the [Concrete Foundations Association of North America](#).

Ekdal this year takes double honors:

A basement of almost half an acre for Villa Del Lago in Pelican Crest for John McMonigle, Monarch Estates, that will be used for a gym, wine cellar and parking for 20 vehicles with a deck on top

A below sea level basement of less than 5,000 square feet for a replacement home on Linda Isle for The Richard Crawford Co.

Check out these photos of the construction of Villa Del Lago (click on photo for larger view):



The company's 2007 winning entry was a 50,000-square-foot basement in Corona Del Mar. [Click here](#) to read the details.

And if you think that's something, imagine building one under water (or at least below sea level):



The red plastic is part of the waterproofing for the basement.

“You have to make these almost like large bathtubs to resist water penetration says Ryan Ekedal, a principal with the company and son of founder Dave Ekedal.

Ekedal is a family-owned general engineering foundation contractor in business for almost 40 years. It’s specialty is hillside foundations, subterranean basements and basements below sea level, which makes it a strong contender for the CFA’s award.

If you think bragging rights to “Basement of the Year” is strange, consider that the award used to be called “Basement from Hell,” highlighting unbelievably difficult residential concrete projects, according to the association’s [web site](#). They’ve lost their sense of humor. They changed the name of the award this year to “project of the year.”

McMonigle says, “I have known and worked with Dave Ekedal and Ekedal Masonry and Concrete Inc. for the last 10 years on many different and always complex projects. In each and every project Ekedal has shown the professionalism and attention to detail which make them the leader in their trade.”

Many of these projects take years to build, Ryan says. Despite the current economy, “we feel fortunate to keep a nucleus of skilled workers busy.

“Even in this volatile economic climate, there actually are local companies being recognized on a national/global level.”

[Click here](#) to watch of video of Ekedal crews at work.