

WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

MARCH-APRIL 2022

WellenParkJournal.com

Vol. IV, No. 1 • FREE

INSPIRED BY THE SUN

Introducing Solis Hall



Artist rendering of Solis Hall

BY NANCI THEORET

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Rick Severance, president of Wellen Park, was pondering weddings. Specifically, wedding invitations. The father of three daughters (who aren't yet pondering weddings themselves), Severance was thinking about the community's new events venue, its picturesque lakefront setting, neighboring Canopy Green and magnificent sunsets. He has been thinking about how the civic building, known internally as Town

"We wanted a name that reflected all the possibilities. The building is absolutely stunning. There's nothing like it in the region. It's on the lake with amazing views of sunset."

— Rick Severance, president of Wellen Park

SEE SOLIS, A12 ▶

Artists now exhibiting at the Wellen Park Welcome Center

BY CHARMAINE ENGELSMAN-ROBINS

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

The North Port Art Center has a long tradition of providing exhibits and instruction to area artists and art lovers. Wellen Park's partnership with the NPAC has expanded public access to the arts by inviting area artists to display small shows of their work in the

Welcome Center for residents and visitors to enjoy and purchase. The latest exhibit features two talented women — Darlene Cramer and Kaye Schuck.

Darlene Cramer

Darlene Cramer was an Ohio resident (Youngstown area), aware



CRAMER

of her inner artist but was busy working a full-time Sam's Club job for 25 years. She'd have spurts of interest but no free time. For a time, she combined her work and art interest by establishing and operating a crafter's home show party business. Unfortunately, her business became overwhelming

and she decided to sell it to lighten her load. Once their children were grown, she and her husband Ron decided to downsize in a big way. They went from a 3,600-square-foot home to a 450-square-foot home and retired from their jobs. Finally, they had the time to pursue other interests. Cramer finally unleashed her inner

SEE ARTISTS, A24 ▶

In appreciation

The World Series champion Atlanta Braves gave their Florida fans a thank you party that lasted all weekend. **A21 ▶**



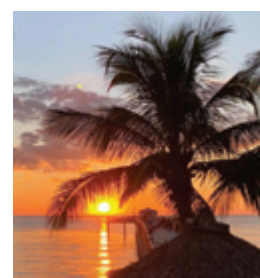
On Demand

Sarasota County launches new transportation service. **A29 ▶**



Photo contest winners

Wellen Park residents share their sunset shots. **A44 ▶**



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COURTESY PHOTO

Guide dogs in training with their coaches.

Grand Palm golfs for Southeastern Guide Dogs

BY CHARMAINE ENGELSMAN-ROBINS

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Wellen Park's Grand Palm is a close-knit neighborhood and appears to be a magnet for golfers.

Once some residents realized how many of them shared a love for the sport, they decided to make it official. Rich Mazur and Bill Piccirillo organized the Grand Palm Men's

Golf League, which has approximately 100 members. Leslie Curley gathered about 30 women to form the Grand Palm Women's Golf League. Membership is free and open to all current and former Grand Palm residents.

Many of the golf league members were players before they moved to Wellen Park. Their camaraderie builds and evolves into something special as the league members rotate to play on different teams and get to

know all the members well. They play on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

It wasn't long before these good-hearted golfers decided that in addition to enjoying the exercise and socialization, they wanted to do something more. It was at one of their after-game clubhouse gatherings that someone suggested they stage fundraisers to support various area causes.

SEE GUIDE DOGS, A4 ►

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GUIDE DOGS

From page 2

Grand Palm residents Mark Tryba and Mark Paone co-chair the fundraising committee and took the bull by the horns. They discovered that organizing such events is a tall order, with different challenges and considerations. They toured several area golf and country clubs to find a club willing and able to host a fun and worthy event.

"I visited many courses without success before I was pleasantly surprised by a warm reception at Plantation Golf & Country Club," recalls Tryba, specifically mentioning that Julie Edgar (director of golf there) was "especially helpful."

Not only did the Plantation venue seem honored to participate, the club was also a great help in pulling everything together, making the event a success. Grand Palm's first event resulted in a generous donation to All Faiths Food Bank.

Tryba's former neighbor, Ruth Schoch, knew he'd had experience in training a service dog, and connected him with the Southeastern Guide Dogs puppy raising program. Grand Palm raised \$8,000, which benefactor Mary Scharf matched. That contribution was enough to fund two puppies and their training programs; one is destined to benefit a veteran with PTSD.

"We had a dog at each hole," explains Tryba. "And in the country club dining area where we all enjoyed a fabulous lunch after the game, nine dogs each unobtrusively stayed next to the chair of its trainer."

So many people were impressed and moved by the dogs that "it almost brought them to tears," says Tryba. "Over the next week, I got about 25 emails just saying 'thank you' for having the pups there."

Outside of Wellen Park, the same support-



This guide dog puppy patiently waits for its assignment.

COURTESY PHOTOS

ive, caring generosity permeates the surrounding city of Venice.

"Big kudos to everyone who helped make this possible," says Tryba. "About 75 different businesses, 65 in Venice proper alone, donated money, prizes, meals and more, all while they themselves were struggling to survive in the pandemic. Randy Kendrick, owner of Venice Print Center, was especially helpful."

The golfers of Grand Palm are already planning another benefit for Southeastern Guide Dogs, scheduled for December.



Golfers line up to register their teams.



Guide dogs in training need to play sometimes.

"Big kudos to everyone who helped make this possible. About 75 different businesses, 65 in Venice proper alone, donated money, prizes, meals and more..."

— Mark Tryba, fundraising co-chair



A guide dog was stationed at every hole.

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COUNTDOWN TO DOWNTOWN

Homegrown Capstan Financial opening Wellen Park office

BY NANCITHEORET

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Financial Consultant Matt DePalma is as close to a Florida native as it gets. The managing partner of Capstan Financial Consulting Group in Sarasota, DePalma was 2 years old when his family moved to Englewood, growing up in a town where generations of children have lamented about the lack of things to do.

“This area is the stomping ground of my childhood,” he reminisces while explaining how his career brought him full circle back to the Venice-Englewood area. Capstan Financial is expanding to Downtown Wellen, leasing a 4,500-square-foot office. The firm is currently occupying temporary quarters for its Wellen Park location until the new building is completed later this year.

“The appeal of Wellen Park is getting in on the proverbial ground floor and being entrenched in the community for the next 20 to 30 years — and beyond,” says DePalma. “Yes, people are moving here, and the average demographics are important, but it’s more about the hometown approach of Capstan.”

Started by DePalma and Bill Marsh in 2010, Capstan is a boutique financial consultancy, independently owned and operated. It manages \$1 billion in client assets as of February 2022 and provides retirement, estate and education planning, wealth management, investment plans and employee and executive benefits. Capstan’s downtown Sarasota office has 25 employees with more than 400 combined years of diverse experience.

DePalma says the new Wellen Park office will employ about a dozen people. The space has offices for eight advisers, a 1,000-square-



COURTESY PHOTOS

Above: Matt DePalma with William Marsh IV, managing principal of Capstan Financial.

Right: Capstan’s Downtown Wellen office will be located near the turrets in this rendering.



foot patio and two conference rooms – one in a turret that DePalma hopes neighboring

businesses will use.

“It’s really going to be something special

for us,” says DePalma. “It’s designed to be a gathering space.”

As part of its initiation into Downtown Wellen and aim of being a good business citizen, Capstan plans to take an active role in the community, entertaining clients in locally owned restaurants and finding opportunities to funnel dollars into the local economy and support the community lifestyle. In Sarasota, the company sponsors events and programs that span from arts and special needs to music. DePalma is the poster child for blood donations, his face emblazoned on the Suncoast Blood Bank’s bloodmobile bus. Capstan also encourages employees to find a passion and support it through volunteerism.

“The same thing goes for our clients. We try to get behind their organizations,” he says. “We’re involved in so many different things.”

One of his priorities at the moment is finding new advisers.

“My job is to find the next person working at Morgan Stanley, Bank of America and the other big companies and tell them how we do it at Capstan, how we’ve found a better way. It’s a great place to finish well for a mature advisor or one just getting started.”

“We want to be a big part of this new community,” he adds. “I really feel good about having this opportunity to grow with something that’s literally coming out of the ground, to be

woven into the fabric of a new community. As a kid who grew up here, it’s exciting.”

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ALL WELLEN GOOD

SCF Venice celebrates opening of Fit Trail

SPECIAL TO THE WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

State College of Florida Manatee-Sarasota students, faculty and staff recently celebrated the opening of the Fit Trail at SCF Venice.

Led by SCF Venice provost Darlene Wedler-Johnson, students, faculty and staff walked the trail for the first time at the celebration. Designed to promote health and wellness at the college and in the community, the Fit Trail winds three-quarters of a mile around a beautiful lake, giving joggers and walkers an opportunity to catch a glimpse of wildlife in their natural habitats.

Two student organizations, Student Government Association and Health and Wellness Club, took the lead role in helping plan the trail. Faculty members involved in the planning process were Jeff Snyder, advisor, office of student life; Andy Swanson, associate professor, natural sciences, and Health and Wellness Club advisor; Felix Rizk, professor, natural sciences; Sheri Chejlyk, associate professor, social and behavioral sciences; and Mary Lazier, assistant professor, language and literature.

At the celebration, Wedler-Johnson recognized SCF president Lars A. Hafner and Traci Steen, associate vice president of facilities, planning and maintenance, for their leadership and commitment to health and wellness at SCF.

BMK Architects from Sarasota was the designer and A.D. Morgan from Bradenton was the construction manager of the trail.

The Fit Trail, which includes 10 exercise stations for a balanced exercise routine, is free, open to the public and ADA compli-



ant. Trail hours are from dawn to dusk. Motorized vehicles and bicycles are not allowed. The trail is accessible between buildings 100 and 500. Maps and directions are online. 📍



CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL
Above: The Fit Trail at SCF is open to all.

Left: Every station provides exercise instructions.

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WANDER WITH WELLEN

A gem of historic proportions

BY PATRICIA HORWELL

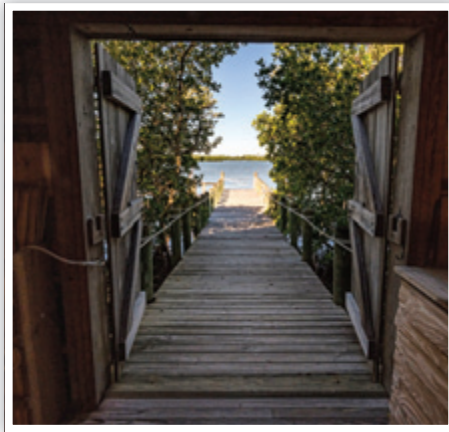
Wellen Park Journal Editor

When you visit Historic Spanish Point in neighboring Osprey, you are taking a giant step back in time — as far back as about 5,000 years.

The 20-acre museum on Little Sarasota Bay features the area's archaic pre-history, as well as pioneer days and early 20th century history. It is believed the Calusa natives first settled in this area. Those prehistoric people lived near the shorelines, taking advantage of the area's abundant food sources. They used pottery and ceramics and devised their own tools, many of which were left behind in their shell mounds, or middens. The midden was, in essence, a garbage dump. At HSP, visitors can walk into the country's only archeological exhibit built inside an archaic midden. Every time you look into it (it is preserved behind glass) you will notice different items. Burial mounds were found on the property — in addition to human remains, graves of several dogs and an alligator were discovered during excavations that took place there between 1959 and 1962.

Around 1867, the Webb family, homesteaders from Utica, NY, were looking for a place to settle along the gulf coast. A Spanish trader told them about the land on Little Sarasota Bay. The Webbs named it Spanish Point. They worked the property for more than 40 years. They built Guptill House and White Cottage and ran a successful citrus business and an inn for vacationers. The pioneer site also features Mary's Chapel and the pioneer cemetery.

A group of volunteer boat builders and captains practice their craft near Guptill



COURTESY PHOTO

Little Sarasota Bay from Packing House at Selby Gardens' Historic Spanish Point campus

House on Little Sarasota Bay. The Magic and the Lizzie G, replicas of the original boats, were hand-built by the museum's maritime volunteers. They also conduct boat tours on the Magic February through April. Selby Gardens, which operates HSP, has also begun a full-day boat tour, which runs from Selby Gardens in downtown Sarasota to HSP and back. Guests have access to both campuses and lunch.

Around 1910, Chicago socialite Bertha Honoré Palmer, considered to be Sarasota County's first developer, bought the property; she owned most of the county as far as the Myakka River. A woman ahead of her time,



COURTESY PHOTO

Above: Mary's Chapel at Selby Gardens' Historic Spanish Point campus

Left: Pergola



and reflecting pool, as well as the fern garden and sunken garden on the property were her creations. Her home was where the Oaks is today. Palmer died in 1918.

Moving on into the 21st century, HSP recently expanded its butterfly garden into a screened-in butterfly house. Visitors can

Palmer was also a cattle rancher and a citrus grower. She named the area where the Webbs settled Osprey Point. The pergola

SEE GEM, A14 ▶

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SOLIS

From page 1

Hall, would be the special place where couples mark the start of their new lives together, and families and groups gather to celebrate 50th wedding anniversaries and engagement parties, baby showers, concerts and a host of homegrown events.

The name Town Hall just didn't resonate. It sounded generic, more fitting for political rallies and city council meetings. Not exactly enchanting or romantic on an invitation to a special place.

“We wanted a name that reflected all the possibilities,” says Severance. “The building is absolutely stunning. There's nothing like it in the region. It's on the lake with amazing views of sunset.”

The answer was in the sun — solis — Latin for sun.

The freestanding Solis Hall, now under construction, is the centerpiece of Downtown Wellen, the community's walkable hub for social gatherings, restaurants, retail and recreation. The vast emerald sweep of the Grand Lawn, a destination for outdoor events and seating for alfresco concerts, provides the foreground for Solis Hall, creating a velvety green red-carpet arrival.

Designed by Khoury Vogt Architects, known for its memorable residential and retail buildings in Alys Beach, Rosemary Beach and other idyllic Florida Panhandle towns, Solis Hall was inspired by scenic New England town halls. Its architecture features a gable roof, sloping walls on each side of its all-glass entry with an arbor above, and an outdoor stage. Inside, its 4,400 square feet — most of it dedicated to the main hall — is illuminated by expanses of windows and glass doors offering

visual and physical connections to the lake and more than 4,000 square feet of outdoor gathering areas, porches and patios wrapping around the building. The ceiling soars 25 feet.

“The natural light in this space is pretty unbelievable,” Christine Masney, vice president of marketing for Wellen Park says. “It's a wonderful place for private events. The thing I love about the space is it's elegant yet comfortable. The possibilities are endless — casual for a baby shower or gender reveal and elegant for black-tie events. The outdoor stage is perfect for live theater performances and concerts — from symphony quartets to a tribute band.”

Khoury Vogt planned Solis Hall to stand out, yet blend in. “We knew we needed something that had an unorthodox form in a civic scale,” says Erik Vogt, a founding partner at the firm. “It will fit in nicely and yet feel distinctive because it's a building open for everyone to use.”

With one side oriented to Downtown Wellen's main boulevard, construction is now 50% completed. And Solis Hall is already getting attention and rental inquiries, says Masney. “The architecture is extremely thoughtful and designed in a beautiful manner that lends itself to the décor,” she says. “It has amazing chandeliers. It's going to be an inviting and memorable space.”



“The natural light in this space is pretty unbelievable. It's a wonderful place for private events. The thing I love about the space is it's elegant yet comfortable. The possibilities are endless — casual for a baby shower or gender reveal and elegant for black-tie events. The outdoor stage is perfect for live theater performances and concerts — from symphony quartets to a tribute band.”

— Christine Masney, vice president of marketing, Wellen Park

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“Solis Hall will be the iconic centerpiece of downtown. As the developer we have a vision for what the space can be. It will be interesting to see what residents have in mind, how the community intends to use it, and how Solis Hall will be integrated as part of Wellen Park’s lifestyle.” — **Christine Masney**, vice president of marketing, Wellen Park

The alfresco spaces around Solis Hall are an extension of the main venue space, each distinct and enhancing the building’s flexibility for rentals. Events can be booked just in the hall or hosts can also rent the alfresco venues, which include Canopy Green, an intimate lakefront park with artificial turf under the shade of downtown’s sprawling signature oak tree.

“We see Canopy Green as the perfect place for memorable celebrations,” says Severance. “When it’s not being used for events, there can be outdoor

games and Adirondack chairs for cocktails while guests wait for their dinner reservations at a nearby restaurant.”

An upscale waterfront restaurant is planned next to the green and will serve as the exclusive caterer for Solis Hall. As Downtown Wellen’s premier waterfront restaurant, the establishment will also offer an outstanding bar and lounge experience. Details will be announced shortly on the restaurateur/operator.

Christine Masney, vice president of marketing for

Wellen Park, envisions Wellen Park residents and downtown visitors taking advantage of Solis Hall’s many built-in benches to enjoy an alfresco lunch by the lake or watch sunsets. She also hopes the building will become the community meeting space for the area and a venue for public events, hosting mahjong and bridge tournaments, art shows, lecture series, holiday events, Easter egg hunts and as the starting and finishing lines for 5-K races and marathons.

“Solis Hall will be the iconic centerpiece of downtown,” Masney says. “As the developer

we have a vision for what the space can be. It will be interesting to see what residents have in mind, how the community intends to use it, and how Solis Hall will be integrated as part of Wellen Park’s lifestyle.”

Solis Hall is planned for completion in the fourth quarter of 2022 as part of Downtown Wellen’s initial phase. Wellen Park will soon be adding information about Solis Hall to their website, where those interested in renting out the space can inquire about availability and pricing.

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GEM

From page 10

commune with hundreds of these colorful creatures as they flutter from plant to plant, often landing on guests' clothing — even shoes. Signage reminds guests to be careful not to step on any butterflies and to make sure none are on clothing before exiting.

Shifting to the future, the museum is currently offering the exhibit, "Seeing the Invisible: An Augmented Reality Contemporary Art Exhibition."

This exhibition of contemporary art created with augmented-reality technologies is on display throughout the grounds. It features the works of 13 international artists, including luminaries such as Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei. The exhibition is simultaneously on display at 12 botanical gardens in six countries, so someone in Scotland or South Africa can view the same work in a completely different garden environment — an example of what CEO Jennifer Rominiecki calls "botanical diplomacy."

To make this work, experts had to determine the exact GPS coordinates of the spot where the work would be seen and then link it to the coordinates of the artwork. To experience it, download an app on a mobile phone or tablet.

Lunch from the Michael's On East food truck is available from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; the truck is parked behind White Cottage. Visitors may eat al fresco bayside or on the White Cottage screened porch.

The museum holds several concert series: Performances at the Point, Garden Music Series and Sunset Music Series — all at the pergola and reflecting pool.

Historic Spanish Point is at 337 N. Tamiami Trail, Osprey, and is open 10 a.m.-5 p.m. daily, except for Thanksgiving Day when it is open 10 a.m.-3 p.m.



COURTESY PHOTO

Seeing the Invisible at Selby Gardens' Historic Spanish Point campus.

Tickets are available onsite at the gazebo via contactless purchasing using credit or debit cards. Tickets may also be purchased online for the Historic Spanish Point campus.

For more information about tickets and programs, visit <https://selby.org/hsp/visit-historic-spanish-point> or call 941-366-5731.

COURTESY PHOTO

Left to Right: Pamela Rosenkranz Anamazon (Limb), 2021 and Sigalit Landau Salt Stalagmite #1 [Three Bridges], 2021





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HOMES AT WELLEN PARK

MARCH-APRIL 2022

| A15

SOLSTICE – TOLL BROTHERS



Flora

The Flora's open-concept floor plan features an inviting covered entry and welcoming foyer, leading to the expansive great room and views to the large covered lanai. The well-designed kitchen overlooks a bright casual dining area and includes a large center island with breakfast bar, plenty of counter and cabinet space, and a walk-in pantry. The primary bedroom suite is highlighted by a generous walk-in closet and a spa-like primary bath with a dual-sink vanity, a large luxe shower, linen storage and a private water closet. Secondary bedrooms offer convenient access to a shared hall bath. Additional highlights include a versatile flex room, a convenient powder room, centrally located laundry and additional storage.

Sales center:

152 Daylily Blvd, North Venice
941-628-7086



Specifications

🏠 Base price: \$578,995

🏠 SF: 2,386+

🛏 3 to 4 Bedrooms

🚿 2.5 to 3 Bathrooms

🏠 Home Type: Single Family

GRAN PLACE – SAM RODGERS HOMES



Destin

The epitome of Florida living, the Destin features three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a three-car garage. Begin your day in your expansive home's breakfast nook overlooking the spacious 675-square-foot lanai. If you love to entertain, the spacious open living area is perfect for just that. As are the additional floor plan options that include an optional in-law suite, bonus room with en suite bathroom or bonus room with a pool bath.

Sales center: Coming Soon

18075 Home Run Drive, Venice, FL
941-621-9307



Specifications

🏠 Base price: From the Low 900's

🏠 SF: 2,697

🛏 3 Bedrooms

🚿 2 Bathrooms

🏠 Home Type: Single Family

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

HOMES AT WELLEN PARK

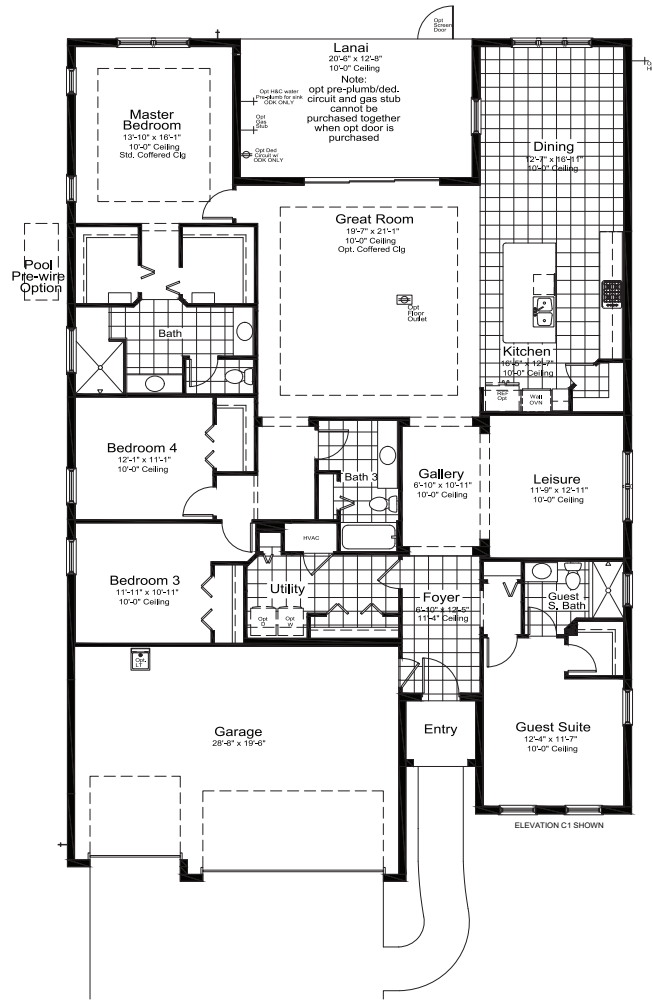
AVELINA – NEAL COMMUNITIES



Avelina – Silver Sky 2

This spacious new home design in Avelina is perfect for family as well as guests. The Silver Sky 2 home includes a guest room with en suite bath and walk-in closet, a luxurious master suite and two secondary bedrooms. An open leisure room can instead be a den with French doors. The foyer and gallery entry makes an elegant impression and leads to an open great room, kitchen and dining nook area. The great room with coffered ceiling offers views out to the sunny covered lanai, where you can add an optional pool bath. A large island and walk-in pantry make the gourmet kitchen especially accommodating. In the comfortable master suite you'll find a bedroom with two walk-in closets, and bath with dual sink vanities, shower, optional garden tub and private water closet.

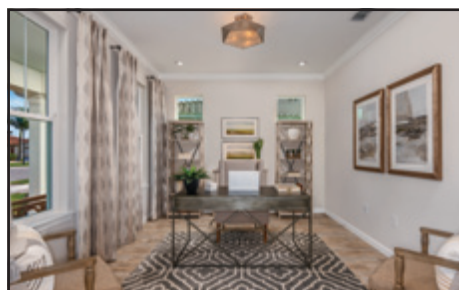
**Sales center:
Coming Soon
941-241-0667**



Specifications

- Base price: Coming soon
- SF: 2,762
- 4 Bedrooms
- 3 Bathrooms
- Home Type: Single Family

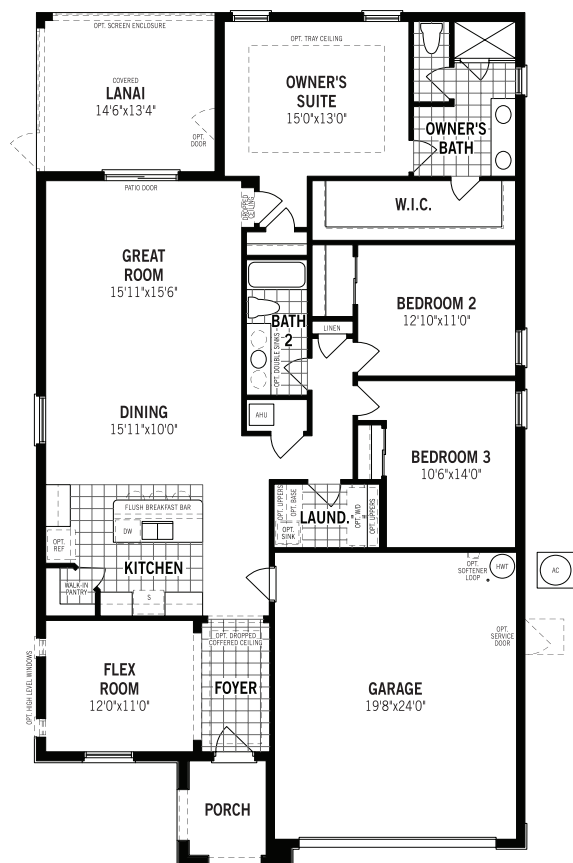
RENAISSANCE – MATTAMY HOMES



Riviera II

The Riviera II is an open and airy home with 1,937 square feet, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, and a 2-car garage. This 1-story single-family home welcomes you with a cozy front porch in the coastal exterior style, or a covered entry. This open home design is highlighted by a designer kitchen with island that overlooks the dining area and spacious great room. A sliding glass door provides easy access to the outdoor covered lanai and brings in abundant sunshine. In the front of the home, a well-lit flex room provides a versatile space for you to use as a home office, hobby room or retreat. Two bedrooms are conveniently located adjacent to a full bath. A spacious owner's suite is located toward the back of the home for privacy and includes an owner's bath with 2 vanities and an oversized walk-in closet.

**Sales center:
11720 Renaissance Blvd., Venice
941-208-6375**



Specifications

- Base price: \$489,990
- SF: 1,937
- 3 Bedrooms
- 2 Bathrooms
- Home Type: Townhome

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

HOMES AT WELLEN PARK

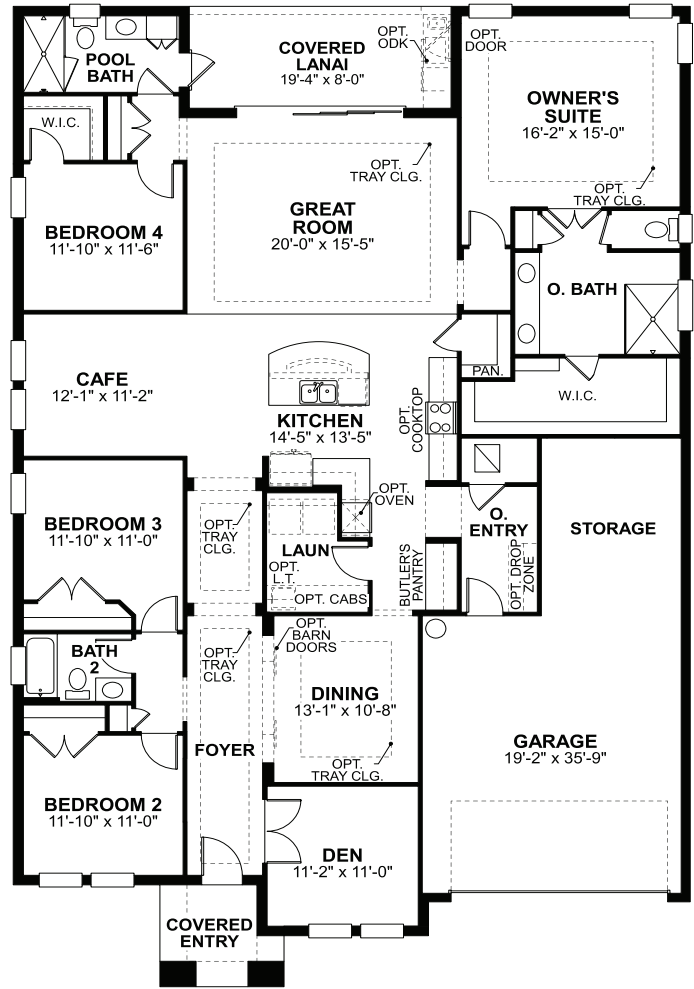
OASIS – M/I HOMES



The Jackson

A spacious and elegant design, the Jackson's standard layout includes 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, a 3-car garage with additional storage space and a den with a fully separate mudroom and utility room. As you walk into the Jackson, you step through a covered entry into a long foyer. A den sits at the beginning of the house, creating a light-filled space for work or play. Two large bedrooms sit on the other side with a full bathroom. At the end of a long hallway with an optional tray ceiling, you are greeted by a large open concept space. The kitchen offers an informal dining nook, ample countertop and cabinet storage and a full walk-in utility room. With clear sightlines, the kitchen opens out to the great room. Designed with maximum space for entertaining and family gatherings, the great room is backed by huge sliding glass doors that lead to a covered lanai. The owner's suite is fit for any king and queen with an optional tray ceiling. The owner's bathroom offers double sinks, an enclosed shower space, a separate toilet area and a massive walk-in closet with the option to extend it even further. The mudroom provides a seamless transition from outdoors to indoors, featuring a 2-car garage with additional space that can be used as a home gym or room for extra storage.

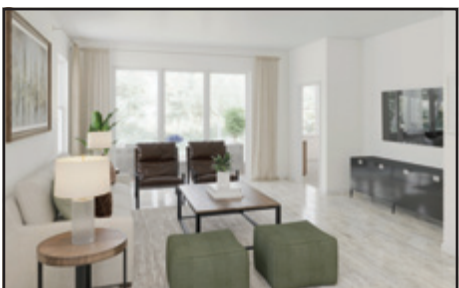
Sales center:
19806 Bridgetown Loop, Venice, FL
941-208-6897



Specifications

- Base price: \$496,990
- SF: 2,744 (Interior)
- 4 Bedrooms
- 3 Bathrooms
- Home Type: Single Family

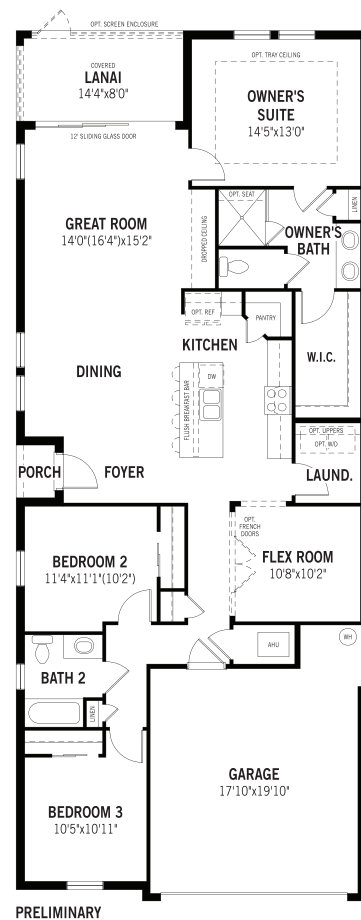
SUNSTONE – MATTAMY HOMES



Topsail

The 1,765-square-foot Topsail is an attached villa floorplan with generous space and style. The flow of space and natural light in this end home elevates your every activity, whether daily routine or special occasion — with shared living areas complementing private, comfortable bedrooms. The large, combined space of the dining room, kitchen with breakfast bar and great room is perfect for entertaining, with a covered lanai extending the stylish living space outdoors. Bedrooms 2 and 3 share a full bath, while the private owner's suite has its own lavish bathroom and a large walk-in closet. A flex room opens off the kitchen and bedroom hallway, offering a versatile space for anything you choose. This is a PRELIMINARY floorplan.

Sales center:
11721 Renaissance Boulevard, Venice
941-205-7051



Specifications

- Base price: \$408,990
- SF: 1,765
- 3 Bedrooms
- 2 Bathrooms
- Home Type: Attached Villa

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

HOMES AT WELLEN PARK

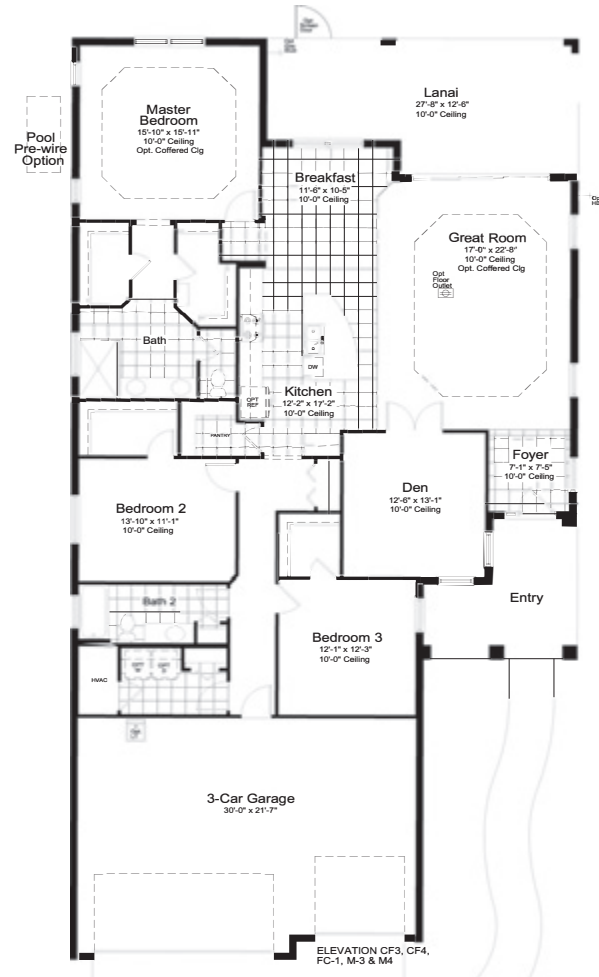
GRAND PALM – NEAL COMMUNITIES



Bright Meadow

The Bright Meadow comes with a variety of personalizing options. Among your alternative choices in this Grand Palm new home floor plan, a fourth bedroom in lieu of a den with French doors, a guest suite with private bath in place of one of the secondary bedrooms, a variety of island designs in the gourmet kitchen and an outdoor kitchen wall and pool bath on the spacious covered lanai. This Neal Communities home design comes with an open family room, kitchen with walk-in pantry and dining nook area. The master suite holds a bedroom with optional ceiling, two walk-in closets and a master bath with dual sinks, walk-in shower and private water closet. The second and third bedrooms each include a walk-in closet.

Sales center:
21209 Wacissa Drive, Venice, FL
941-214-9190



Specifications

- Base price: Low \$600s
- SF: 2,288
- 3 Bedrooms
- 2 Bathrooms
- Home Type: Single family

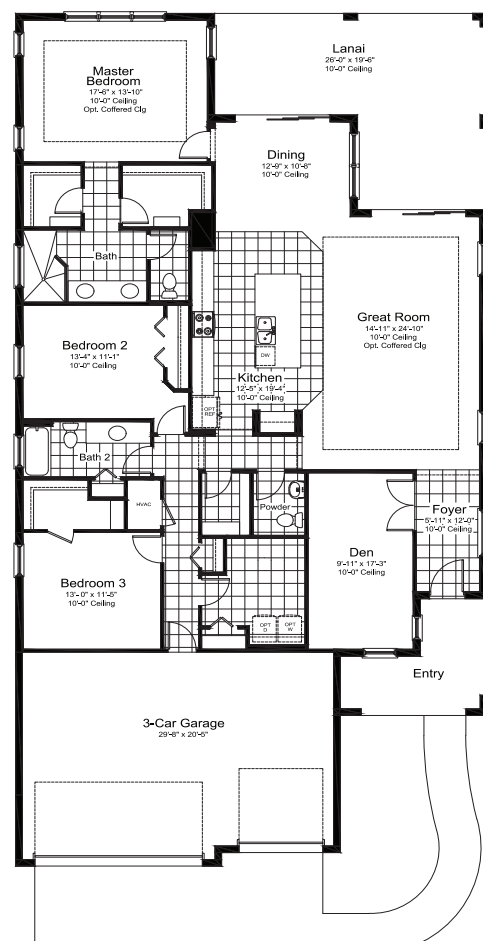
BOCA ROYALE – NEAL COMMUNITIES



Sea Mist

This Neal Communities home design offers the option to add a second floor if you want more space. The main living area of the plan is spacious and open with a great room, dining room and island kitchen. In the master suite, two walk-in closets sit just off the bedroom, which includes an optional coffered ceiling. The suite's master bath features dual sinks, a large walk-in shower and water closet. Another full bath, situated between the two remaining bedrooms, has the option of Jack and Jill entry. The plan also includes a den or office, large laundry room and a spacious covered lanai, which comes with options for an outdoor kitchen wall and a pool bath. If you opt for a second level it can include a loft with a second master suite or a bonus room and full bath.

Sales center:
1 Golf View Dr, Englewood, FL
941-214-9760



Specifications

- Base price: Low \$600s
- SF: 2,427
- 3 Bedrooms
- 2.5 Bathrooms
- Home Type: Single family

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

HOMES AT WELLEN PARK

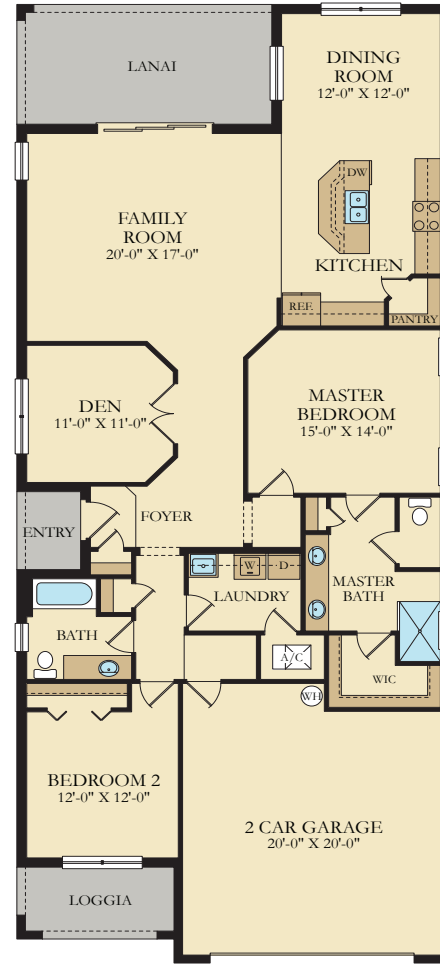
SARASOTA NATIONAL – WCI, A LENNAR COMPANY



Roma

The living is easy with a perfect 1,917 square feet of under-air living space, featuring two spacious bedrooms plus den, two full baths, a large 2-car garage and airy and open living room with sliders leading to screened-in lanai.

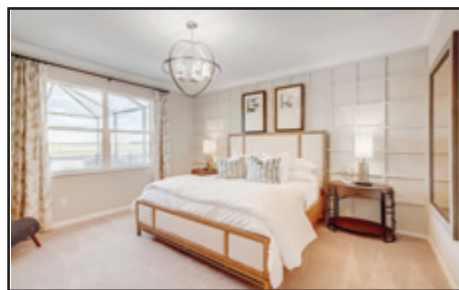
Sales center:
23114 Copperleaf Drive, Venice
941-246-0076



Specifications

- 🏠 Base price: Starting from the low \$400s
- 🏠 SF: 1,917
- 🛏️ 2 Bedrooms + Den
- 🚿 2 Bathrooms
- 🏠 Home Type: Single Family

TORTUGA – LENNAR



Marsala

The 2,201-square-foot Marsala home is designed to entertain, featuring an open-concept kitchen and great room. A sumptuous owner's suite creates a personal retreat set apart at the back of the home with two walk-in closets and fabulous master bath. Two additional bedrooms each have their own private bathroom. The den is a great home office or hobby room. The Marsala is complete with a spacious covered lanai and two-car garage.

Sales center:
19611 Tortuga Cay Drive, Venice, FL
941-621-9324



Specifications

- 🏠 Base price: Starting from the low \$400s
- 🏠 SF: 2,201
- 🛏️ 3 Bedrooms + Den
- 🚿 3 Bathrooms
- 🏠 Home Type: Single Family

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

WELL VERSED

Venice Theatre — not so little anymore

BY CHARMAINE ENGELSMAN-ROBINS

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

What started out in a borrowed building — an old army barracks at the Venice Army Air Base, lent to the theater by then Mayor Frank Raeburn — Venice Little Theatre staged its debut performance, “The Torchbearers.”

It thrived over the years and became dearer to the community, eventually outgrowing its name and dropping the no-longer appropriate “Little.”

The company now known as Venice Theatre was founded in 1950. This community live theater is now the second largest and most active in the country — its mainstage room accommodates 432 seats, while its smaller black box theater seats 90.

Audience members are encouraged to relax when they attend and wear comfortable clothing. It is perfectly acceptable to show up in shorts and a shirt to enjoy the programs.

Ever growing, staff and volunteers recently celebrated the renovation and opening of their Tech Arts Center. This renovation is a part of Venice Theatre’s Next Act Capital Campaign, which recently entered its public phase, thanks to a \$500,000 match by area resident Carole Freeland Raymond. Donations are still being accepted. The campaign exists to raise funds to renovate, improve and expand Venice Theatre’s three-building campus, including the main theater building, the Tech Arts Center and the Arts Education Center, acquired in 2019 and yet to be renovated.

The theater has received many accolades, including Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Play, Best Musical, Special Award for Original Music, Director/Design awards and more, ranging from the recognition of local audience members and publications to nods from the Florida Theatre Conference and the Southeastern Theatre Conference. It is reasonable to expect more recognition for the shows scheduled this season.

In addition to offering this array of plays and musical entertainment, Venice Theatre provides theater education for all ages — from five to 105. These offerings have been described as fun, entertaining, high-quality, no-shortcuts theater training programs. Instructors share basics and more that students can use to work their way into show business. Right now, graduates of Venice Theatre programs are working as profes-



COURTESY PHOTO

“Alter Eagles” production at Venice Theatre



COURTESY PHOTO

“Start Me Up” Rolling Stones tribute

sional actors and technicians.

For more information about its educational programs, email KellyDuy@VeniceTheatre.net or call 941-486-8679.

From June 20 to 26, Venice Theatre will, for the fourth time, host the International Community Theatre Festival. The 2020 festival was cancelled, and theater patrons are hungrier than ever for this celebration featuring shows and talent from theater companies across America and around the world. Shows are presented in their own languages — plus one in gibberish. “The language of theatre is international,” says Venice Theatre marketing and public relations director Laurie Colton, “And the visuals make it easily understood.” Photos from previous festivals can be viewed at tinyurl.com/466bbybd.

Tickets sell out quickly.

Venice Theatre is located at 140 Tampa Ave. W., Venice. For information, visit venicetheatre.org or call 941-488-1115. Patrons are encouraged to purchase tickets online. The box office is not currently open for walk-up sales. 💡



COURTESY PHOTO

“Sounds of Soul”

SEASON CALENDAR*

- >> **March 4-April 3:**
“The Last Five Years” — Drama Desk winner, one of TIME magazine’s ten best shows of 2021
- >> **March 6-7:**
“Folk Legacy Trio” — featuring songs of the great folk era from the 1950s through mid-1970s
- >> **March 13-14:**
“Sounds of Soul: A Motown Tribute”
- >> **March 20-21:**
“The Anthems: The Music of Whitney Houston”
- >> **March 25-28:**
“The 28th Annual Silver Foxes Show: Broadway for the Chillz of It!”
- >> **March 27:**
“The Teenyboppers Improviganza: With VT’s Teen Improv Troupe”
- >> **April 15-May 1:**
“Blackbird” — a no-holds-barred drama (adult content)
- >> **April 15-May 1:**
“To Kill a Mockingbird”
- >> **April 24-25:**
“Alter Eagles” — a tribute to the music of The Eagles

*All dates are subject to change.



COURTESY PHOTO

“Let’s Hang On” Four Seasons tribute show

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ALL WELLEN GOOD

Atlanta Braves celebrate World Series victory in Florida

BY SANDRA YEYATI

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

The buzz of excitement and anticipation has been mounting as local Atlanta Braves fans have waited to celebrate the 2021 World Series win at the Braves' spring training home, CoolToday Park. Celebrate is exactly what they did on Feb. 19 and 20 at the World Champions Welcome Weekend. Thousands of jubilant Southwest Florida fans were in attendance, expressing support and appreciation for their favorite team.

The celebration included live concerts, appearances by Braves legends, giveaways, kids' activities, a parade of the Budweiser Clydesdale horses and a firsthand view of the Commissioner's Trophy. Fluffy mascot Blooper bounced among the crowd, all too happy to pose for pictures with his adoring friends.

"There's only one world champion, and it's here," exults Michael Dunn, vice president of Florida operations, who has been with the Atlanta Braves organization for more than 30 years. "It's a very exciting time. We have a new, state-of-the-art stadium with all the fan amenities ready to host the World Series champions."

Each WCWW day was capped by a two-hour evening concert on the plaza. Wowing the stage Saturday was the B Street Band, the longest-running and most revered Bruce Springsteen cover band straight from New Jersey. On Sunday, Nashville's John Stone and the Trailer Park All-stars performed their energetic, crowd-pleasing brand of country music.

During the day, the stadium and plaza were abuzz with free activities and excitement for the whole family. "It was like a glorified open house," Dunn explains. "The stadium was wide open, so people could come with their entire family and pick out their seats, or if they already had season



CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

The crowd waits for the Budweiser Clydesdales parade during the World Champions Welcome Weekend.

tickets, see exactly where they will be sitting during Spring Training."

Autograph Alley offered meet-and-greets with popular VIPs like former player and Braves Hall-of-Famer Andruw Jones, television sportscaster Chip Caray and Braves manager Brian Snitker.

The Budweiser Clydesdales paraded down West Villages Parkway to the plaza both days, and families had a blast in the Wellen Park Fun Zone with baseball-themed activities like running of the bases, a competitive speed pitch and a life-sized baseball card cutout for photo opportuni-

ties. Those who participated in the running of the bases and speed pitch had an opportunity to win beach cruiser bicycles and tickets to an upcoming game, as well as an opportunity to

SEE BRAVES, A22 ►

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PHOTOS BY CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

Clydesdales on parade.

BRAVES

From page 21

take a picture with the championship trophy. And all guests had a chance to sign up to win an Aventon LEVEL Commuter Electric Bike.

Snacks and refreshments were plentiful, as all the concession stands were open for business, offering everything from nachos, chicken sandwiches and empanadas, to hot dogs and deli sandwiches. Braves Country aficionados scooped up official 2021 World Series and Spring Training gear at The Clubhouse Team Store.

“We were thrilled for local fans to enjoy the stadium for such a festive occasion. It was a great and unique time for people to celebrate the reigning champions at CoolToday Park,” Dunn explains, adding that Spring Training offers fans an opportunity to appreciate the players up close. “You’re able to see the games from multiple vantage points because it’s an open concourse, and you’re very close to the field. Plus, Spring Training is the start of the season, so it’s a much looser atmosphere. The players are just getting ready.”

The start of Spring Training will be announced in the immediate future due to current labor negotiations between owners and players. Spring Training tickets range from \$15 to \$60, depending on seat location. Package discounts are available. For more information or to purchase Spring Training tickets, call the box office at 941-413-5000 or visit [Braves.com/springtraining](https://braves.com/springtraining).



ABOVE: Cynthia Bassett passes out Braves pennants to fans at Cool Today Park for the Braves National Title win. RIGHT: Mason Drake showing his support for his favorite team at the Braves celebration.



The Braves’ World Series trophy on display.



Steve Cardona celebrates the win.



Ailey and Emily Adams relaxing at Cool Today Park during the Braves open house.



Wellen Park was there all weekend and gave away an e-bike.



Cruiser bikes and Aventon LEVEL Commuter electric bikes were the prizes for Speed Pitch and Race the Base winners.

Wellen Park announces Speed Pitch and Race of the Bases winners

Three cheers for the winners of the Speed Pitch and Race of the Bases competitions from the Atlanta Braves World Champions Welcome Weekend.

Speed Pitch: Jacob H. won two tickets to a spring training game and a photo with the World Series Trophy.

Race of the Bases: Ryan H., Arica L., and Annabelle C. each won a cruiser bicycle. Brycen H. is the lucky winner of an Aventon LEVEL Commuter electric bike.

Congratulations to all. Wellen Park has emailed the winners with details on collecting their prizes. 🎉



Dalmatian and crew preparing to drive the team down West Villages Parkway.



Fans entering CoolToday Park to celebrate the Braves' World Series win.



Braves manager Brian Snitker signs a baseball for a fan.



Getting the Budweiser Clydesdales ready for their parade.



Derek Toley throws a 59 MPH pitch.

“Everything just fell into place. I feel like I’m doing what I’m supposed to be doing, exactly where I’m supposed to be. This is the first home we’ve had that we consider permanent.”

— Kaye Shuck, artist

ARTISTS

From page 1

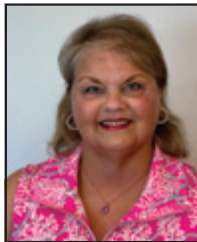
artist, after so many years of waiting for time. She had always loved crafts and photography, and now she could explore and embrace the arts. Her aunt Maryanne Evans connected her with the North Port Art Center and she was immediately hooked.

The thrill of creating mixed media art, with the support and encouragement of her aunt and the super-friendly folks at NPAC, opened the whole world of art to her. She began showing and selling her creations. Her aunt became the first buyer of one of her works (which she cherishes to this day). Cramer often takes inspiration for her art from artistic photography, which she calls “hunting with a camera.” Repurposed and upcycled items are a special joy and challenge for her, as is creating large-scale paintings. She has been known to cruise thrift shops in search of affordable, oversize canvases with which to experiment on a scale much larger than those images her camera could offer.

For Cramer, an especially pleasing and satisfying aspect of her art is how she creates texture on the canvas with a gel medium, thus giving her tree bark, gulf waves and more a lifelike texture that art lovers find particularly appealing. She also incorporates grass, moss and various other elements to convey a sense of reality to the object, rather than an idealized portrait of it.

Kaye Shuck

When Kaye Shuck and her husband decided to leave Wichita, Kansas, they knew they wanted to live somewhere on the Gulf of Mexico coast but weren’t sure exactly where. They traveled and looked around



SHUCK

Texas (a definite “no”), Louisiana (a weak “maybe”) and several areas on Florida’s southwest coast. When they reached the Venice area, it was love at first sight. They spent two days walking around the local beaches and downtown before they connected



“No Pier Pressure” by Darlene Cramer

with their real estate agent (a resident of Gran Paradiso) to zero in on the right place. Wellen Park turned out to be their easy and definite choice. The agent may have made her most convincing closing point when Shuck asked how cold it got in winter. Her Realtor laughed, gestured to the summer attire she was wearing and responded, “I dress like this in January too.”

The Shucks closed the sale of their Wichita home in just five days and moved to Venice in March of 2020, renting a house in IslandWalk so they could continue exploring the area while building in Wellen Park. As they expected, their expanded exposure to the area only reinforced their initial impression.

Discovering the North Port Art Center was the icing on the cake. In Wichita, Shuck had enjoyed teaching and creating art in her own studio/teaching facility — the Clay Art Studio — for more than 10 years. She missed it and was happy to discover the NPAC where she had access to pottery-building equipment. Chatting with new friends there while working on her art, she was pleasantly surprised when she was offered a teaching position at the center. This, in concert with having a small studio in her new home where she could do her acrylic painting, made life pretty close to ideal.

“Everything just fell into place,” says Shuck.



“Debbie Chillin” by Darlene Cramer

“I feel like I’m doing what I’m supposed to be doing, exactly where I’m supposed to be. This is the first home we’ve had that we consider

permanent.”

To see these two women’s art, stop by the Wellen Park Welcome Center. 📍



Pottery by Kaye Shuck

COURTESY PHOTOS

COUNTDOWN TO WELLEN

Outfitter Bringing Kind Vibes and Good Times to Wellen Park

BY NANCITHEORET

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

For Jamie Albano, owner of Venice Outdoor Sports, a trip to Wellen Park proved serendipitous. He was scouting the area for a second retail location and soon discovered the community was looking for an outfitter to offer electric bikes, kayaks, and paddleboard rentals on the adjoining 80-acre Grand Lake.

“Venice is growing every day and with more people moving here, they want more things to do,” he says. “Wellen Park represents a young, energetic and inclusive lifestyle with restaurants, sports and recreation. It’s exactly where we want to be.”

Expected to open during the fourth quarter of 2022 with the completion of Downtown Wellen’s first phase, Kind Vibes Outfitter will offer a variety of paddleboard and kayak options, as well as manual and electric bicycles. It’s located in an eye-catching building of wood, large storefront glass windows and corrugated metal shipping containers accented by Wellen Park’s signature red — strawberry joy brand color — and is just steps from the lake and dock.

Kind Vibes’ hourly on-site rentals will include paddleboards, single and tandem paddle- and pedal-powered kayaks, plus e-bikes, and trikes. Albano is also exploring other equipment options. Contrary to popu-



Artist rendering of Kind Vibes Outfitter

COURTESY PHOTO

lar belief, he says electric bikes provide quite the cardio workout — it all depends on how much effort the user puts into it.

“Your legs are moving faster on an e-bike. A lot of triathletes use electric bikes,” he says. “They get 60 miles on one charge so you can be out there for hours. They’re easy to use. We can teach people in just five minutes.”

Kind Vibes Outfitters’ rentals can also be

taken off site to a favorite paddling or riding trail — from Midnight Pass in Sarasota to Boca Grande and anywhere in between. Wellen Park residents will enjoy white-glove service with equipment delivered right to their door or preferred launch location. “I’m a native Floridian in the land of hospitality,” he says. “We’re a full-service company. I want to make it easy for people to get outside

“Wellen Park represents a young, energetic and inclusive lifestyle with restaurants, sports and recreation. It’s exactly where we want to be.”

— Jamie Albano, owner of Venice Outdoor Sports

and be active.”

Albano also expects to offer paddleboard yoga, guided sunset tours with certified Florida naturalists and events like e-bike, kayak and paddleboard tournaments — whatever the community supports.

Albano started Venice Outdoors in 2020 with a retail store on Tamiami Trail South and guided paddling tours of the area’s scenic blueways. The company also offers e-bike tours.

“We’re having a lot of fun with our customers,” he says. “The pandemic shifted people’s perception of self-care and spending time outdoors with family.”

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SUNSTONE
 Builder: Mattamy Homes
 Sales Center: 11721 Renaissance Blvd.
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 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Fri. & Sun.
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| Avelina Neal Communities | 96 | 2,327 - 2,762 | Coming Soon | \$\$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Boca Royale Neal Communities | 1,127 | 1,632 - 3,346 | Low \$400's | \$\$\$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gran Place Sam Rodgers | 42 | 2,291 - 3,127 | Coming Soon | \$\$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Grand Palm Neal Communities | 1,975 | 1,632 - 2,907 | Mid \$400's | \$\$\$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Oasis M/I Homes | 150 | 2,146 - 4,000 | Mid \$400's | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Renaissance Mattamy Homes | 700 | 1,431 - 3,414 | High \$300's | \$\$\$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sarasota National WCI, a Lennar Co. | 1,584 | 1,917 - 3,000 | Mid \$300's | \$\$\$\$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Solstice Toll Brothers | 270 | 1,528 - 3,395 | Mid \$300's | \$ - \$\$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sunstone Mattamy Homes | 398 | 1,501 - 2,969 | Mid \$300's | \$\$\$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tortuga Lennar | 111 | 1,667 - 3,231 | Mid \$300's | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wellen Park Golf + Country Club Lennar | 1,316 | 1,120 - 3,025 | Coming Soon | TBD | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wysteria Neal Communities | 153 | 1,434 - 1,859 | Coming Soon | \$\$\$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

February 2022 | © 2021 Wellen Park
 **Product, pricing, amenities subject to change without notice.
 *Refer to HOA documents for details

HOA DUES: \$ = \$200 - \$300 / month \$\$ = \$300 - \$400 / month \$\$\$ = \$400 - \$500 / month \$\$\$\$ = > \$500 / month



FUN-LOVING LIFESTYLE

EVENTS CALENDAR

Ongoing Events in Progress

Second and fourth Fridays each month, 7-9 p.m.: Venice Main Street's Friday Night Concert Series, gazebo in Centennial Park. Follow CDC guidelines. Bring chairs or blankets. No alcohol is permitted.

Scheduled to perform:

March 11 – Patchouli (www.Patchouli.net)

March 25 – Harbor Drive (www.harbordrive.pro)

April 8 – no concert

April 22 – Robert Garcia

(www.RobertGarciaSoloAct.com)

Through March 5: Four exhibits at Art Center Sarasota: “31 Flavors” by Vitus Shell, a Louisiana-based artist, features large-scale, mixed-media works exploring the Black experience. “Revisited” by JAVO features intricate works on canvas that explore the beauty and tragedy of culture-making within the native Puerto Rican’s adopted society. In the juried exhibition, “Visions in Black,” Art Center Sarasota partners with the Suncoast Black Arts Collaborative to showcase the works of local art students alongside works by seasoned artists of African descent. The “Visions in Black” exhibit is sponsored in part by the Gulf Coast Community Foundation. “Anything Goes” is a juried exhibition of artwork spanning a range of mediums, including paintings, drawings, photography and sculpture.

Through March 25: MARA Art Studio & Gallery presents “Duality,” featuring large-scale, mixed-media works by Mara Torres Gonzalez. 1421 5th St., Suite A, in the Rosemary District, downtown Sarasota. Call 941-914-8110 or visit www.MaraStudioGallery.com.

Through March 26: Asolo Rep presents “Our Town.” Tickets are available at Asolo Rep’s box office, 5555 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, by phone at 941-351-8000 or 800-361-8388, or online at www.asolorep.org.

Through March (Saturdays, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.): Venice Farmers Market at Venice City Hall, 401 W. Venice Ave., Venice. More info: www.thevenicefarmersmarket.org.



Through April 1: Asolo Rep stages Broadway hit comedy “Grand Horizons” in the Mertz Theatre, in the FSU Center for the Performing Arts. (Contains mature themes and language and is recommended for age 16+.) Visit www.asolorep.org for a full performance schedule. Tickets are available now in person at Asolo Rep’s box office at 5555 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, by phone at 941-351-8000 or 800-361-8388, or online at www.asolorep.org.

Through April 2: Asolo Rep presents “The Great Leap.” Tickets are available at Asolo Rep’s box office at 5555 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, by phone at 941-351-8000 or 800-361-8388, or online at www.asolorep.org.

Through April (first and third Saturdays, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.): Special and Permanent Exhibits at Venice Museum & Archives, 351 Nassau St. South, Venice. More info: www.venicemuseum.org.

Through July: Venice Area African American History: More than 100 years in the making. Special exhibit runs until July 27. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. First and third Saturdays through April, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Free to the public. Venice Museum & Archives, 351 Nassau St. S., Venice (Historic Triangle Inn). Call 941-486-2487 or visit www.venicemuseum.org.



COURTESY PHOTO

Patchouli

Upcoming Events:

March 5-6: 21st annual Downtown Venice Art Classic, Historic downtown Venice, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. www.VisitVeniceFL.org.

March 10-11: “Wind Beneath Our Wings” Audubon virtual event. Engaging programs, online auction and keynote speaker to benefit Audubon Center for Birds of Prey. Support will ensure treatment of more than 700 injured and orphaned raptors annually, connecting people to nature through education and protecting bald eagles in Florida. Visit windebeneathourwings.org.

March 11: Venice Main Street’s Friday Night Concert Series features Patchouli (www.Patchouli.net) 7-9 p.m., gazebo in Centennial Park. Follow CDC guidelines. Bring chairs or picnic blankets. No alcohol is permitted in Centennial Park.

March 19: A Roman Holiday: the Venice Symphony Ball at Plantation Golf & Country Club, 500 Rockley Blvd., Venice. The event evening will include valet parking, a cocktail hour, dinner, open bar, program, live auction and the highlight of the evening: dancing to music of The Roman Holiday Orchestra with a special guest vocalist. For more information, call Holly Anderson at 941-207-8822 ext. 16 or visit tinyurl.com/4wzzjyr3.

March 20: Corvette Show-A-Vette Together, Centennial Park, historic downtown Venice. Organized by Antique Automobile Club of America Venice Region. Visit www.venicefloridacorvettes.com.

March 25: Venice Main Street’s Friday Night Concert Series 7-9 p.m., features Harbor Drive (www.harbordrive.pro) performing at the gazebo in Centennial Park. Follow CDC guidelines. Bring chairs or picnic blankets. No alcohol is permitted in Centennial Park.

March 25-26: Writers Festival and Book Fair. William H. Jervy, Jr. Venice Public Library and West Blalock Park. Organized by Venice Heritage, Inc. www.venicebookfair.com.

March 27: 32nd annual AACA Car Show, Centennial Park, historic downtown Venice. Organized by Antique Automobile Club of America Venice Region. www.veniceaaca.com.

April 1-3: International Chalk Festival, Airport festival grounds, 610 Airport Ave. E., Venice. www.ChalkFestival.org.



April 22: Venice Main Street’s Friday Night Concert Series, 7-9 p.m., features Rob Garcia (www.RobertGarciaSoloAct.com) performing at the gazebo in Centennial Park, historic downtown Venice. Follow CDC guidelines. Bring chairs or picnic blankets. No alcohol is permitted in Centennial Park.

April 23: BBQ & Bluegrass Hoot ‘n’ Annie. Fox Lea Farm. Organized by Suncoast Foundation. www.suncoastfoundation.com.

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COUNTDOWN TO DOWNTOWN



Construction safety notice

Above all else, your safety is our primary concern.

SPECIAL TO THE WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

It's hard to miss all of the construction activity taking place around Wellen Park, from the construction of Downtown Wellen along U.S. 41 to the new neighborhoods being built in Playmore District a bit farther to the south and everything in between. We're just as excited as you to see more of Wellen Park take shape and come out of the ground. However, please remember the following.

No one has permission to enter the clearly marked construction areas, whether by foot, bike or vehicle.

These areas are unsteady and as such, a number of accidents can happen. Vehicles can easily get stuck in the terrain. Large and unyielding construction trucks are constantly moving around on site. These trucks cannot stop easily, and their sight lines are limited with regard to pedestrians or bicyclists who

are not permitted to be in the designated construction zone. For all of these reasons and many more, we urge you to respect the construction fencing and posted signage and do not trespass on what is currently private property.

It is a felony to trespass on construction sites and violators will be ticketed and prosecuted. North Port Police Department and private security are patrolling the construction sites, which are under video surveillance, and will issue tickets onsite.

This is a safety matter, first and foremost. It doesn't matter if you're curious to see the construction a little closer, searching to find shark teeth or simply want to bike or walk just a bit farther.

We're hard at work and excited to complete construction so that everyone can enjoy all that Wellen Park has to offer. In the meantime, thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter. 🍌



ADAM HUTCHINSON / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

Construction sites can be dangerous. Trespassers will be ticketed.



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AROUND TOWN

SCAT initiates non-emergency transport program

BY CHARMAINE ENGELSMAN-ROBINS

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

If you have ever spent a few days without your car, you know how frustrating it is to feel stranded. Some folks deal with this dilemma every day.

Luckily, in June Sarasota County government established an on-demand service to provide non-emergency, prearranged minivan transportation (some are wheelchair accessible) as part of the Sarasota County Area Transit service.

Clients enroll online and a grant pays for the transportation. Depending which grant they are on, SCAT takes them to work, doctor's appointments, dialysis, school for the challenged, mental health drop-in centers, grocery stores and even some restaurants.

How much is OnDemand used here? SCAT Director Jane Grogg shares the immediate response and the immense continued growth.

"OnDemand by Sarasota County has continued to grow since it launched last June," she explains. "During its first month, there were around 5,000 OnDemand rides. During the month of December, 18,000 rides were provided. We're very pleased with how the service has been embraced by the community."

Here are some basic facts to help riders figure out what to expect of this service.

OnDemand service is offered Monday through Saturday, 5 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Sunday, 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Service is via SCAT minivans.

Reservations may be made for up to four passengers. Some vans have a maximum of three passengers, while others can hold up to five. Cost per person per ride is \$1.25, those



COURTESY PHOTO

Rides to various appointments, including grocery stores, are now available through the county's OnDemand service.

under six years and over 80 years ride free. Licensed service dogs are welcome. Other dogs and cats must be in an airline-approved carrier in order to ride with OnDemand and be able to be carried on the rider's lap or underneath the rider's seat. 🐕

"During its first month, there were around 5,000 OnDemand rides. During the month of December, 18,000 rides were provided."

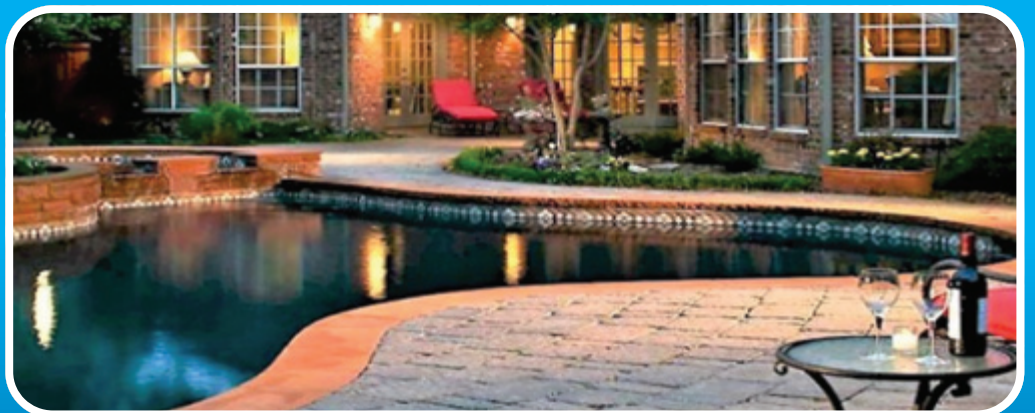
— Jane Grogg, Sarasota County Area Transit service Director

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ALL WELLEN GOOD

“We’ve all seen the stories of people who are reevaluating where and how they live their life and are choosing a better lifestyle. Wellen Park is a big part of the answer to that demand and is very attractive to those from outside our state. It has so much to offer.”

— Lisa Krouse, president and CEO of the Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County (EDC)

Sarasota County EDC helps connect employees to jobs

BY ROBIN F. DEMATTIA

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

U.S. News & World Report has rated Sarasota the #1 in Best Places to Retire two years in a row and #9 in Best Places to Live, citing housing affordability, happiness, desirability, retiree taxes, the job market and access to quality health care for the rankings.

TIME magazine last year named Sarasota to its “World’s Greatest Places” list of 100 destinations that include Mozambique and Cairo, Egypt.

It’s no wonder that people are flocking to Sarasota County and Wellen Park in droves.

“The interest in Sarasota County in the last two years has dramatically increased,” says Lisa Krouse, president and CEO of the Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County (EDC). “The volume of inquiries we’re getting from businesses interested in relocating to or wanting information about Sarasota County has exploded.”

The EDC, along with Visit Sarasota County, recently launched a “Work Where You Want to Live” campaign to lure new residents to the area to fill open positions with local employers and attract remote workers who can live anywhere. The digital campaign is running in New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Atlanta and Washington, D.C.



COURTESY PHOTO

Krouse

“We’ve all seen the stories of people who are reevaluating where and how they live their lives and are choosing a better lifestyle,” Krouse says. “Wellen Park is a big part of the answer to that demand and is very attractive to those from outside our state. It has so

much to offer.”

Wellen Park represents what a community should look like, Krouse says.

“It reflects the needs of who wants to move here both in housing and in businesses,” she says.

Krouse says business opportunities range from entrepreneurs starting their own enterprises to support all the new residents to major companies expanding or relocating to the area.

Drinking cup manufacturer Tervis Tumbler, which is headquartered in North Venice, recently announced plans to open a 71,000-square-foot facility in North Port.

PGT Innovations, the largest manufacturer in Sarasota County, acquired Anlin Industries last fall for about \$126 million.

The EDC website (edcsarasotacounty.com) has a job bank to connect employers and job seekers.

Hot sectors include technology, digital and creative, financial services, construction and light manufacturing.

Krouse says local educational institutions offer a clue to job trends, noting that USF added a cyber security degree and locally, the State College of Florida has a new coding academy.

“The schools and universities are advancing the development of future employees by

listening to the businesses,” Krouse says.

Job opportunities require employees, and Krouse says the top question she receives from businesses that consider relocating to Sarasota County is whether or not they will find skilled talent in the area.

“We are hoping that by seeing the growth in the population, we are also going to see positions filled,” she says. “The success of our region has raised the profile of our county and helped recruit talent here.”

She says the beautiful beaches, warm winters, available land and communities like Wellen Park make attracting employees easy.

“It doesn’t take a whole lot to sell our community,” she says. “It just takes a visit to see what families can enjoy.”

Krouse also credits Wellen Park president Rick Severance, who recently joined the EDC’s board of directors, for being a strong ambassador for Sarasota County.

“Rick Severance has been actively engaged in our economic development mission,” Krouse says. “That’s telling to have leadership walk the talk. To say ‘We’re expanding in Sarasota County but also giving back to the community’ speaks volumes about the manner in which Wellen Park does business. It’s a powerful message to our citizens and those who choose to live here.”



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AROUND TOWN

Ace Hardware gets a Wellen Park place

BY NANCITHEORET

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Ace, the place with the helpful hardware folks, is coming to Wellen Park.

Chandler Short, who owns the Ace Hardware on Jacaranda Boulevard in Venice, is expanding, building a standalone store on U.S. 41 at the Marketplace shopping center. He expects construction to begin soon and hopes to open by the end of the year.

"I haven't told a lot of people about the new store but there have been some rumblings," he says. "It's an amazing spot and will be good for the area, which is really growing. It's a great opportunity because there are a lot of people moving to town."

The store will offer about 8,000 square feet of retail space, selling Ace staples — everything from power tools, paint, plumbing supplies to propane to grills and individual screws. Short will also offer beach basics and merchandise themed for Venice and potentially Wellen Park.

The expansion made sense to Short. Not only does Wellen Park annually rank among the top 10 fastest-selling communities in the country, many of his current Venice customers are also Wellen Park residents.

"We deliver 10 grills a week over there," he says. "Ace's motto is about being the neighborhood store and that really fits the vision of Wellen Park."

There was also the Publix factor. The Florida-based supermarket chain has a reputation in the real estate industry for identifying the top growth markets in the state and building new stores in advance of a population influx — and ahead of competitors.

"Publix knows what they're doing," says



Artist rendering of ACE Hardware

COURTESY PHOTO

Short. "It's smart to follow them and be there for people."

The new Ace Hardware is on an outparcel at the Publix-anchored Marketplace. It's also larger than the Jacaranda location, allowing Short to expand the store's inventory with more merchandise tailored to the market — fishing shirts, beach and fishing gear, Venice-themed T-shirts and shark tooth sifters for the beach, the latter a top seller given Venice's title as the shark tooth capital of the world. The Wellen Park store will also offer Benjamin Moore paints, a brand popular in the Northeast.

He's currently vetting local vendors,

including a local honey supplier and an area resident who makes big-wheeled beach wagons. He also expects to sell beach canopies — lightweight tarps that work with the wind to make a shade-providing sail and are easier to carry and less bulky than a beach umbrella.

Founded in 1924, Illinois-based Ace Hardware, the world's largest retail cooperative, recently earned the No. 12 spot on Entrepreneur magazine's 2022 list of top 500 franchises and has claimed J.D. Power's highest ranking for customer satisfaction of U.S. home improvement stores 14 out of the last 15 years.

Short often drives around Wellen Park, watching construction progress on Downtown Wellen just across U.S. 41. As the community's social epicenter with restaurants, retail, an 80-acre recreational lake, trails and outdoor gathering spots, the first phase is expected to be completed during the fourth quarter of 2022 — about the same time the new Ace arrives on the scene.

"I've seen the master plan and it's going to be beautiful," says Short. "We want to be here and we're looking forward to joining other local businesses and being part of the community." 🏡

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FUN-LOVING LIFESTYLES

Meet your neighbors

Part of the Wellen way of life is living healthy, getting to know your neighbors and residing in a welcoming, walkable community.

And soon, Downtown Wellen will have something special for everyone — from great eateries to stylish shops and exquisite sunsets.

Downtown Wellen is being designed as a vibrant mixed-use development that will serve as the premier shopping, dining and entertainment destination for this growing community.

In the meantime, follow Wellen Park on wellenpark.com, Facebook and Instagram for the Countdown to Downtown Event Series.

Calling all walkers

Walking is good for your health and it is fun, especially when you are ambulating with your Wellen Park neighbors. Walk with old friends. Meet new friends.

Walkers of all paces are welcome.

The walkers group meets on the first Saturday of each month at 9 a.m. at the Welcome Center.

Walkers enjoy their beautiful community while staying in shape. This is also a great way to meet like-minded friends.

A community ambassador will greet the group and share a map of various walking trails and pathways.

All participants will receive two drink tickets redeemable at Barrel & Bean so you can enjoy a beverage with your new friend.

Register at <https://linktr.ee/wellenparkfl>.

Cycle with us

H.G. Wells mused, “Every time I see an adult on a bicycle, I no longer despair for the future of the human race.”



COURTESY PHOTOS

Are you a big fan of cycling? Wellen Park makes it easy to feel good — cultivating physical and emotional well-being for all.

On the second Saturday of each month residents are invited to meet at 9 a.m. at the Welcome Center to participate in a cycling group meet-up.

A community ambassador will greet the group and share a map of various cycling trails and pathways. It's up to you how far you want to cycle.

Each participant will also be given two free drink tickets to redeem at Barrel & Bean, so you can enjoy a beverage with your fellow cyclists after you wrap up your ride. Your choice includes beer, wine, iced tea, coffee or water.

Register at <https://linktr.ee/wellenparkfl>.

Running and Fitness Group

What a great way to spend your morning — putting on your running shoes, meeting other runners and upping your fitness game.

The Wellen Park running club meets at 8 a.m. in the Welcome Center on the third Saturday of the month.

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PET TIPS

From veterinarian
Andrea Daniels of West Villages Animal Clinic
www.westvillagesvet.com

Q&A

Should people be taking their pets to the vet for regular checkups and how often?

Yes, a physical exam can catch small health problems before they turn into larger problems. The exam includes evaluating for eye, ear, or dental problems; listening to the heart and lungs; palpating the abdomen; looking for skin problems; evaluating for lameness or neurologic issues; evaluating your pet's diet and weight. It's a great opportunity to ask any questions you have. The veterinarian will also make recommendations for vaccinations. An annual physical exam is also required to prescribe any medication, even heartworm prevention and many of the flea and tick preventatives. If a pet has a medical condition, or is a senior, they may need to be seen every 3-6 months for an exam and testing.



When you first get a new pet, should you see a vet immediately for a checkup?

Yes, I recommend having a new pet examined by your regular veterinarian within the first week of bringing them home.

Things to look for that would trigger a vet call or visit?

True Emergencies - get to the vet now: Unable to breathe, collapsing at home, unable to get up or walk, male cats straining to urinate, actively seizing for more than three

minutes, severe trauma like being hit by a car, profuse bleeding, snake bite, persistent vomiting or retching.

Urgent - get to the vet within a few hours: Vomiting three or more times, a pet less than 16 weeks old who won't eat, not acting right after eating foreign material, persistent coughing, problems while giving birth, three or more seizures in 24 hours, ingestion of any medications or toxic substances, bloody vomiting and diarrhea, squinting or swollen eye or insulin overdose.

Semi-urgent - get to the within 24 hours: Vomiting one or two times, not eating for more than 24 hours, acute diarrhea, straining to defecate, bloody urine or straining to urinate, small wounds, intermittent coughing, broken toenails, allergic reactions or limping.

Reason for concern - get an appointment soon: itching or scratching, weight loss, hair loss, red skin or ears, a single seizure and then back to normal or decreased

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PET TIPS

appetite.

What type of features should pet owners be looking for in a vet? (hours, payment plans, consistent staff, etc?)

Everyone has different needs in a veterinary practice. If you value always seeing the same doctor, you may want a one- or two-doctor practice but they likely will have more limited hours. If you have a hard time getting off work during the day, you may want a larger practice that is open in the evenings and on weekends. Most veterinary practices do not offer in-house payment plans but may take national programs like CareCredit. I recommend looking at the practice's website, then schedule an exam with a veterinarian and talk through your concerns. It is important to have a veterinarian you can trust and listen to their recommendations.

What about dental cleanings for your pets?

Dental health is very important for overall health! There is a list of products approved by the VOHC (Veterinary Oral Health Council) that can help prevent plaque build up. Once plaque becomes tartar (the



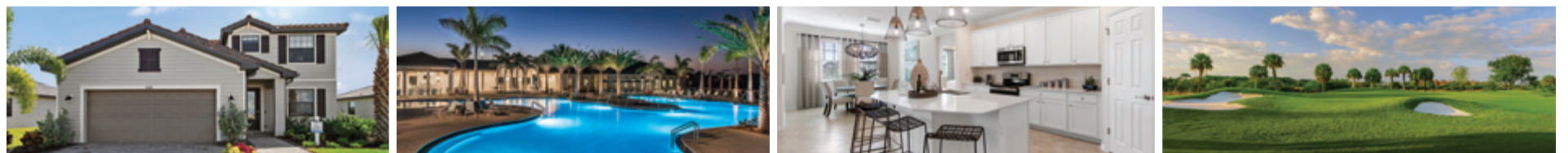
yellow-brown substance on teeth), then a dental cleaning is needed to remove that. Most dental problems are under the gumline, so what you see is a small amount of the problem. Regular exams will help to identify dental problems early.

Most pets need a dental cleaning every one to two years. This is done under general anesthesia, and MUST include dental x-rays. Good preventative dental care will keep your pet comfortable and prevent other issues. 🐾



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CHEF'S CORNER

Local chef offers tips, recipes for healthy eating

BY ROBIN F. DEMATTIA

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Chef Mike Leopold has an easy tip to remember when trying to eat well.

"Look for contrast in color, texture and cooking style, and you'll have a healthier meal," says Leopold, executive chef of OTW Restaurant Group.

Leopold applied that strategy when developing menus for the company's Barrel & Bean, Irma's Tacos and Off the Wagon Brewery & Kitchen restaurants.

"I have a general rule when it comes to cooking, and that's fresh ingredients," Leopold says. "You can see it in Irma's, which you wouldn't think of from a taco place. I have a very, very small area in my storage dedicated to cans, bags and boxes. Everything is fresh."

For example, he makes his salsa verde by peeling and roasting fresh tomatillos.

"It's labor intensive but worth it," he says.

He also says that more colors in a dish likely mean it's healthier.

"The colors in food are pigments that contain vitamins and minerals," he says, citing the orange in carrots that have beta-carotene that supports eye health.

Textures are important too, he says. Leopold suggests including raw elements that maintain their nutrients and don't have added fat.

Eating healthy while dining out starts by

selecting the right restaurant, especially one that focuses on fresh ingredients, he advises.

Avoid foods that are fried, buttered or creamed, and ask for sauces or salad dressings on the side.

Over the past few years, Leopold has seen his customers avoiding carbs and gluten. He offers tacos in a bowl, both flour and gluten-free corn tortillas, and a gluten-free hamburger bun.

He also created eight vegetarian or vegan tacos among the 32 on the Irma's Tacos menu, and all the salsas and bean dips are vegan.

He offers the Beyond Burger and a popular kale salad at Off the Wagon, among other vegetarian options.

"It's very important to me to give people who want to eat healthy a lot to choose from," he says. "I love the fact that four people can come in together and two are eating steak tacos and two are eating vegan tacos."

OTW Restaurant Group plans to open a second Irma's Tacos location in Sarasota this fall and a higher-end steak and seafood restaurant called Villani & Co. in Downtown Wellen by the end of the year. Leopold says both restaurants are part of new construction, so timing depends on the availability of materials.

Eat healthy at home with these recipes that are featured at OTW Restaurant Group's three restaurants. 🍴



SARASOTA NATIONAL SANDWICH

Barrel & Bean

Ingredients:

- 2 slices, sprouted grain bread
- 4 oz Boar's Head Maple Turkey, sliced thin
- 4 slices granny smith apple, sliced thin
- ¼ cup caramelized onion
- 2 thin slices, Boar's Head Vermont Cheddar

- ¼ cup fresh watercress
- 1 oz balsamic glaze

Layer sandwich with apple on bottom.

Top with turkey and cheddar.

Top with onions, watercress and balsamic.

Press in panini press or on griddle.

CHEF'S CORNER



RAMEN BROTH

Off the Wagon Brewery & Kitchen

Broth ingredients:

- 2 lb pork neck bones
- 1 cup shiitake mushroom stems
- 1 sheet nori seaweed
- 1 onion, sliced
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 3 sticks celery, chopped
- 1 heads garlic, halved
- 1 inch piece fresh ginger, sliced
- 2 quarts water
- 1/2 bunch cilantro

- 1/4 cup soy sauce

Combine everything and simmer for 2 hours

Ramen assembly ingredients

- Ramen noodles
- Shiitake mushroom caps, sliced
- Bok choy
- Soft boiled egg
- Sliced scallions
- Hot chili oil or Sriracha



MANGO HABANERO SALSA

Irma's Tacos

Ingredients:

- 1 lb mango, small dice
- 1/4 cup red onion, small dice
- 2 ea. habanero, seeded, minced

- 1/2 cup cilantro, minced
- 2 tbsp. lime juice
- 1 tbsp ancho chili seasoning
- 1 tsp. kosher salt


Combine.

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ALL WELLEN GOOD

Single-family rental home community coming to Wellen Park

BY NANCI THEORET

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Stillwell, a new neighborhood at Wellen Park, represents a growing trend in the rental housing market — single-family homes built for rent. The gated community will offer 274 one- to three-bedroom homes, ranging from 712 to 1,275 square feet under air, and a host of amenities, including a 5,000-square-foot clubhouse and resort-style zero-edge pool. Residents will also benefit from onsite property management.

“Our residents are looking for much more than solid surface countertops and stainless-steel appliances. They want the feeling of living in a single-family home while having the flexibility and hassle-free lifestyle that renting provides,” said Andy Lallathin, managing partner at Coastal Ridge, which is building Stillwell in collaboration with Halstatt Real Estate Partners in Naples. “Stillwell has been carefully crafted and developed to provide the same privacy and outdoor space that comes with home ownership, without committing to a mortgage or maintenance. It’s what we consider to be ‘sanctuary without strings.’”

The build-to-rent concept is gaining traction throughout the country. Renters enjoy the experience of a single-family home in a community managed like an apartment — without sharing walls with noisy neighbors. The number of new build-to-rent homes is expected to double in the next two years and national builders like Toll Brothers and Taylor Morrison have already entered the fray, according to the National Apartment Association. “Coastal Ridge started its build-to-rent program two and a half years ago,” says Hilary Marshall, director of corporate marketing for Coastal Ridge.

Most of Stillwell’s single-family homes are two-bedroom, two-bath units with 981 square feet. The neighborhood will also offer 84 one-bedroom, one-bath homes with 712-square feet and 34 two-story homes with



COURTESY PHOTOS

Artist rendering of the planned Stillwell community.

two bedrooms, two baths and 1,240 square feet. The largest homes have three bedrooms and two baths in 1,275 square feet. The first homes are expected to be completed by early 2023. “Leasing will begin late 2022. Rental prices will be announced on our website,” says Marshall.

The homes were designed by Charlan Brock Architects from Maitland, Fla., and feature modern finishes, smart home technology, private outdoor yards with a patio and popular open-concept floor plans blending great room and kitchen. The units have 10-foot ceilings, solid surface countertops, luxury vinyl

tile flooring, kitchens with islands, tile backsplashes and stainless-steel Energy Star appliances. Garages are also available to rent.

Stillwell is planned for 28 acres and will offer community parks, green spaces, a third of a mile walking track, lakes and a dog park. Stillwell’s clubhouse will feature fitness and



Floorplan of one-bedroom rental home.



Floorplan of two-bedroom, one-story rental home.



Floorplan of two-bedroom, two-story rental home.



Floorplan of three-bedroom, two-story rental home.

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“Leasing will begin late 2022. Rental prices will be announced on our website in the coming months.”

— Hilary Marshall, director of corporate marketing for Coastal Ridge



COURTESY PHOTO

Artist rendering of the clubhouse area.

business centers, a club lounge, community kitchen, game room and coffee and juice bar. Outdoor amenities include an event lawn, bocce court, firepits and grills with seating areas.

“The clubhouse is state of the art,” says Lallathin. “It’s a place to gather and meet neighbors.”

With headquarters in Ohio, Coastal Ridge invests, develops and operates multifamily housing, including student housing in Gaines-

ville, Fort Myers and other college towns. The company has a build-to-rent presence in 15 markets, says Lallathin.

“We’re super excited to be in Wellen Park and be part of something so highly regarded,” he says. “Everything about Wellen Park is so appealing, from the master plan to the Braves spring training presence, and more. We understand the vision of the community and know this is a match made in heaven.”

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ALL WELLEN GOOD

Wellen Park residents share their sunset photos



Michelle Snyder, Sharky's on the Pier, Venice Fishing Pier - Facebook Winner



Liesel Walsh, Liesel Walsh Photography, Sunset over Caspersen Beach - Instagram Winner

We received several beautiful photos in our sunset photo contest, which was announced on our blog at www.wellenpark.com. Choosing the winners was no easy task. Thank you all for participating. The winners each received a \$100 gift card for the Marketplace merchant of choice.

• **Facebook Winner:** Sharky's on the Pier – Venice Fishing Pier by Michelle Snyder

• **Instagram Winner:** Sunset over Caspersen Beach by Liesel Walsh

Runners Up (in alphabetical order)

- Family Beach Time by Charma Margulies
- Lido Beach by Krys Alvarez
- Nokomo's Sunset Hut by Ama Coltan
- Sunset by Daria Luczkowski
- Venice Fishing Pier by Christine Wright 🍷

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Family Beach Time, Charna Margulies



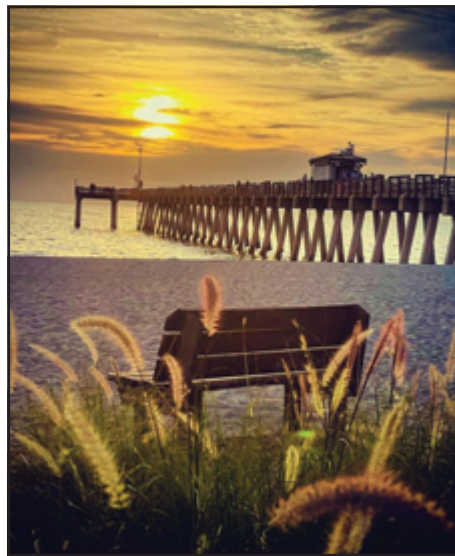
Nokomo's Sunset Hut, Ama Coltan



Sunset, Daria Luczkowski



Lido Beach, Krysta Alvarez



Venice Fishing Pier, Christine Wright

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ALL WELLEN GOOD

Four of Our Favorite Beaches Near Wellen Park

SPECIAL TO WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

A huge part of living life the Wellen Way means taking advantage of the waterside lifestyle that Southwest Florida has to offer. Fortunately, Wellen Park is located within close proximity to numerous places to kayak, fish, and simply enjoy some aquatic fun — and visiting the surrounding area’s white-sand beaches is one of the absolute best ways to do it.

Whether you prefer beaches with ample amenities, a quaint and quiet sanctuary, or a place you can bring your best four-legged friend, there’s a spot for every type of beachgoer just a short drive away from Wellen Park.

Venice Beach

Distance from Wellen Park: 25-Minute Drive

Complete with calm waters and stunning white sand, Venice Beach is a relaxing, must-visit spot year-round.

As a Certified Blue Wave Beach, Venice Beach’s environment is nationally recognized as clean, healthy and well maintained.

When you visit Venice Beach, it’s highly likely that you’ll spot some native Florida wildlife. Pro tip: Keep an eye out for dolphins off the North Jetty and look out for marine turtle nests in the dunes between May and October.



COURTESY PHOTOS

Available amenities include free parking, life-guards on duty, food concessions, shelters and picnic areas, sand volleyball courts, boardwalks, and the Venice Fishing Pier, which is a favorite spot to drop a line!

Manasota Beach

Distance from Wellen Park: 20-Minute Drive

Manasota Key is home to many beaches,

including the aptly named Manasota Beach. Though visitors have access to amenities such as a boat ramp, kayak launch, fishing pier, picnic facilities, restrooms and volleyball courts, this beach is loved for its lack of commercialization. Frequenters of Manasota Beach fondly refer to this area as a “real, old time Florida beach” as the location is slightly off the beaten path, without being too far from home.

You’ll find the two-mile stretch of Stump Pass Beach State Park here as well, where visitors can partake in nature hikes and ranger-guided tours in winter. This beach is great for shelling too — you’ll notice the sand isn’t a pure white but rather multi-colored and composed of fragments of colorful shells and fossils.

Englewood Beach

Distance from Wellen Park: 20-Minute Drive

Englewood Beach, another beach on Manasota Key, is also close by and so well loved that it’s shared by two counties: Sarasota and Charlotte.

This is a great beach to consider if you love golf, as you can spend your morning on one of the many nearby courses, then cool off at the beach in the afternoon.

There are many other fun recreation options right on the beach, as well. Let out your adventurous side and rent a jet ski, charter a fishing boat or even try parasailing. You can take a peek at the action wherever you are, by checking out the live Englewood Beach EarthCam.

Brohard Beach and Paw Park

Distance from Wellen Park: 20-Minute Drive

This one’s for the dog lovers. Take a trip to Brohard Beach, the only pet-friendly beach in the area. Supervised dogs are allowed to roam free, though there is a fenced-in doggy play area as well.

Other amenities at Brohard Beach include picnic tables and benches, showers and restrooms, a fishing pier, and drinking fountains for both humans and their canine companions.

At Wellen Park, we love a relaxing day at the beach.

See for yourself how Wellen Park is even better than you ever imagined. 🐾



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In the spirit of the holiday season, I would like to acknowledge my customers for an exceptional year in real estate. I cannot express in words how grateful I am for your business, and I truly cherish the relationships we have created. From my family to yours, I wish you much health and happiness in 2022!



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- Welcomed new puppy named Sundance

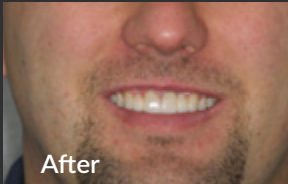
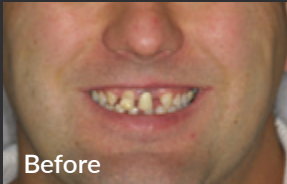
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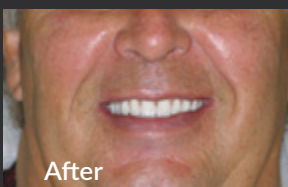
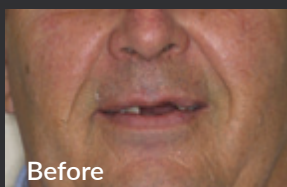
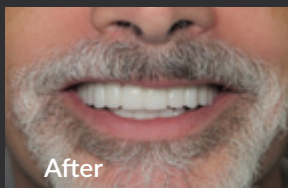
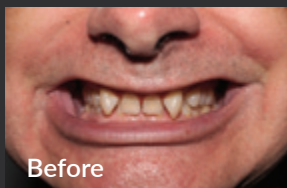
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Kathryn Ross-Nash
Smile Makeover Patient



Actual Patient,
Kathryn Ross-Nash

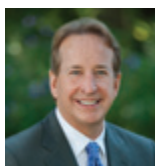


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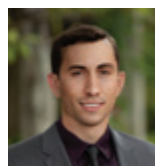
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