

WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

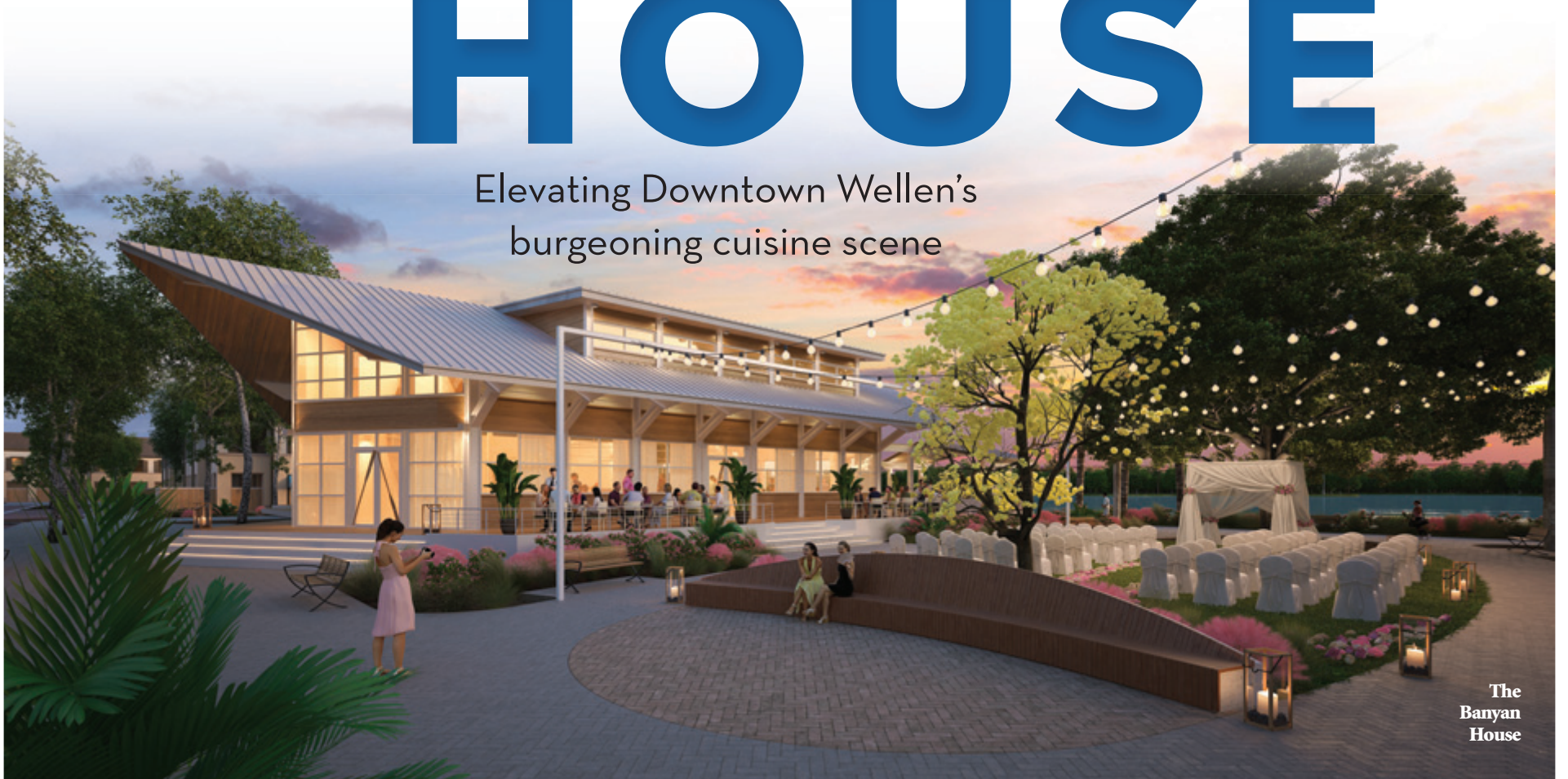
APRIL-MAY 2022

WellenParkJournal.com

Vol. IV, No. 2 • FREE

THE BANYAN HOUSE

Elevating Downtown Wellen's burgeoning cuisine scene



COURTESY PHOTO

The Banyan House

BY NANJI THEORET

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

The Banyan House in Downtown Wellen was always intended to stand out. As the only restaurant nestled along downtown's 80-acre Grand Lake, finding the right fit was important. Not only would the flagship establishment offer a first-class dining experience and innovative cuisine, it would also define the new downtown as

SEE BANYAN, A18 ►

"The Banyan House complements our vision and the joyful, vibrant spirit of Wellen Park for everyone to experience."

— Rick Severance, president of the Wellen Park community

Wellen Park's trail system promotes wellness — and a chance to win prizes

BY NANJI THEORET

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Resort-style pools, championship golf courses and tennis courts — pickleball and bocce in recent years — have become the mainstays of many planned communities. But there's another amenity that matters most to today's homebuyers: trails.

"Trails are the No. 1 amenity homebuyers

want, and they're the No. 1 amenity residents use most when they move in," says Rick Severance, president of Wellen Park. "New residents may never step foot on the tennis court, but they'll use the trails. The investment in trail systems for generations to come adds value to a community."

Trails and greenways factored into the home-buying decision before the pandemic, but the need for social distancing and outdoor recreation elevated demand.

On any given day, at any given time, Wellen

Park's 18 miles of trails are often occupied by pedestrians, joggers and bicyclists. The trails, which will eventually expand to 40 total miles, also attract local running and cycling groups, numbering 26 and 30 members, respectively. Bike lanes and paths are wide for enhanced safety, benches and shaded areas provide destinations to take a breather and enjoy the sights.



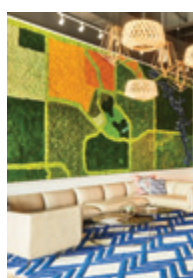
CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

Residents enjoy walking their dogs on the trails around Wellen Park.

SEE TRAILS, A20 ►

This center is really welcoming

Wellen Park can now boast that it has the Best Community Welcome Center in the United States. **A6 ►**



Don't dim the lights yet

Sarasota is a hot spot for the arts — and even with the season winding down, there are still plenty of interesting shows to catch. **A27 ►**



Chalk one up to these artists

The International Chalk Festival wows visitors with vibrant, colorful works of art that are beautiful — while they last. **A32 ►**



Download our FREE App today

Available on the iTunes and Android App Store.



Publisher

Brandi Riede

brandi.riede@floridaweekly.com

Editor

Bob Massey

bmassey@floridaweekly.com

Presentation Editor

Eric Raddatz

eraddatz@floridaweekly.com

Contributing Writers

Samuel Burnley, Robin DeMattia,
Charmaine Engelsman-Robins,
Patricia Horwell, Dennis Kirk,
Nanci Theoret, Evan Williams

Photographer

Chris Tilley

Production Manager

Alisa Bowman

abowman@floridaweekly.com

Graphic Designers

Chris Andruskiewicz · Emma Campos
Lindi Daywalt-Feazel · Scott Sleeper

Circulation District Manager

Michaelle Snider

msnider@floridaweekly.com

Account Executives

Michael Colgan

michael.colgan@floridaweekly.com

Elizabeth Skaggs

elizabeth.skaggs@floridaweekly.com

Operations Manager

Kelli Carico

Published by

Florida Media Group LLC

2891 Center Pointe Dr., Suite 300

Fort Myers, Florida 33916

Phone: 239.333.2135

ALL WELLEN GOOD

The future is bright, and remarkably exciting, for land surrounding the Braves stadium

BY NANCI THEORET

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Wellen Park is peering years into the future, exploring the possibilities for 75 acres of developer-owned property adjacent to CoolToday Park, the spring training stadium of the Atlanta Braves. The developer recently assembled strategic partners for a daylong planning session focusing on potential uses for the site, including a stadium entertainment district at the intersection of West Villages Parkway and Playmore Road.

“Plans are very preliminary,” says Rick Severance, president of Wellen Park. “We are being proactive in planning multiple years ahead, thinking about the vision for the property in the long term. As stewards of the area, we also have to consider how people will experience the space and how it may live for generations to come.”

The session was attended by leadership and development teams from Wellen Park, the Atlanta Braves as well as engineers, land planners, apartment developers, architects and teams of Wellen Park’s downtown buildings and future hotel, and the construction team currently building all of Downtown Wellen. The group brainstormed possible experiences, the synergy with nearby downtown and how potential uses could extend the stadium’s busy two-month spring training window into a full-time vibrant destination.

“We have to be careful and mindful in creating something the entire community will embrace,” says Mr. Severance, noting residents and visitors frequently inquire about future



COURTESY PHOTO

development plans for the property. “We’ve been telling the public so much about downtown. As place-makers, we always need to be thinking five, six years ahead.”

Offering a behind-the-scenes perspective into the planning session, Mr. Severance says participants agreed the property should have a lively, high-energy atmosphere, attract a variety of age groups and play off its proximity to the ballpark and affiliation with the Braves. It could have restaurants, sports bars, live music, apartments, office space, retail, play areas for children and inviting outdoor spaces.

In other words, it could be a stadium entertainment district — a scaled-down version of The Battery Atlanta, the mixed-use development next to Truist Park, the Braves’ hometown field.

“The Battery is an interesting and dynamic area,” Mr. Severance says. “It meets so many of the things we’ve envisioned for this property with elements to make our district successful

year-round. Wellen Park’s demographics are continuing to change, and we need to create energy and a place that appeals to the younger generations of customers and residents, while also continuing to provide experiences enjoyed by our active adult residents and guests.”

The planned four-star hotel will initially drive development. And Wellen Park already has a preliminary commitment for a 120-room, four-story Braves-themed building with connections to CoolToday Park — access to the stadium’s year-round tiki bar, potential use of its meeting rooms by guests and the possibility of integrating a hotel rooftop bar or pool with the ballpark.

“The hotel is intended to feel like it’s part of the stadium,” Mr. Severance says. “The first thing is working on how it connects and interacts with the stadium and the uses for the rooftop. We also took into account the placement of buildings; the property has amazing sunset views.”

With the prospect of multifamily homes, offices, taprooms, and sports right in one location, the district would create the walk-to-work environment and nightlife sought by 35- to 45-year-olds who might prefer to rent.

“This would be new, fresh and invigorating with a really great vibe that will complement downtown,” says Mr. Severance, noting the market will ultimately steer the final vision and timing. “Nothing is off the table; it’s fun to strategize and be creative as to what could be possible.”

FOR US, EVERY COMMUNITY IS A PREMIER COMMUNITY.

AND IF IT ISN'T, WE'LL MAKE IT ONE.

ArtisTree makes a daily choice to raise the standards of our industry, which is why we provide the same superior service to a small account as we do a sprawling country club community. If your HOA values quality and communication above all else, contact Michael Casper at mikec@artistree.com for a maintenance proposal and a list of communities we serve. See why ArtisTree is the premier landscape company of choice throughout Wellen Park and beyond.



DOWNLOAD YOUR OWN PLANT NURSERY!

Email artistreelandscape@gmail.com with “Free Plant Guide” in the subject line. We’ll send you a link to ArtisTree’s popular Plant Guide filled with rows and rows of tried-and-true local specimens.



• Maintenance services to meet your budget, including irrigation/water management, turf/ornamental maintenance, mulching, seasonal color • Award-winning designers, LEED GA, landscape architect • Serving Sarasota, Manatee & Charlotte counties since 1990

artistree.com | 941-488-8897
Deeper roots. Higher standards.®

We've Got It All



Bacon's
FURNITURE
MATTRESS EXPRESS

Ashley
HOMESTORE

AMERICA'S TOP
BRAND NAMES
IN FURNITURE!

OVER 100,000 SQ. FT.
OF BEAUTIFUL
SHOWROOM!

100'S OF ITEMS
AVAILABLE FOR
EXPRESS DELIVERY!



Bacon's
FURNITURE
www.baconsfurniture.com
941-625-4493

17701 Murdock Circle
Port Charlotte Fl, 33948

ASHLEY
www.ashleyfurniture.com
941-235-8400

ALL WELLEN GOOD

Grand Lake: the many shapes of water

BY NANCI THEORET

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

As the centerpiece of Downtown Wellen, Grand Lake offers many personalities and possibilities for residents and visitors to experience its 80 acres.

A beautiful backdrop for restaurants, businesses and awe-inspiring sunsets ... a favorite fishing hole for anglers aiming to reel in a largemouth bass or channel catfish ... a beacon of calm enjoyed from secluded sitting and observation areas nestled along its banks or while adrift on a kayak or paddleboard ... a proper promenade for walking or jogging along the 2.8-mile lakefront trail ... a beloved spot for birdwatchers and nature lovers exploring its island preserves and adjoining wetlands.

Downtown Wellen's connection to the water runs deep. Taking shape as part of Downtown Wellen's construction, Grand Lake imparts a welcoming waterside vibe that's both engaging and relaxing, active and leisurely, encouraging visitors to experience its shifting personalities by land and by water — and enjoy the wellness of water.

Water is a healing elixir, good for the mind, body and soul. Science and psychology have proven just seeing or hearing water reduces stress, promotes peace, enhances wellbeing and inspires positive thinking. It also improves sleep quality, focus and creativity.

Throughout Wellen Park's downtown, lake views take center stage, sweeping across the watery expanse to nature preserves and a tree-lined shore on the far banks.

Grand Lake, 32 feet at its deepest, also

offers recreational catch-and-release fishing. Upon completion later this year, it will be stocked with 168,000 fish and shrimp — golden shiners, flagfish and grass shrimp initially, then sport and predator fish like channel catfish, largemouth bass, redear sunfish, bluegill and threadfin shad. Fishing sportsmen and others can get closer to the fish — and water — on the fishing pier.

Gliding on the water, paddlers can venture to secluded alcoves and the peninsula islands, see schooling fish just below the surface and enjoy the tranquility of simply slowing down — motorized vessels aren't permitted on the lake. Enthusiasts can BYOB (bring your own boat) or rent kayaks and paddleboards on-site at Kind Vibes Outfitters. A floating dock aids launching.

The outfitter also offers e-bicycles, ped-

al-powered bikes and trikes to hit the trail.

The 2.8-mile route whisks pedestrians, cyclists and runners along a changing waterscape — from downtown's banks elevated above the water's edge, passing sloping banks with littoral plantings that attract wildlife and foraging birds and momentarily paralleling Preto Boulevard, which leads to Wellen Park's Playmore District neighborhoods. It also offers opportunities to take the path less traveled and follow side trails skirting two preserves with vantage points of Downtown Wellen from its distant shores.

Weaving water with wellness, Grand Lake creates both background and foreground for visits to downtown and a connection to the healing powers of nature and water. ✨

Millennium Physician Group: a 12,000-square-foot office in Wellen Park

BY NANCI THEORET

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

The doctor will see you. So will the radiologist and the lab technician.

Millennium Physician Group is bringing medical care to the community with plans for a 12,000-square-foot medical office on U.S. 41 in Wellen Park. The building will have space for three primary care physicians and offer a full-service radiology department, lab and walk-in medical clinic for urgent-care needs

with extended hours, says Liza Fernandez, director of marketing and public relations for the Fort Myers-based group.

"We are always looking to tend to the needs of our surrounding communities, and we look forward to caring for the new and vibrant community taking shape at Wellen Park," she says.

Construction will take about 18 months, placing its completion in late 2023.

The Wellen Park office will also offer health and wellness programs complementing the community's focus on healthy, active lifestyles

and services for patients 65 and older.

"Half of our patients are 65-plus," Ms. Fernandez says. "We will be focusing on wellness and advocacy for the those who are 65 and older. We currently offer diabetes education, smoking cessation, weight-loss and Medicare education programs. We also specialize in Medicare quality programs."

Patients can choose a Millennium physician to be their primary-care provider.

Millennium is actively recruiting doctors and medical staff for the new building. ✨

"We are always looking to tend to the needs of our surrounding communities, and we look forward to caring for the new and vibrant community taking shape at Wellen Park."

— Liza Fernandez, director of marketing and public relations for Millennium Physician Group



Lennar's newest Golf & Country Club Community is opening soon in Wellen Park, FL!

Get on the VIP list today for the latest updates, including home releases, model grand opening, events and more!

The Wellen Park Golf and Country Club is a collection of single-family and multi-family homes located within the Wellen Park masterplan community in Venice, Florida! Here, residents will enjoy state-of-the-art amenities including an 18-hole championship golf course, resort-style pool, state-of-the-art fitness center, dining, outdoor sports courts and so much more!

The Wellen Park community also provides plenty of ways to spend your days, featuring local shops, music, eateries and a brand-new downtown area coming soon!

Your dream home awaits you at Wellen Park Golf & Country Club! Join our VIP list today to receive exclusive updates on homes coming soon and everything you need to know about Wellen Park Golf & Country Club!

WellenParkGolfCountryClub.com



Venice, FL 34293



877-45-LENNAR | Lennar.com



Plans to build out this neighborhood as proposed are subject to change without notice. Please see your New Home Consultant and/or home purchase agreement for actual features designated as an Everything's Included feature. Features, amenities, floor plans, elevations, and designs vary and are subject to changes or substitution without notice. Items shown are artist's renderings and may contain options that are not standard on all models or not included in the purchase price. Availability may vary. Sq. Ft./acreage/dimensions is estimated; actual sq. Ft./acreage/dimensions will differ. Garage/bay sizes may vary from home to home and may not accommodate all vehicles. Models/lifestyle photos do not reflect racial or ethnic preference. Maps are not to scale and are for relative location purposes only. Lennar does not guarantee the availability of homes within the price ranges above. Price subject to change without notice. Site plans, community maps and/or aerial photos are conceptual in nature and are merely an artist's rendition. They are solely for illustrative purposes, should never be relied upon, and are subject to change. This is not an offer in states where prior registration is required. Void where prohibited by law. Copyright © 2022 Lennar Corporation, Lennar, the Lennar logo, WCI, the WCI logo, Everything's Included and the Everything's Included logo are U.S. registered service marks or service marks of Lennar Corporation and/or its subsidiaries. LENNAR HOMES LLC CBO38894 and CGC1523282. LENNAR REALTY INC (CQ1013633) 04/22.

ONWARD[®] WHAT'S IN YOUR GARAGE?



CADDY CARTS

Club Car

**BLACK
& GOLD**
2020
Club Car

12691 Tamiami Trail S. • North Port • 941-474-4747 • 1-800-681-CART
www.Caddy-Carts.com • Open M-F 8-4:30 • Sat by appointment

ALL WELLEN GOOD

Wellen Park Welcome Center recognized as the Best in the U.S.

BY NANCI THEORET

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

At the award-winning Wellen Park Welcome Center, you'll find both local residents and potential homebuyers. Residents will stop by every morning for breakfast at Barrel & Bean café, return on weekends for live entertainment and a glass of wine on the patio or pop by to study the calendar of coming events and check in on the construction progress of neighboring Downtown Wellen.

Part storyteller, part social hub, the center encourages newcomers to discover the story of Wellen Park as they roam its 5,000 square feet and sit a spell in inviting lounges and a living room.

The award-winning part occurred earlier this year when the Welcome Center was named by industry leaders as the best in the land, receiving the National Association of Home Builders' prestigious 2022 gold award as Best Community Welcome Center in the United States. The gold, the highest honor, celebrates the center's creativity, concept, design and displays. Upon entrance, you're greeted by a vintage Piaggio Apé Italian truck retrofitted as a reception desk. Video walls offer an interactive experience, as well as an electric-bikes-as-art installation, welcoming sitting areas and commissioned artwork that pays homage to Wellen Park's story.

Presented in February during The Nationals, the NAHB's annual awards program honoring the country's best communities, homebuilders and interior designers, the gold award recognizes the team involved in creating the Wellen Park Welcome Center — strategic planning and creative design by Walker Brands, International



COURTESY PHOTOS

Design & Display Group for the development and construction of experiential displays, and interior design by Builders Design.

"Our Welcome Center was thoughtfully and intentionally designed to convey the story of Wellen Park in an authentic and genuine way that reflects the community," says Christine Masney, vice president of marketing for Wellen Park. "We're honored by this recognition from the National Association of Home Builders and are reminded every day how truly special our Welcome Center is when residents and locals stop by for breakfast or a craft beer, to meet up with friends or to see the newest exhibit by our artists in residence."

The center celebrates the joys of community, meaningful connections and wellbeing, capturing a true sense of place through a full sensory experience. The scents of fresh-cut flowers and freshly brewed coffee perfume the air. Jolts of

vivid orange and blue accenting the décor echo the sunsets and waters of the nearby Gulf of Mexico. Even Barrel & Bean's selections of locally brewed craft beers provide a dose of local flavor.

The iconic three-wheeled Apé — affectionately described as a Vespa scooter in the front, a truck in the back — represents the relaxed easy-going spirit of the community. Electric bikes, sneakers, a scooter and inline skates displayed on a curlicue shine the spotlight on Wellen Park's emphasis on health, wellness, a connection to nature and its expanding network of trails and pathways. A wall-spanning art installation provides a unique spin on the traditional community site map, rendering Wellen Park's topography and the nearby Myakka River in different hues of preserved moss.

Nature is also represented in "Heartfelt Connections," a large lipstick-on-canvas piece created by Sarasota artist Alexis Fraser, aka Lipstick

Lex. The commissioned artwork, comprised entirely of lipstick kisses, pays homage to the community's painstaking efforts in relocating 26 heritage live oak trees to Downtown Wellen, where future Wellen Park stories will unfold under their broad canopies.

Ms. Masney says the artwork is a popular backdrop for social media posts. So, too, is the floral mural painted by local artist Laura Pomnier across the Welcome Center's exterior.

"Inspire," an aptly named mobile pop-up cart, references the community's ongoing partnership and artists-in-residence program with the North Port Art Center. It features a rotating display of work by local artists which welcome center visitors can purchase.

As the official introduction to Wellen Park's lifestyle and its homes, the center's video walls, interactive digital displays and touchscreen maps highlight neighborhoods, builders and buying opportunities as well as regional amenities, entertainment and attractions. Visitors can explore side-by-side comparisons for neighborhood and floor plan options.

The Wellen Park Welcome Center is also the destination for Countdown to Downtown events and activities, hosting everything from dinner and wine pairings to cycling and running group meetups for residents of Wellen Park and the surrounding region. The months-long event series commemorates construction of Downtown Wellen, nestled along an 80-acre lake just beyond the center's back patio.

"The Welcome Center is the precursor of more wonderful things coming soon in Wellen Park," Ms. Masney says, "especially with the completion of the adjacent Downtown Wellen later this year." 🏡

AWARD-WINNING WATERFRONT DINING ON LEMON BAY

Burgers | Salads | Smoked Ribs & Wings | Seafood
Cocktails | Happy Hour | Live Music



"Best Place to Watch the Sunset"

HOURS:

11am-9pm Sun-Thursday
11am-10pm Friday-Saturday
LIVE MUSIC 7-days a Week
RESERVATIONS SUGGESTED!

BY CAR
Right Off Placida Rd.
260 Maryland Ave



BY BOAT
Channel Marker 17A
Englewood, FL

Follow Us
For Updates



@lighthousegrillatstumpass

www.TheLighthouseGrill.net | 941.828.1368

LOCAL

Lighting Design



Photo by Hinkley

YOUR HOME IS A PERSONALIZED REFLECTION OF YOU.

Let our expert lighting design team illuminate it beautifully.



Photo by Corbett



Photo by Hinkley



Photo by Hinkley



Photo by Hinkley



Photo by Corbett



Call to schedule an appointment at our Punta Gorda showroom, or we can come to your home for a consultation.

941-621-4180

1105 Taylor Road, Unit E, Punta Gorda, FL 33950

www.thelocallightingshop.com

ALL WELLEN GOOD

Bayside Pet Resort coming to Wellen Park

BY ROBIN F. DEMATTIA

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Fluffy and Fido will have a new luxury retreat to enjoy when Bayside Pet Resort opens in Wellen Park next year.

It's the fourth location of the family-owned business that pampers pets.

"We take care of our clients' pets as if they're our own," says Angeline Pantazis, director of operations. "We're a five-star pet resort that offers wonderful amenities for our guests."

Bob and Lynn Huff, who live seasonally in Siesta Key, started the business with a Sarasota location in 2012. The couple had operated 63 nursing homes and wanted to bring the same level of care to people's pets.

The business recently won Best Pet Boarding and Best Pet Training in the 2022 Sarasota Herald-Tribune Reader's Choice Awards.

There are additional Bayside Pet Resort locations in Osprey and Lakewood Ranch. A site in Fort Myers is under consideration.

Tyler Smith, vice president of development and operations, says Wellen Park is an ideal location for the business.

"We think Wellen Park is a phenomenal location as it is a very up-and-coming area," he says. "With the expanded growth happening currently and that will continue to happen, we feel this would be a great service to a lot of folks who will be living in the community."

Jeff Charlotte, president of Venice-based J.E. Charlotte Construction Corporation, expects construction to start by September

and take nine months. The 16,000-square-foot pet resort will sit on 2½ acres along U.S. 41.

Mr. Charlotte describes the resort as "a Ritz-Carlton for pets" complete with a pool, shaded courtyards, outdoor runs and an agility area.

There will be 100 dog suites — most with access to outdoor runs — and 18 kitty condos and penthouses, all varying in size and amenities to match an individual animal's needs.

The kennel areas will be air-conditioned, humidity controlled and have a specialized ventilation system that circulates fresh air every 10 minutes. Most will have televisions as well as monitors, so owners can check on their pets. Fresh linens and soothing music are also provided.

Services will include canine lodging, feline lodging, doggie day care, dog and cat grooming, and dog training.

Ms. Pantazis says the existing resorts primarily see dogs, though about 25% of guests are cats. They accept most animals, including turtles, fish, bearded dragons, guinea pigs, rabbits, snakes and even a pot-bellied pig that is a frequent guest.

They do not accept horses, birds or anything venomous.

One thing that sets the business apart, according to Mr. Smith, is its transparency.

"You can come in any time and we'll give you a tour around the whole building," he says. "You can ask to see any area."

Additional details will be provided as plans are finalized and construction begins.

Learn more at www.baysidepetresort.com.



ALL WELLEN GOOD

Some local wildlife you're likely to encounter this time of year

BY DENNIS KIRK

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Anywhere you travel during this time of year, you are sure to find lots of different kinds of birds — even on the side of the road.

As you approach intersections, there are usually several small black birds sitting on the wires supporting the traffic lights. These are called grackles. From a distance they may look all black, but up close they have an iridescent bluish hue and light-colored, piercing eyes. You may also see large black birds, and these are vultures. Just like in the old cartoons, they sit patiently waiting for their next meal (often prepared by a passing car).

Many ospreys will hover over the water of drainage ditches and retention ponds along the roadways, then suddenly look like they fell out of the sky, hit the water and fly away with a fish in their talons. (Bald eagles can also be observed doing this, but they like areas that are a little more isolated.)

Sitting along the shore you may also see several long, skinny, dark-colored birds with outstretched wings. They may look like they're praying to the fishing gods, but in actuality they are drying their wings in the sun. These birds are cormorants and anhingas. The way to tell the difference is the anhinga has a long beak, sharp and pointed. The cormorant's beak is also long, but the end curves downward. Both of these birds are excellent swimmers and dive for their fish.

Looking out over a body of water, you might see large dark patches that look like they're all moving in unison. These are large flocks of ducks. The species is the lesser scaup, also known as the Canadian bluebill. These flocks can number in the thousands — and if you are out in a



COURTESY PHOTO

boat approaching them, it is a real thrill to see them all take off at once.

Along the medians you will see some medium-sized, dark-colored birds — with long legs and long downward-curved beaks — pecking at the grass. These are glossy ibis, and they look just like white ibis, except their feathers are a shiny reddish-brown. As you drive along, you may also see many white birds with tufts of brownish feathers on their backs. These are cattle egrets. Look for a farmer or rancher plowing land, or workers with a commercial mower on the side of the road cutting grass, and you'll likely see these birds flocking to follow the machinery to feed on grubs, insects and worms that are exposed as the machines pass over the ground.

Another species of our fine feathered friends that you'll see occasionally along the road (and sometimes crossing it) are large, grey birds growing more than 4 feet tall, with bright red head feathers. These are sandhill cranes. You'll usually find two adults accompanied by one or two of their young this time of year. Give them plenty of room if they are on the road in front of you.



Mother's Day Specials



CELEBRATE MOM WITH OUR PAMPER PACKAGES.

DERMATOLOGY | BOTOX | DERMAL FILLERS | AESTHETICS | HAIRLOSS TREATMENTS

BOTOX BLISS

Buy any TWO areas and get THIRD area FREE*

\$9.50 PER UNIT

FILLER FRENZIE

Buy ONE syringe and get \$150 off SECOND syringe

MUST BOOK APPOINTMENT OR PURCHASE GIFT CERTIFICATES BY MAY 15TH

**ENTER RAFFLE WITH PURCHASE TO WIN:
ONE FREE JUVÉDERM XC SYRINGE OR SKINCARE GIFT BASKET**

Contact us for more specials & Gift certificates

LUMINARYDERMATOLOGY.COM

**3105 BOBCAT VILLAGE CENTER RD
BOBCAT VILLAGE CENTER
NORTH PORT, FL 34288
PHONE: (941) 271-0021**

**4315 S. TAMIAMI TRAIL
VENICE JACARANDA CROSSINGS
VENICE, FL 34293
PHONE: (941) 263-2710**

**1550 E VENICE AVE
INSIDE EYE ASSOCIATES
VENICE, FL 34292
PHONE: (941) 667-9030**

*THIRD AREA OF BOTOX IS OF LESSER VALUE.

A Realtor® who listens... IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU!

What are YOUR real estate goals?



“ I’ve lived in Venice for twenty-five years, I am a Wellen Park resident myself. My mission is to provide both buyers and sellers with an exceptional real estate experience. Exceeding your expectations is my top priority. ”

- A Multi-Million Dollar Producer
- Recipient of the Coldwell Banker “Best of Blue Award” in 2017-2021
- Ranked in the top 3% of Realtors in Venice
(ranked by sales volume February 1, 2021 - February 1, 2022)

TESTIMONIALS

“Julie not only helped us find our house but answered every one of our myriad of question immediately, even though we were 1500 miles apart! She handled the sale professionally and made sure that every deadline was met with plenty of time to spare.”
-Venice, FL

“If you’re looking for just the right agent in your home search, look no further. Julie is on top of her game; knows the area, FL real estate and how to negotiate the entire buying or selling process. She is also vibrant, energetic and a pleasure to spend time with, and we looked at many different properties! We were delighted with the results of working with Julie Willett. Enthusiastic thumbs up for this agent!”
-Placida, FL

Your dream home is only a call away!



COLDWELL BANKER
REALTY

Julie Willett PLLC,
BROKER ASSOCIATE, REALTOR®, GRI, ABR®



941-223-7088 | 331 West Venice Avenue | Venice, FL 34285
www.VenicelsHome.com

ALL WELLEN GOOD

Breakwater brings fashionable home furnishings and accessories to Downtown Wellen

BY NANCI THEORET

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Mike and Rene Perry understand the disappointment of finding a just-purchased item for less online, or discovering that supposed one-of-a-kind item has thousands of identical cousins. As the proprietors of Breakwater Home Fashions, a home décor boutique coming to Downtown Wellen, the Atlanta couple has personally vetted potential vendors and hand-selected every lamp, vase, accessory, accent table and work of art to ward off any inkling of buyer's remorse.

"We have a prerequisite with our vendors: We don't want pieces you can get on Amazon or online," says Mr. Perry. "We want unique products that complement the homes in the area."

"If you can find it on the internet, we're not interested," reiterates Mrs. Perry.

The Perrys made their intentions very clear while attending an industry trade show at the sprawling AmericasMart Atlanta — which, at 7.1 million square feet, is the world's single-largest collection of wholesale home, gift and apparel showrooms.

"In the home category alone, there were 1,800 vendors," Mr. Perry says.

As its name suggests, Breakwater specializes in coastal home décor. The 1,500-square-foot boutique, which the Perrys hope to open Nov. 1 contingent upon completion of the under-construction Downtown Wellen, will offer an ever-changing inventory and high-light work by local artists.

"Every time you come into the shop, you'll see things you haven't seen before," says Mr.



COURTESY PHOTOS



Perry. "It will always be a different shopping experience, always fresh and moving."

That goes for the store itself with moveable display walls, monitors and beach-themed music within a palette of white, tan, emerald and an assortment of blues from light to sky and navy. The couple is excited to unveil the complete shopping experience at the soft opening.

Breakwater will carry lighting, lamps, wall art, paintings, console and coffee tables, candles, an array of smaller accessories and accent pieces, linen, tableware and area rugs.

"We offer products and vendors from all over the world," says Mr. Perry.

He's an experienced specialty retailer, while Mrs. Perry is a Realtor with a panache for home décor.

"I've always had a passion for interior design," she says. "We have always wanted to do something in Florida with home décor but never found the right opportunity."

"A friend of mine who I grew up with 45

years ago told us about Downtown Wellen," adds Mr. Perry. "They moved to IslandWalk in Wellen Park a year ago. We loved the area and are super excited to become members of the community."

As part of their introduction, the Perrys will feature local artists in rotating displays, provide consultations and commissioned pieces. They'll also work in the store.

"We hope to sponsor events through our connections with local artists," Mr. Perry says. "We can't wait to become involved with residents in the area. The location is absolutely perfect." ♦

The Best 46 Years of Dental Care in Charlotte County!



Panther Hollow Dental Lodge is where very caring, considerate and competent dentistry occurs. Within our wilderness lodge, you will find state-of-the-art technology and diagnostic equipment for every dental need.

Cosmetics | Veneers | Teeth Whitening
Crowns | Dental Implants | Dentures

Partial Dentures Treatment of Occlusal (bite) Disorders/TMJ Dysfunction

Dental Hygiene including Cleanings and Periodontal Treatment

We now have a CONE BEAM CT, used for situations when a regular dental x-ray is not sufficient, also helpful for placing implants.



Starting left to right: Robert G. Coseo, D.D.S., Neil Seaver, D.M.D., Joseph C. Bender, D.M.D., Timothy L. Palmer, D.D.S.
Seated left to right: Ashley N. Reynolds, D.M.D., Melissa M. Duston, D.D.S.



We now offer "TRIOS SYSTEM for Dental Impressions." Much more comfortable for the patient and provides an interactive experience for crowns, bridges, etc.



19240 Quesada Avenue,
Port Charlotte, FL
941.743.7435
www.PantherHollowDental.com





IMAGINE MORE WITH MATTAMY AT WELLEN PARK

Two great communities, one incredible location

Visit our communities and experience for yourself the lifestyle that awaits you with Mattamy Homes at Wellen Park.

Sunstone at Wellen Park

Gated, single-family and attached villas
Models open in May

18150 Wellspring Ct., Venice, FL 34293

Renaissance at Wellen Park

Gated, single-family and paired villas
4 model homes are open daily

11720 Renaissance Blvd., Venice, FL 34293

Explore all of this and more:

- Enjoy shops, eateries, recreation and future Downtown Wellen –just around the corner
- Live less than a mile from CoolToday Park, home of the Atlanta Braves Spring Training
- Walk or bike on miles of community trails and paths
- Send your kids to A-rated public schools
- Surround yourself with iconic Gulf Coast beaches and tranquil state parks

Fun-filled amenities at both communities include:

Beach-entry pool with lap lanes, clubhouse with fitness center, pickleball courts, full-time activities director, dog park, tot lot, and more!

To learn more or schedule your appointment please call 941-269-3918
or visit mattamyhomes.com/sarasota



Visit Mattamyhomes.com or see a Mattamy New Home Counselor for further details and important legal disclaimers. Prices, specifications, terms, conditions, all offers, home site and plan availability are subject to change or revocation without prior notice or obligation. This is not an offer in states where registration is required. Void where prohibited by law. Models/lifestyle photos do not reflect racial or ethnic preference. E.&O.E. Builder #CGC1513363 MATTPA237



ALL WELLEN GOOD

North Port's Public Safety Complex opens

BY ROBIN F. DEMATTIA

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Wellen Park residents will benefit from a new city of North Port Public Safety Complex that opened this month after a ribbon-cutting and public open house celebration on April 15.

The 24,300-square-foot complex at the corner of Tamiami Trail and Preto Boulevard is a combination fire station and police substation. Fire Station 86 is the city's sixth firehouse. The new location means faster emergency response for residents in Wellen Park and the surrounding areas and also reduces demand placed on the current Sarasota County fire station at the State College of Florida campus.

"Crews are excited to be in the new station, which will provide us a better opportunity to meet the needs of North Port residents now and in the future," says Deputy Fire Chief Scott Lane.

North Port Fire Rescue will have a lieutenant, district chief, fire inspector, four firefighters and a combination of EMT/paramedic.

The equipment includes a ladder truck, fire engine, two rescue vehicles, two brush trucks, one UTV and one soft-side boat.

The station will also house a Sarasota County fire engine and two or three personnel plus one rescue vehicle with two personnel, according to the chief.

"What we have heard back from the community has been positive," Chief Lane says of the complex's opening.

North Port Police Chief Todd Garrison says his department will have about 18 full-time staff at the site along with the law enforcement training division. He says his staff are excited to have the new space and look forward to providing enhanced services in the Wellen Park area.

As the city's population has grown west of



COURTESY PHOTOS

Above: The newly opened city of North Port Public Safety Complex combines a fire station and police substation.

Far left: Fire Station 86 means faster emergency response for residents in Wellen Park and the surrounding areas.

Left: The ribbon cutting ceremony for the new safety complex.



Myakka River, the new building will enable faster emergency response to Wellen Park and the surrounding areas now and for years to come. Sarasota County Fire Department's presence in the building also increases emergency response capabilities.

In addition to the Public Safety building, the complex includes a rescue helipad for urgent emer-

gency transport, 1,600-square-foot police garage for support equipment and dedicated parking for police and fire personnel as well as visitors.

The facility also showcases NPPFR's vintage 1946 Seagrave fire truck that sits within a glass display room, symbolizing the rich history of North Port Fire Rescue and glowing at night like a lantern for the community. Other highlights include a four-

bay, double-deep, 7,000-square-foot apparatus room to house rescue vehicles.

The complex was funded by Wellen Park, which will then be paid back from impact fees collected in the new community over time.

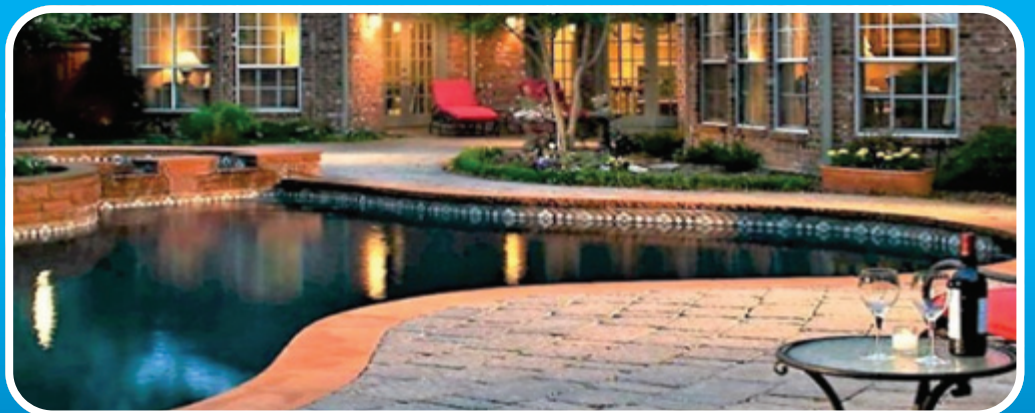
Groundbreaking for the complex took place Feb. 3, 2021. It was built by Willis Smith Construction and designed by Plunkett Raysich Architects. Engineering work was completed by Snell Engineering Consultants, AM Engineering Inc., Kimley-Horn and Quest Design Group.

DISCOVER THE DIFFERENCE!

RESPECTABLE PAVER, TRAVERTINE & CONCRETE SEALING

(941) 391-2467

The Boutique - Style Company that provides luxury level service which will impress even the most discerning of customers!



www.RespectableGroup.com

DISCOVER THE ULTIMATE IN HURRICANE HOME PROTECTION AND SECURITY

PRODUCTS BUILT TOUGH TO WEATHER THE STORM



ACCORDIONS

Built for ease of use, our accordion shutters simplify how you protect your home.



ROLL DOWNS

Achieve the ultimate in protection at the touch of a button with our automatic roll down shutters.



CLEAR PANELS

See why our clear panels are the clear choice to match with any home or desired aesthetic.



PANELS

Our easy-to-install panels make preparing your home for hurricane-force winds a breeze.

Call Today for a **FREE Estimate 941-200-2916**



ELITE

HURRICANE HOME PROTECTION
Licensed & Insured • SCC131152514

www.elitehurricanehomeprotection.com



ALL WELLEN GOOD

Wellen Park Race Series kicks into high gear

BY ROBIN F. DEMATTIA

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

More than 300 people came as families, running clubs and individuals to Wellen Park's inaugural St. Patrick's Day 5K race on March 19. It was the first event in Wellen Park's new race series that offers fitness enthusiasts the opportunity to walk, run and even bike in friendly competitions in and around the master-planned community.

"Wellen Park's core initiative and vision is to offer activities and events about health and wellness," says Michelle Churchill, events and experiences director for Wellen Park. The route included part of the community's pathways and trail system.

For the Glasses, it was truly a family affair. Three generations of the Glass family participated: Ashley Glass; her 9-year-old daughter, Sailee; and 6-year-old son, Braylan. They all ran, with Braylan being the youngest finisher of the day. Ms. Glass' parents, Dale and Pam Riegsecker, ran in the race. Her uncle, Daryl Kay, ran while her aunt, Lori Kay, walked.

Ms. Glass also coaches the 100 Mile Club at Laurel Nokomis School and encouraged the students in her group to participate.

"With obesity levels going up, it's so important that these kids exercise for their health and brains," she says.

Ms. Glass says Wellen Park was a pretty and safe route for children, and she appreciated the awards that were presented to them.

"I love that they motivate the kids with prizes in the age groups," she says.

On the other end of the spectrum, 85-year-old Julia Evans was the oldest participant.

"I'm a walker, as you can imagine," she quips.

SEE RACE, A16 ►



Above and left: Racers of all ages and levels set off on the St. Patrick's Day 5K race.



Right: Meagan Boucher, top female finisher overall, and Louis Saviano, top male finisher overall.

CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

PLANTATION GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

SUMMER TRIAL MEMBERSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE!

THE BEST CLUB IS NOW EVEN BETTER!

Plantation Golf & Country Club
Venice, Florida

CONTACT US TODAY TO SCHEDULE A TOUR | 941.493.0501 OR JMADSEN@PLANTATIONGCC.COM

Because it's your life



Life doesn't stop when you're going through cancer treatments. To help make sure you can carry on with your routine as much as possible, we'll design your treatment program around you.

At GenesisCare, we are committed to providing personalized, high-quality cancer care with access to the most advanced radiation oncology technology and treatments for the best possible life outcomes.

**This is a better world of care.
This is GenesisCare.**

Contact us today to
schedule your appointment:
(833) FOR-MYGC
[genescare.com/us](https://www.genescare.com/us)



CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL



Ron Reid

RACE

From page 14

But she's not just a walker. Ms. Evans is part of the V-Pack, a Venice-based group of runners and walkers she joins at least three times a week for companionship and to stay physically fit. She participates in many 5Ks and recently joined the V-Pack for the 10K across the Skyway Bridge.

She says about 15 to 20 of her group participated in the Wellen Park race, including several other friends in their 80s.

"People always seem to be impressed when

they see the older groups," she says.

The St. Patrick's Day 5K was part of Wellen Park's "Countdown to Downtown," a celebratory event series that gives both residents and visitors a taste of what's to come in Downtown Wellen.

Ms. Churchill says there will likely be events in October and December, as well as a half marathon and full marathon within the next two years. She is also considering a duathlon as well as including activities on the lake, such as kayaking or standup paddling.

She credits Douglas Cuff, Lisa Hardy, Michele Moore, Myra Myerholtz and all the volunteers for making the inaugural event such a success. 🍷

TOP AWARDS

Matt DePalma, managing partner for event sponsor Capstan Financial Consulting Group, presented awards to participants, including Meagan Boucher and Louis Saviano, an engaged couple from New Hampshire who were visiting a relative in the area. They run often and searched online for races during their Florida trip. Though they each have won races before, this was the first time they both came in on top.

"That was a new one for us," Mr. Saviano says. "It's always a lot of fun to win a race, and even more enjoyable when we both perform well on the same day."

- >> **Top Male Finisher, Overall** - Louis Saviano (16:45.2)
- >> **Top Female Finisher, Overall** - Meagan Boucher (18:22.8)
- >> **Top Male Finisher, Masters** - Mark Witmer (20:20.2)
- >> **Top Female Finisher, Masters** - Amber Carter (22:26.7)
- >> **Top Male Finisher, Grand Masters** - Bruce Burns (20:21)
- >> **Top Female Finisher, Grand Masters** - Kathleen Strayer (23:40:8)
- >> **Top Male Finisher, Senior Grand Masters** - Tim McCaffrey (20:41:1)
- >> **Top Female Finisher, Senior Grand Masters** - Jeff Murray (24:19:2)
- >> **Top Male Finisher, Veteran Grand Masters** - Tom Treend (24:43:9)
- >> **Top Female Finisher, Veteran Grand Masters** - Anne Marie Paradiso (32:41:8)

Individual & Family Insurance

Shop For Affordable Health Insurance From The Health Marketplace Or Short Term Coverage

Broad Selection

A licensed agency and not a health insurance company. We offer plans from multiple companies in your area.

Best Prices

Health Insurance rates are filed and regulated by your state's Department of Insurance so our rates will be the lowest rates filed in your state.

Fast Processing

Health Insurance Marketplace USA can assist you with online processing of your application for best results!

Superior Customer Support

Our knowledgeable and friendly licensed staff will help you make the most of your premium dollars and help with claims questions with professional, unbiased service.

New to Medicare or Shopping? Contact us today for a Free Benefits Review! Call us 1-888-865-9086

Americans are able to choose health insurance from leading carriers on the federal marketplace. You may qualify for premium tax credits (APTC), and depending on your household income subsidies to help lower your deductible and cost sharing. Don't know where to begin? Let us help you get the best coverage at the best price and take advantage of all the cost savings you are entitled to! We are Certified for the Federal Marketplace.

As your health insurance advocate, we are committed to protecting your privacy and the information you provide to us.

GET A QUOTE HERE ▶



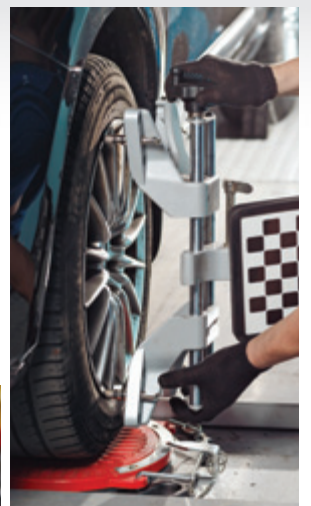
healthinsurancemarketplaceusa.com

Complete & Reliable Automotive Service & Repair

OUR TEAM SETS US APART, SAVING YOU TIME AND MONEY, NOT TO MENTION WORRY.

10% OFF ANY SERVICE OVER \$100

- ▶ DIESEL ENGINE REPAIR
- ▶ MAINTENANCE & AUTO SERVICE
- ▶ TRUCK SERVICE & UPGRADES
- ▶ FLEET SERVICE
- ▶ MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT REPAIRS
- ▶ TRAILER REPAIR
- ▶ AND SO MUCH MORE!



Great service and honest! I can't say enough about the entire crew, from the front office to every mechanic and the owner himself! I really appreciate the way they took care of me.

~ Brian N.



941-451-8157 | 347 Seaboard Avenue | Venice, FL
www.leopoldtruckrepair.com

CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL



Sheila Valentino and Laura Kincaid take a selfie before the start of the Wellen Park St. Patrick's Day 5K.



Indira Gomez waves to the crowd.



ASHLEY GLASS / COURTESY PHOTO
Ashley Glass with son, Braylan, and daughter, Sailee.

CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL



Servicing Wellen Park-Venice, FL and Surrounding Areas

The Right Choice, The First Time

Whether you're a full time resident, vacation homeowner or rental landlord, *Anthony's Concierge Service* offers a complete line of professional home watch and concierge services to protect your home and provide peace of mind that your home is well cared for. We act as an invaluable resource to homeowners, who come to us for anything regarding their home care needs.

Services Include:

- Home Watch
- Concierge Services
- Storm Preparation
- Automotive Care & Transportation Coordination

- Accredited Member of National Home Watch Association
- Licensed, Insured, Bonded
- Personalized Home Watch Reports
- Services Tailored to Your Precise Needs



Protect your investment with ACS, LLC

941-615-8474

19503 S. West Villages Pkwy., Suite A104
Venice, FL 34293

Email: acslaporta@gmail.com

www.acsofflorida.com

Buying or Selling... We Can Make Your Dream a Reality in Wellen Park!



THE BUCKLEY GROUP OF BISHOP WEST REAL ESTATE

724 SHAMROCK BLVD • VENICE, FL 34293
12739 TAMIAMI TRAIL • NORTH PORT, FL 34287

941-468-1118

www.BISHOPWESTREALESTATEGULFCOAST.com



MINDY BUCKLEY | BUD BUCKLEY | KARI MYRONUIK



COURTESY PHOTO

BANYAN

From page 1

a place to meet, gather, and enjoy the moment

with friends and family in a premier waterside location. And, as the exclusive caterer for events in neighboring outdoor venues and Solis Hall, Downtown Wellen's signature event venue, the restaurant also needed the flexibility and depth to create special menus — from casual food

and heavy hors d'oeuvres to formal black-tie dinners — as memorable as the milestones celebrated there.

Ironically, the answer was in Wellen Park's own backyard: a team of passionate restaurateurs who love what they do.

Meet brothers David and Dennis Valentino, of Bocca Lupo Coal Fired Pizza in the Wellen Park Marketplace, and partner Mark Costanzo. These gentlemen aren't just any restaurateurs. For 25 years, they have introduced authentic dining experiences and successful restaurants

Look & Feel Beautiful.

The Aesthetics Suite at Venice Avenue Dermatology is Now Offering:

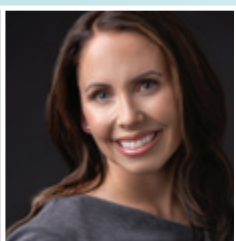
DIAMOND GLOW™

Introductory Diamond Glow special.

\$159

Regular Price \$225

- Botox Cosmetic Injections
- Juvederm dermal fillers
- DiamondGlow - more than a facial, "a next-level, noninvasive skin-resurfacing treatment" by Allergan
- Microneedling
- VI Peels
- Salicylic & Glycolic peels
- Facials and more.



Introducing Master Injector, Dana Pilz, MPAS, PA-C

Welcoming New Patients! Our goal is to help you maintain healthy, beautiful skin through Aesthetic, General and Surgical Dermatology.



VENICE AVENUE
DERMATOLOGY
www.veniceavederm.com

Call to Schedule an Appointment Today!
941-486-1404

897 East Venice Avenue, Suite A • Venice, FL 34285
Appointments Available Monday-Friday: 8am-4pm



Jeffrey R. Hunek, M.D., Lee R. Lumpkin, III, M.D., Monica L. Walker, M.D., Amy Demonbreun, APRN, Tina McBride, Licensed Medical Aesthetician, Dana Pilz, MPAS, PA-C

CERTIFIED BY THE AMERICAN BOARD OF DERMATOLOGY AND DIPLOMATES OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF DERMATOLOGY.

to Charlotte and Sarasota counties with Donato's Italian Restaurant, beloved for its subway turnstile entrance and dining room that transports customers to New York City's Little Italy, and Prime Serious Steak, a contemporary steakhouse known for its craft cocktail culture.

Shortly after Bocca Lupo's Marketplace debut in late 2020, it became the top-selling location — a distinction it's held since. The bar and lounge at the newly opened Prime on Venice Island have proven so popular, David Valentino wishes they'd gone bigger.

At The Banyan House, expected to open in November with the completion of Downtown Wellen's first phase, the partners are developing an entirely new concept, one that celebrates today's trends with a food-forward approach, upscale new American cuisine, and yes, a larger bar and lounge.

"The Banyan House reflects how people dine today," says David Valentino. "Exciting trends in the last decade focus on making the dining experience more youthful and accessible while emphasizing more creative fare. Bars and lounges are larger with comfortable seating dedicated to guests having a cocktail, appetizers and small plates with friends. They may go out on a Tuesday and not want a full dinner. We are giving our guests and residents more options."

Rick Severance, president of the Wellen Park community, is pleased with the concept the restaurant brings to Downtown Wellen.

"The Banyan House complements our vision and the joyful, vibrant spirit of Wellen Park for everyone to experience," he says. "We anticipate the restaurant will become a local favorite for residents and the regional community to connect over a shared experience, gather with family and friends, and celebrate milestones and everyday moments."

The Banyan House's chef-driven cuisine features salads, sandwiches and casual selections for lunch, a dinnertime menu focusing on fusion-inspired fare and orangewood-grilled

"From a culinary perspective, it's incredibly exciting to have a more eclectic, far-reaching menu. We're having a lot of fun with it."

— Rick Severance, president of the Wellen Park community

seafood and steak, and a formal weekend brunch rivaling those in big cities with carving stations and a champagne bar, says Mr. Valentino.

"From a culinary perspective, it's incredibly exciting to have a more eclectic, far-reaching menu," he says. "We're having a lot of fun with it."

The 6,100-square-foot restaurant will seat 320 and offer 2,000 square feet of alfresco dining — all showcasing picturesque lake and sunset views. The Valentinos and Mr. Costanzo have enlisted the help of noted Tampa branding and restaurant interior design firm api(+), ArchitecturePlus International, and a California company specializing in backgrounds for theme parks, the latter sculpting realistic banyan trees that will tower 20 feet above guests.

The Banyan House's open, light-filled dining areas are centered around a large wood-fired grill and the ever-present lake views showcased by walls of windows. Billowing curtains frame the lake from the wood-cloaked patio.

"We really want to lean into the waterfront setting and being part of downtown," says Mr. Valentino. "The Banyan House will offer upscale dining, but not in a stuffy way. It's a fun, high-energy space with a lovely waterfront and joyful environment in a walkable area. People are outside enjoying the beautiful weather and

they can come in from golf or shopping."

From their lakeside tables, diners will also enjoy prime people-watching — the parade of pedestrians meandering downtown's sidewalks and the 2.8-mile lake-hugging trail, private events under the twinkling lights of the adjacent Canopy Green park's heritage oak tree as well as kayakers, canoers and rowers on the water, perhaps a photo session of newlyweds along the lakefront at Solis Hall.

With two kitchens, The Banyan House will also cater private indoor and alfresco events, community festivities, weddings and parties at neighboring Solis Hall, the Great Lawn, and the intimate lakefront Canopy Green park. The venues, including the restaurant, can be booked individually or together, placing Downtown Wellen on the radar of wedding and event planners.

Solis Hall, named for its sunset views over Grand Lake, offers 4,400 square feet inside and 4,000 square feet of outdoor gathering areas, porches and patios wrapping around the building. The front faces the Great Lawn, a destination for community events, picnics and parties or enjoying live entertainment from the hall's stage.

With its flagship restaurant now in place, Mr. Severance says The Banyan House elevates and complements Downtown Wellen's growing restaurant scene, which includes rustic seafood-centric Sicilian cuisine at Mirabella's Italian Coastal Cuisine, stone-oven pizzas and a signature 50-tap beer wall at Oak & Stone, a raw bar and small plates at Villani & Co., and super-premium ice cream at Bright Ice.

Also on the horizon is The Yard, Downtown Wellen's destination for ultra-casual food and fun. A collection of shipping containers retrofitted as kiosks will offer counter-served food and beverages with alfresco seating and outdoor activity centers. The container-as-building idea playfully references downtown's Kind Vibes Outfitters, where shipping containers provide storage for rental kayaks, paddleboards and bicycles, and one painted in Wellen Park's signature strawberry joy brand red and placed on its end makes a bold exclamation.

The Yard will be the perfect space to relax, dine on your favorite quick bite menu selections and enjoy each other's company in a casual but engaging space next to the water, the playground and the Great Lawn, says Mr. Severance.

The Yard will include lobster rolls at the Valentinos' Claw & Co., the Atlanta Braves' Taste of the Park and Mediterranean offerings from Agapi.

The culinary scene at Downtown Wellen is sure to become a foodie destination and a must-do experience locals can't wait to show off to out-of-town guests.

"Small restaurants give a community a sense of identity," says Mr. Valentino. "They're what makes a town. Along this little stretch of (U.S.) 41 we call home, people talk about the small businesses and organizations. When someone visits your hometown, there's always a place you've got to take them to, and so often it's a restaurant." 🍷

NOT JUST A REAL ESTATE AGENT BUT ALSO **YOUR NEIGHBOR!**



Hello,

As your local West Villages specialist and neighbor, I understand the real value of what our neighborhood offers.

I've proudly provided outstanding results, exceptional service, market knowledge, and local expertise that has led to many happy and returning customers over the years. I'd love to do the same for you because as your neighbor, it's not just about real estate but the relationship.

Your resource for all things West Villages/Wellen Park.

Call me today and let's discuss your goals.

Tracy Pierce REALTOR®

941.275.1570

TracyPierce@michaelsaunders.com

TracyPierce.michaelsaunders.com



THE BEST OF THE BEST 2019, 2020 & 2021

Use your smartphone's camera to scan the QR code to see what neighbors and customers like you have said about their experience.

Michael Saunders & Company

LICENSED REAL ESTATE BROKER

TRAILS

From page 1

The community's nine existing concrete and asphalt trails are scattered throughout the built areas of Wellen Park, offering a jaunty .67-mile loop around the West Villages lake and up to 6.3 miles circling the West Villages district. Other paths run along Tamiami Trail and Preto Boulevard, loop around Blue Heron Park and connect the future downtown to CoolToday Park. Most of the trail system is multimodal, for use by pedestrians, bikes and low-speed vehicles.

"People have flexibility to run or hike different trails," says Mr. Severance. "No one walk or run is ever the same."

Mile markers were recently installed to enhance the experience. And signs with QR codes along the trails will soon introduce visitors to the local wildlife and natural habitats.

"One of my favorite things about running here at night is seeing the flora and fauna," says Mr. Severance. "I've seen ospreys, hawks, the most beautiful birds."

New trails will open in the next two years, including the 2.8-mile path around the 80-acre Grand Lake in Downtown Wellen, currently under construction, and a second 3-mile route brushing against a large nature preserve and skirting wetlands. The new routes will have crushed shell and natural surfaces.

The lake trail provides changing scenery, taking hikers, bikers and joggers from the urban environment of the downtown area elevated above the water to sloping banks and two island preserves. Side trails skim around the preserves with lakefront observation areas across the water to downtown.

The trail system is an ode to Wellen Park's emphasis on health and wellness. Future trails



Bob Colwell walks his dog, Cash, on the trails around Wellen Park.

CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

will enhance the connection to nature and community with boardwalks, vistas across wetlands, prairies and ponds, and easy access from current and future neighborhoods.

"I love the level of interconnectivity our trails provide," Mr. Severance notes. "Residents of gated neighborhoods get on the trails and meet each other. The trails connect everybody."

To promote the expanding trail system and encourage an active lifestyle, Wellen Park is challenging residents to step it up in May.

The month-long "Spring into Summer at Wellen Park" invites participants to walk, run, bike, skip or roller skate their way to wellness

in Southwest Florida's parks and trails, awarding weekly prizes to randomly drawn winners who average 7,500 steps daily or the equivalent in activities, including swimming and bocce.

The free online contest, from May 1-31, syncs with participants' activity trackers, filling in an interactive map of U.S. national parks as they progress. The first person to complete the map wins. Participants can register under the events tab at www.wellenpark.com. Wellen Park plans to host additional wellness contests throughout the year to further encourage the ever-growing active lifestyle of its residents. ♦



Take the stress out of flying and...

Arrive

2 HOURS before **TAKEOFF**



FLYPGD
Punta Gorda Airport

28000 A-1 Airport Road • Punta Gorda, FL 33982
www.FlyPGD.com



SHEAR Heaven

Our stylists are ready to provide you with the all latest trends and techniques!

941.484.1011

We are located at:
1740 E. Venice Ave, Ste 7
Next to Allegro Bistro
Venice, FL 34292

GET \$5 OFF YOUR NEXT VISIT
Get \$5 off your next hair service when you join our mailing list at www.ShearHeavenSalonofVenice.com

Serviceing the Venice area for over 10 years.
Haircuts, Creative Color & Trendy Tones, Blow Dry & Style, Updos, Perms, Keratin Treatments, Hair Supplement, Barbering, Extensions, Waxing & Tinting, and Wedding and Special Occasion Hair & Makeup

Our Team has deep values and drive that lead them to provide excellent service, with a big helping of personality!

HOMES AT WELLEN PARK

APRIL-MAY 2022

| A21

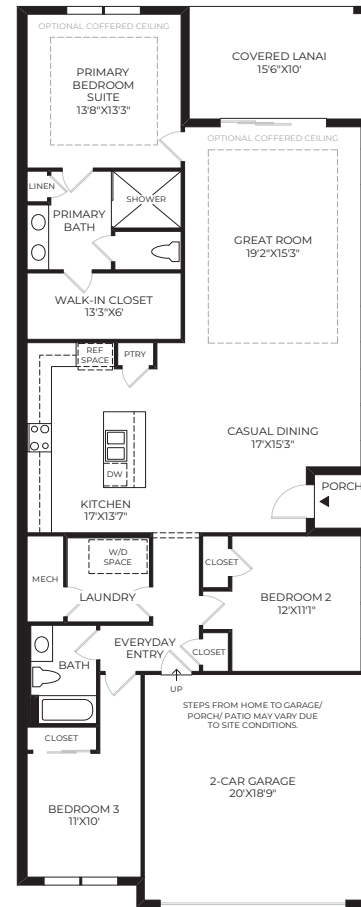
SOLSTICE – TOLL BROTHERS



Dunnet

The Dunnet attached villa is an inviting retreat that you'll be proud to call home. The spacious, open floor plan features a well-appointed kitchen with a center island, walk-in pantry and ample storage space. In addition, the adjacent casual dining area and sunlit great room open to the private covered lanai. The primary bedroom suite is an oasis of its own, including a primary bathroom with an oversized shower, linen storage, dual-sink vanity, private water closet and large walk-in closet. Two additional bedrooms with a shared full bath are perfect for guests, a home office or a den. Smart home features include a keyless front entry lock, Wi-Fi thermostat and Wi-Fi garage control.

Sales center:
152 Daylily Blvd., North Venice
941-628-7086



Specifications

🏠 Base price: From \$452,995

🏠 SF: 1,804

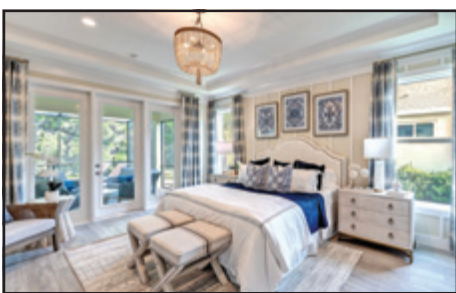
🛏 3 Bedrooms

🚿 2 Bathrooms

🏠 Home Type: Attached Villa

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

GRAN PLACE – SAM RODGERS HOMES



Acadia

The Acadia is a three bedroom, two-and-a-half bath plus bonus room home that is built for everyone — and we mean everyone! The Acadia brings the homey feel to a Florida dream home. With three bedrooms, 2,500 square feet, tray ceilings and an abundance of natural light, you will be able to entertain friends and family in your new Florida home. You'll love the option that affords you the ability to convert the bonus room into a fourth bedroom, plus a third bath. The Acadia provides the space and luxury your family needs to be able to live every day in paradise.

Sales center:
18075 Home Run Drive, Venice
941-621-9307



Specifications

🏠 Base price: From \$820,990

🏠 SF: 2,501

🛏 3 Bedrooms

🚿 2½ Bathrooms

🏠 Home Type: Single Family

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

HOMES AT WELLEN PARK

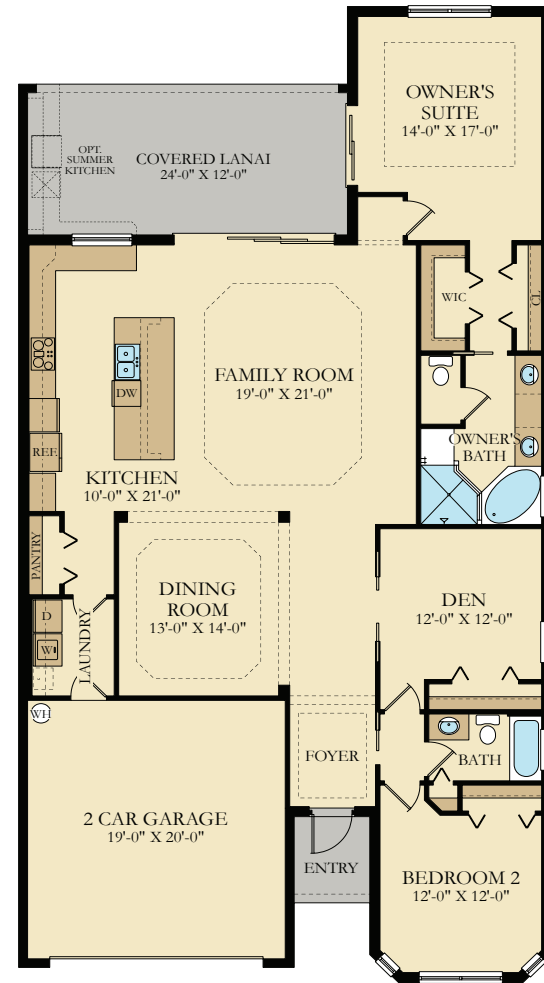
WELLEN PARK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB – LENNAR



Angelina

The Angelina is part of the Executive series, and features a spacious 2,201 single-story home with two bedrooms, den, two bathrooms and two-car garage. The cohesive modern design provides full use of the space with an open floor plan featuring a gorgeous kitchen with a large island designed to gather around. The den can easily be used as another space for hobbies or extra guests for added flexibility. The natural lighting in this home is exceptional, offering an expansive lanai that is accessible from the great room and the spacious owner's suite. The secondary bedroom in the front of the home has a beautiful panoramic view with windows on three sides.

Sales center:
20061 Galleria Blvd., Venice
941-740-6524

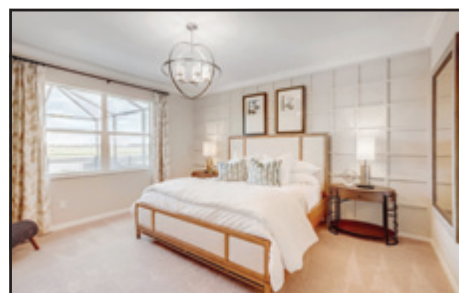


Specifications

- Base price: From the \$500s
- SF: 2,061
- 2 Bedrooms + Den
- 2 Bathrooms
- Home Type: Single Family

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

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
941-621-9324



Specifications

- Base price: From the \$500s.
- SF: 2,201
- 3 Bedrooms + Den
- 3 Bathrooms
- Home Type: Single Family

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

HOMES AT WELLEN PARK

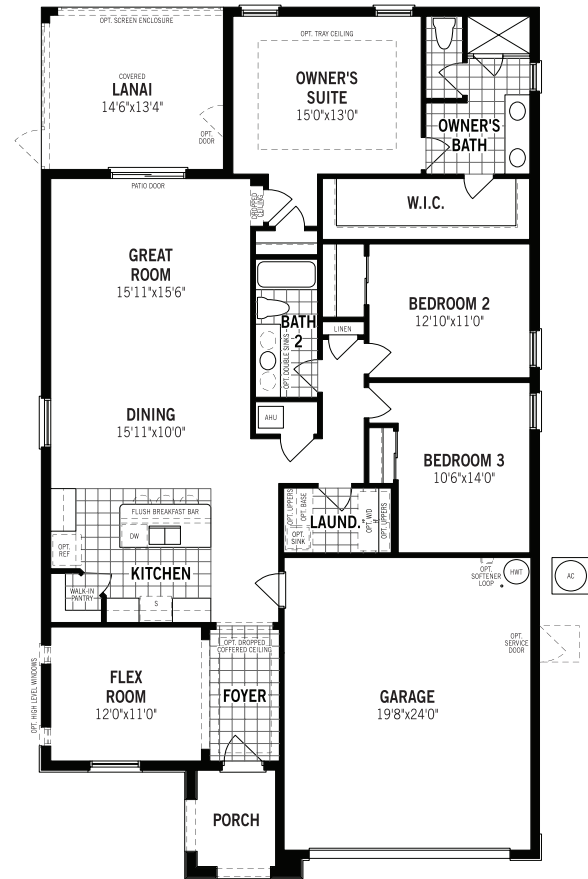
RENAISSANCE – MATTAMY HOMES



Riviera II

The Riviera II is an open and airy home with 1,937 square feet, three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a two-car garage. This one-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 towards the back of the home for privacy and includes an owner's bath with two vanities and an oversized walk-in closet.

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



Specifications

- Base price: From \$516,990
- SF: 1,937
- 3 Bedrooms
- 2 Bathrooms
- Home Type: Single-Family

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

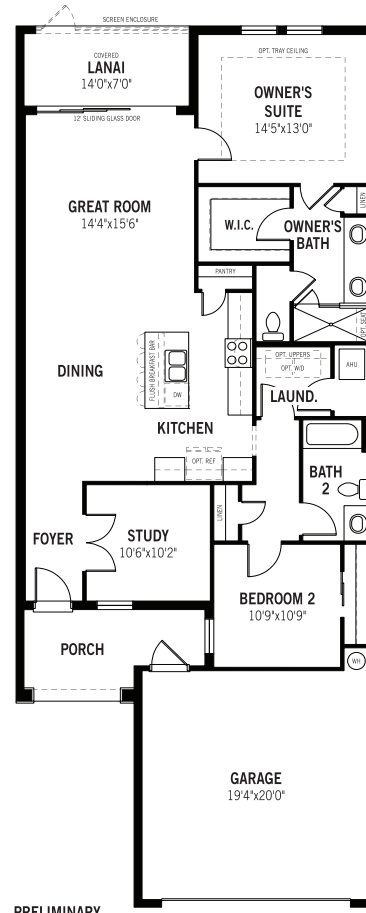
SUNSTONE – MATTAMY HOMES



Anclote

The 1,501 square foot Anclote is an attached villa floor plan with serious style and optimized spaces for daily living, nightly privacy and any kind of special occasion. The cozy porch of this interior home leads to both the two-car garage and the foyer — which opens to a study that's perfect for a hobby room or a home office. The airy great room features expansive sliding glass doors, overlooks the dining and kitchen areas, and offers plenty of space for gatherings, daily meals, games, movies and more. A breakfast bar and covered lanai create even more opportunities for conversation and enjoying your day. The private owner's suite has a large walk-in closet and dual-sink bath of its own, while bedroom No. 2 has a full bath and easy access to the laundry room. This floor plan and exterior style illustration are preliminary.

Sales center:
11720 Renaissance Blvd., Venice
941-205-7051



Specifications

- Base price: From \$395,990
- SF: 1,501
- 2 Bedrooms
- 2 Bathrooms
- Home Type: Attached Villa

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

HOMES AT WELLEN PARK

GRAND PALM – NEAL COMMUNITIES








Savannah 2

The open-concept Savannah 2 is an exciting four-bedroom, three-bath, three-car garage single-family home by Neal Communities. This home includes open space living across 2,868 square feet with a great room, dining area, gourmet kitchen and formal den. The master bedroom includes two walk-in closets, a luxurious soaking tub, corner shower, and two vanity sinks. A guest room with en-suite accommodations and walk-in closet is the second bedroom, and a tech space has been included for additional electronics or flexible space needs.

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



Specifications

-  Base price: From \$777,990
-  SF: 2,868
-  4 Bedrooms
-  3 Bathrooms
-  Home Type: Single Family

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

BOCA ROYALE – NEAL COMMUNITIES








Sandcastle

The largest twin villa home design by Neal Communities, Sandcastle offers bright open living spaces including an island kitchen, dining area and great room with optional coffered ceiling. A den, entered from the main living area through lovely French doors, provides a great spot for a home office. A covered lanai sits at the back of the home, accessible through sliding glass doors or optional pocket slider from the great room. The lanai can also be entered from the master bedroom through an optional door. The master suite also features an oversized walk-in closet and bath with two sink vanities. Two secondary bedrooms, full bath and utility room complete the floor plan.

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



Specifications

-  Base price: From \$497,990
-  SF: 1,842
-  3 Bedrooms
-  2 Bathrooms
-  Home Type: Paired Villa

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

HOMES AT WELLEN PARK

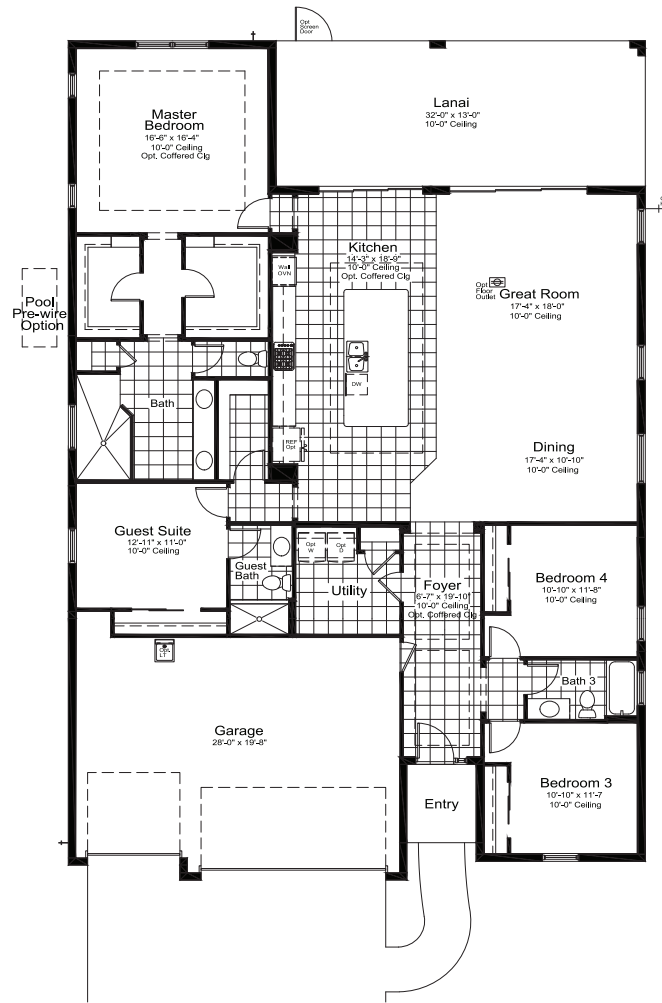
AVELINA – NEAL COMMUNITIES



Sea Spray

The inviting Sea Spray offers an open floor plan with a gourmet kitchen featuring a large island, walk-in pantry and a dedicated dining area. Both the kitchen and great room areas bring in natural light from a glass sliders leading to a large outdoor lanai. Your guests can also have a space to relax in the guest suite complete with en-suite bath and walk-in shower. The spacious master bedroom features two walk-in closets, a private water closet, walk-in shower and double sink vanity. There are two additional bedrooms with an option to include a den in lieu of a fourth bedroom.

Sales center:
12581 Meribel Street, Venice
941-241-0667



Specifications

- Base price: From \$644,990
- SF: 2,610
- 4 Bedrooms
- 3 Bathrooms
- Home Type: Single Family

* Prices are subject to change without notice.

Enjoy some top-notch fruit, tools and knowledge about Florida's blueberry season

BY BRAD BUCK

University of Florida/IFAS

March signaled the start of Florida's blueberry production, harvest and shipping season. The state's blueberry industry has grown rapidly in the past 20 years. Today, Florida farmers grow more than 5,200 acres of blueberries, producing about 20 million pounds.



PHILLIPS

Dating back to the 1950s, with a history of developing good-tasting, disease- and pest-resistant varieties, UF/IFAS' blueberry breeding program released its latest cultivar, Sentinel, in 2020. So far, Sentinel brings high yields for growers and fruit that is liked by consumers,

as reflected in UF Sensory Lab consumer taste panels.

We met with Doug Phillips, the UF/IFAS statewide blueberry Extension coordinator, to see what we can expect from the blueberry market this year.

Q: In addition to Sentinel, what are some of the latest blueberry varieties from UF/IFAS? What makes them interesting to the consumer? How about for the producer?

A: More recent UF/IFAS releases include Optimus. Machines pick it very well, and it has firm, sweet fruit. Others include Arcadia and Avanti for the evergreen system; Colossus for north-central and central Florida; and Magnus, which is best suited for north-central Florida. Detailed information, including yield, fruit quality data and other material is available here and

in the UF/IFAS Blueberry Growers Guide app.

Q: When is it best for commercial growers to plant their blueberries and why?

A: It is best to plant blueberries during the cooler portions of the year, before or after summer high temperatures. In Florida, blueberries are harvested beginning in March in south-central and central Florida and ending typically by early May, when market prices begin to drop and much of the available fruit has been harvested. If planted before summer and the cultivar selected is vigorous enough, then fruit could be harvested the following season, which will not be the case if planting after summer. However, Florida blueberry growers plant at different times during the year, depending on weather, temperatures, plant availability, labor availability for bed preparation and planting and availability of water for irrigation.

Q: Where do blueberries grow in Florida?

A: Blueberries grow throughout the state of Florida, primarily from Hendry County in the south to Alachua and Putnam counties in the north. There are some rabbiteye blueberries grown in the Florida Panhandle, mostly on smaller farms with U-pick operations. Most blueberries grow in central Florida, although there is significant acreage in both the north-central and south-central regions.

Q: Where does Florida rank in blueberry production nationally?

A: Based on 2019 U.S. Department of Agriculture data, Florida ranked eighth in terms of utilized blueberry production. We are not very large, but we do produce the first fresh fruit of the country and that makes us very relevant.

Q: How do growers cope/manage those potential obstacles/challenges?



COURTESY PHOTO

A: While large companies might dedicate entire teams focused on each area, most Florida producers rely on the information and support given by UF/IFAS. UF/IFAS has several production resources available to commercial blueberry growers, including multiple EDIS publications addressing many of the items. Links can be found at www.blueberrybreeding.com/blog, and the UF/IFAS Blueberry Growers Guide app (available for both iOS and Android systems), which includes a scouting guide, monthly management calendar for Florida growers, and a cultivars module with detailed information on UF/IFAS southern highbush blueberry releases. In addition, I can answer growers' questions, and I am a liaison with UF/IFAS faculty.

Q: What are the current market conditions for Florida blueberry producers?

A: Florida has the first U.S.-produced blueberries to reach the domestic market in early spring. Harvest generally begins in March in the south-central and central regions and continues through early May, when market prices decline. This market window is when prices are typically the highest, which is an advantage for Florida growers.

Q: How has blueberry breeding changed over the years?

A: Historically, blueberry breeding has involved a method called recurrent phenotypic selection, where parents with favorable characteristics are crossed and over time, offspring with the most favorable characteristics are selected to advance through a multi-stage selection process. Some of these favorable offspring are also used as parents in subsequent breeding cycles, with the goal of continually increasing the favorable characteristics of the breeding program's germplasm. This process works well but could take 12 to 15 years — and a lot of resources — to develop a new cultivar. In more recent years, different strategies, methods and techniques have been implemented in breeding programs to accelerate the process of identification of superior parents and individuals that can become cultivars. One of these is Genomic Selection, a method that uses genetic markers and statistical methods. The process of developing a cultivar is still long, as we still need to test the candidates in multiple commercial locations and management practices, but now it can take us six to 10 years.

The mission of the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences is to develop knowledge relevant to agricultural, human and natural resources and to make that knowledge available to sustain and enhance the quality of human life. With more than a dozen research facilities, 67 county Extension offices, and award-winning students and faculty in the UF College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, UF/IFAS brings science-based solutions to the state's agricultural and natural resources industries, and all Florida residents. ifas.ufl.edu | @UF_IFAS. 🍷

ALL WELLEN GOOD



COURTESY PHOTOS

Aerial view of Venice Beach.

REFLECTIONS *In Gold*

Est. 1982

#shesparkles



1975 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice, FL | 941-493-1911

www.ReflectionsInGold.com

GIA Certified Diamonds | Engagement Rings
Custom Designs | Full Service Repair | Appraisals
GIA Trained Staff

LET'S GET SOCIAL!

@rigjewelry

@Reflectionsingold941

@REFLECTIONS_IN_GOLD

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 2-mile stretch of Stump Pass

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 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.

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!



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. 🌞

adno=502476



ALL WELLEN GOOD



COURTESY PHOTOS

The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art.

Prepare to be dazzled by these upcoming arts events in Sarasota

BY NANCY STETSON

nstetson@floridaweekly.com

Sarasota is a hot spot for the arts, with high-class theater and visual art.

Though the end of season is nearing, there are still plenty of interesting shows to catch.

On the campus of The Ringling (5401 Bay Shore Road, 941-359-5700) you can visit the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, The Ringling Circus Museum and Ca' d'Zan, the former home of John and Mable Ringling.

The Ringling has an eclectic offering of art, from paintings from 16th to 20th century Europe in its permanent collection, a new wing that exhibits Asian art and contemporary art. As the venue likes to say, it has everything from the Rubens Galleries (which has

paintings by Peter Paul Rubens) to Joseph's Coat, a skyspace by James Turrell.

Current exhibitions include: "Metadata: Rethinking Photography from the 21st Century," which runs through Aug. 28. (Metadata is information embedded and hidden in a digital image.)

Also: "The Marvelous Marbling of Mtsui Kosei," which runs through Sept. 25. This exhibit shows five of the Japanese artist's marbled, unglazed ceramics.

And: "Ballroom Florida: Deco & Desire in Japan's Jazz Age," which also runs through Sept. 25. The exhibit contains six paintings and a photograph of women who danced at Ballroom Florida, considered "the most dazzling of Tokyo's Jazz Age dance halls."

The Ringling also contains the Historic



COURTESY PHOTOS

SEE SARASOTA, A28 ► The Ca' d'Zan

WANDER WITH WELLEN

Art and poetry blend at Selby Gardens

BY PATRICIA HORWELL

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens is one of Sarasota's jewels — it provides an escape from the buzz and flurry of downtown. Listen to the birds. Drink in the floral perfumes. Relax at the koi pond. All as you meander through the 15-acre campus.

And through June 26, Selby Gardens visitors can also experience the work of legendary photographer Robert Mapplethorpe and singer/songwriter/poet Patti Smith. The exhibit is the sixth edition of Selby Gardens' annual Jean & Alfred Goldstein Exhibition Series, which explores the work of major artists through the lens of their connection to nature. The exhibition features a selection of Mr. Mapplethorpe's iconic photographs of orchids, hyacinths and irises, along with Ms. Smith's poems about flowers and nature as well as her music.

SEE GARDENS, A42 ►

SELBY GARDENS

>> **Where:** 1534 Mound St., Sarasota

>> **When:** 10 a.m.-5 p.m., every day except Christmas

>> **Cost:** Members, free; member guest: \$10; adults, \$25; ages 5-17, \$10; ages 4 and under, free.

>> **Information:** 941-366-5731, www.selby.org



COURTESY PHOTOS / MARIE SELBY BOTANICAL GARDENS

Sarasota is a hot spot for the arts, with high-class theater and visual art. Though the end of season is nearing, there are still plenty of interesting shows to catch.



The Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

SARASOTA

From page 27

Asolo Theater, a reconstructed 18th-century theater from Asolo, Italy. At 7:30 p.m. from April 28-30 you can see “Andares” by Maku-leiko Colectivo Teatral, a three-person narrative about the ancestral myths, traditional music and art of the people of Mexico’s most remote areas.

Also part of The Ringling, the Asolo Repertory Theatre (5555 N. Tamiami Trail, 941-351-8000) is in a separate building that houses the Mertz Theatre and the smaller Cook Theatre.

It is the largest Equity theater in Florida and the largest repertory theater in the southeastern United States.

The Asolo Rep presents top-notch theater in repertory, so you can see three different shows over a weekend, if you choose. Shows



have premiered there before going on to Broadway, including musicals such as “Bonnie and Clyde.”

The world premiere of “Knoxville,” based on the James Agee novel “A Death in the Family” and also, in part, the play “All the Way Home” by Tad Mosel, will play through May 11. Directed by Frank Galati, who also wrote the show’s book, with music by Stephen Flaherty and lyrics by Lynn Ahrens, this new musical reunites the creative team of “Ragtime.”

In the smaller Cook Theatre, “Eureka Day,” by Jonathan Spector, will play from May 13 through June 4. The play is a comedy about an illness spreading through Eureka Day



Inside the Historic Asolo Theater

COURTESY PHOTOS

Gulf Coast Fishing at its Finest!

Sunset Cruises from **\$200**
 Island Adventures/Bar Hopping
 or Wildlife Tours from **\$85** per person

TIME OUT CHARTERS

•Gulf coast fishing at its finest•

DEPARTING FROM MARINEMAX | 1485 TAMIAMI TRAIL | VENICE

www.timeoutcharter.com

@time_out_fishing | Time-Out-Charters-106342798170929



The grounds of the Van Wezel Performing Arts Center.

COURTESY PHOTO

TSchool and the havoc it causes among parents, teachers and administration.

Capping off the season, "Hood" is a musical about Robin Hood, who rescues a damsel who doesn't need rescuing. Written by Douglas Carter Beane with music and lyrics by Lewis Flinn, the show runs June 11-26 (with previews June 3-10).

The Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe (1012 N. Orange Ave., 941-366-1505) presents two one-act plays May 4-29: "From Birmingham to Broadway, a tribute to Nell Carter" written by Tarra Conner Jones, and "Float Like a Butterfly," about Muhammad Ali, written by Michael Jacobs and WBTT founder Nate Jacobs, with musical compositions by Derric Gobourne Jr. and Henry Washington.

The Van Wezel Performing Arts Center (777 N. Tamiami Trail, 941-263-6799) stages national touring Broadway shows and well-known musicians, bands and comedians. Upcoming at the venue are: Grammy Award-winning singer/songwriter/musician

The Van Wezel Performing Arts Center stages national touring Broadway shows and well-known musicians, bands and comedians.

Boz Scaggs with his "Out of the Blues Tour 2022" (May 4) and "One Night of Queen" starring Gary Mullen and the Works (May 7). The Van Wezel has an excellent sound system that pleases patrons even in the back of the house. 🍷

preferred **SHORE** REAL ESTATE

Over \$6.76 Billion Closed Sales

941-786-4200

Award Winning

Your Wellen Park Neighbors & local Experts

Nancy Schweitzer, Broker Associate
21 Year REALTOR®/IMLS/NAR/DAR

Ken Schweitzer, Asst/Inspections
US Army Master Sgt Retired/Ranger

20251 Passagio Dr

Best BBQ in Town... Hands Down!

DUBZ BBQ
ESTD 2020

Indulge in our **SMOKEHOUSE SIGNATURES, SANDWICHES, SALADS & SIDES** and don't forget to drizzle or dredge your favorite smokey dish in our original, Memphis sweet, "Carolina tangy gold" jalapeno mango, or hot BBQ sauce!

Let's Eat.

Open Everyday 11AM - 9PM
941-200-2636 | 4391 Aidan Lane, North Port, FL 34287 | www.dubzbbq.com

HAPPY HOUR DAILY

2-5pm & 8-Close
& All Day Tuesday!



Best **NEW RESTAURANT!**

IRMA'S Tacos

CRAFT BEER & TEQUILA BAR

Amazing STREET and ETHNIC TACOS from Executive Chef Mike Leopold of Off The Wagon.

Featuring CRAFT BEER from 3 Bridges Brewing and Full Bar!

941-681-2348 • 12221 Mercado Drive • Venice, FL

f /IrmasTacos

MICROBREWERY + GASTROPUB

VENICE'S FIRST MICRO-BREWER & BEST BURGER IN ONE PLACE!

• LIVE MUSIC •



OFF THE WAGON
BREWERY | KITCHEN

The best quality fresh food, craft beer and hand-crafted cocktails made in a friendly environment for every guest, every day. At OTW, we are constantly looking at new ways to enhance your experience, either by creating new exciting dishes, booking the best entertainment or crafting the best local brews. Visit us today and experience it for yourself!

941-497-2048 • 2107 S. TAMiami TRAIL • VENICE • www.OTWBAR.com



BARREL & BEAN

COFFEE • WINE
CRAFT BEER • FOOD



941-460-8874
12275 MERCADO DRIVE, STE.
VENICE, FL

OPEN DAILY 8AM-4PM  /BarrelBean

Lucarelli's Restaurant

SEAFOOD • ITALIAN • STEAKS

*Our Goal
Consists of Creating
Real and Delicious
Italian Food from
Many Generations
for You to Enjoy
in a Relaxed
Atmosphere.*

"Our go to place for good Italian food!"
- Trip Advisor Reviewer -

"The food and service are the best in Venice! Family owned-worth a try!"
- Trip Advisor Reviewer -

"Lucarelli's never fails to impress."
- Trip Advisor Reviewer -

ALL WELLEN GOOD

Chalk Festival lets visitors see the world through artists' eyes

BY SAMUEL BURNLEY

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

It's not often that people are encouraged to look down upon artists or the beautiful works they create. But at the International Chalk Festival, which took place over the first weekend of April, organizers hoped attendees would do just that.

In the tradition of the "Madonnari" — vagabond artists traveling from town to town in Italy beginning around the 16th century, using chalk, coal, bricks and stones to adorn sidewalks and streets with their works, and earning a living coin by coin — contemporary chalk artists invite you to direct your gaze to the ground.

What began in 2007 as Avenida de Colores in Burns Square in Sarasota — which featured 22 artists and attracted perhaps 5,000 visitors — has evolved into a multi-day festival featuring hundreds of artists from around the world, drawing as many as 200,000 visitors in 2011, though the typical attendance is in the neighborhood of 50,000 to 60,000.

Like the art itself, which is designed to be impermanent, the festival is always something breathtaking to behold — and then it is gone. The next year sports a new theme, new blood and new ancillary events.

The festival was once known simply as the Chalk Festival. It then became the Sarasota Chalk Festival, and finally the International Chalk Festival when it was moved to its current home at the Venice Airport in 2014. (A full history of the festival, along with galleries of past artwork is available at www.chalkfestival.org.)



CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

The Venice Airport Festival Grounds are on the eastern end of what was once a third runway at the airport. The giant expanse of unutilized concrete is the perfect canvas for all the horizontal artwork of the Chalk Festival. Because some artists use a basecoat of paint for installations (where "leave no trace" is not required), a few examples of 2014's theme, "Extinct and Endangered Species," are still visible, the largest of which are clearly discernable on Google Maps' satellite view.

On Friday, April 1, the nearly 100 artists who

had converged on Venice Island from around the world began their creations at the festival grounds. A volunteer at the gate pegged Friday's attendance at 6,000. Total weekend attendance was not available at the time of this writing, but the same volunteer described Saturday as "crazy busy." The schedule called for artists to prepare their "canvases" — many opted to paint a black background on the pavement to make the colors on top more vivid, layout or plot their creations, and start the painting or chalking on Friday. On Saturday the artists were hard



JANSEN
shutters & windows

HOW CAN WE PROTECT YOU?
Shelter your family. Protect your investment.
Secure your well being.

Hurricane Protection,
Outdoor Living, Welded
Products And More!

**FREE ESTIMATES
CALL TODAY!
941-484-4700**

JANSENSHUTTERS.COM

Protect your family,
your home, and the
environment with our
American-made
Enviro Water Products.

- Whole House Filtration
- Pure & refreshing clean drinking water
- Filter out chemicals, maintain beneficial minerals
- Salt-Free Water Conditioning/Softening
- Eco-friendly
- Prevents scale
- Stops corrosion

941-473-2344
mikedouglassplumbing.com

CFC1430064

517 Paul Morris Drive, Ste A, Englewood, FL



CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

at work on hands and knees, covered in paint and chalk, creating mesmerizing pieces of art, pausing at times to stand and talk to curious passersby. By Sunday, which was miraculously spared of precipitation, the artwork was completed and festivalgoers were treated to the full splendor of the artists' intent.

Wellen Park Journal visited the International Chalk Festival on Saturday. It was a hot, hazy day, and decidedly summery except for the steady breeze out of the south, which held the flags of the world (that lined the fencing erected for the festival) out straight. A steady parade of cars crept from U.S. 41, down Avenida del Circo, along Airport Avenue and onto the festival grounds, guided at turns by members of the Venice Police Department. Volunteers guided cars into free parking in the grass, and others took tickets at the gate. Tickets, which were available through Eventbrite, started at just \$5, a very reasonable price considering the many accommodations to the artists and the overall quality of the experience for the public.

It was clear that the festival staff, which is all volunteer — from the aforementioned attendants to the founder and director, Denise

Kowal — had plenty of practice running a well-oiled event. Once through the gate, attendees gathered into a considerable queue to navigate around the main loop of art, or the Avenida de Colores, you could say, on a former taxiway now cut off from the airport. There was also a large courtyard area of food and beverage vendors, as well as merchants selling everything from clothing to jewelry to arts and crafts. Beyond that, on the decommissioned runway, was another section of artwork including multi-panel installations, interactive artwork and a broad expanse of outlines meant for kids to color in with chalk.

Ms. Kowal says this is the Chalk Festival's 15th year being held, though not consecutively. The 2018 festival was cancelled due to the airborne effects of red tide, and '20 and '21 were cancelled because of the pandemic.

"We just decided to keep it a little quieter, being our first one back," she says. So although nearly 100 artists participated this year, "Normally we have closer to 200."

Still, the smaller participation didn't mean the artists came from any closer to home:

SEE CHALK, A34 ►



MASTER COLORIST // HIGHLIGHTING

BALAYAGE // SMUDGE ROOT

HAIRCUTS MEN AND WOMEN

FORMALDEHYDE FREE HAIR STRAIGHTENING

PRIVATE RELAXING STUDIO ATMOSPHERE

Stylin & Design Salon, Inc.

EXPERIENCE OUR PASSION & PRIDE WITH EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

3980 TAMAMI TRAIL SOUTH, VENICE

941.735.9852 // STYLINDESIGNSALON.COM

Expect the Best.



I'm not just a Realtor, I'm your neighbor too! I'm happy to say that I live in Wellen Park.

Whether you're getting ready to buy or sell, or just looking for some answers, my expertise and ability to ascertain the wants and needs of my clients will ensure you get the best experience possible. It's what I love to do.

As part of the Exit King Realty Team, I am backed by professionals with decades of experience.

Melissa Helms

Born and raised in New Jersey, I relocated to Florida 20 years ago after finishing college. I have lived in both Charlotte and Sarasota Counties and am knowledgeable about both.



Call me today - I'm here to help you! Cell: 941-544-9652



Melissa Helms | Exit King Realty
1800 Tamiami Trail, Venice, Florida 34293

941-544-9652
mel@melissahelms.com

CHALK

From page 33

“Belgium, Colombia, Brazil, Japan, Italy, Spain, Mexico,” Ms. Kowal begins to list when asked from where the artists had come. “Thirty different countries.”

And for being kept on the supposed down-low, the desire to participate seemed to be robust.

“We go through about 1,000 applications per year,” Ms. Kowal notes. “A lot of [the artists] I’ve worked with for years, so I already know their skill level, I know what they’re capable of doing, and every year we try to bring in people who haven’t been here before. As an example, just in the last two weeks we’ve had 260 applications. Of course, at this point, we’re not taking more applications.”

With the somewhat ambiguous theme of “Resiliency,” the artwork from the visiting artists ranged from the whimsical to fantastical to realistic to serious portraiture, all loosely tied to the theme. There were examples of folk art, cartoon-like art, tongue-in-cheek starving art and

even what would be considered fine art if only it were hanging vertically. But the fact that the works are created on the ground led, way back in 1980, to an amazing trend in the so-called pavement arts.

American artist Kurt Wenner, who continues to be involved with this very festival, pioneered the 3D technique that has become ubiquitous among the chalk festival scene worldwide. Because it is impossible — without the advantage of height at least — to view pavement art straight down, much of it is created in anamorphic perspective, meaning that it is purposely drawn distorted. When viewed from a certain angle however, the subjects appear to rise up off the ground or descend into it. If you’ve never been to a chalk art festival, it’s really something to behold. Viewing the artwork through a camera lens, which naturally tends to compress an elongated image, aids this effect.

One such drawing, by Orlando resident Naomi Haverland, depicted one of those old toy punching bags some might be old enough to remember, the plastic inflatable characters weighted on their rounded bottoms so they pop back up after being punched. Ms. Haverland’s clown drawing was actually about 20



CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

feet long. Viewed from the indicated position, however, the clown appeared to be about three feet tall, just like a real punching toy. When Ms. Haverland crouched next to him for a photo, she looked like she could easily knock the grin off his face.

This is the third trip to this festival for Ms. Haverland.

“The first time I came to this festival I had just moved to Seattle, and the second time I still lived in Seattle,” she says. “Now I’m actually driving down instead of flying down, which is kind of interesting. It’s a totally different experience.”

“Art is my full-time job, but primarily I do murals. I think this kind of segued into me being able to get into the mural industry. In May I’m going to the Netherlands to work in a museum there. But since I’ve moved to Florida, I’ve gotten a lot more jobs in Tampa than Orlando.”

The next artist over exhibited a common subject at this year’s festival that fit the theme of resilience perfectly. Though some were overt and others subtle, many works paid homage to

Ukraine. There were lots of sunflowers, lots of yellow, lots of blue.

Italian artist Vanna Lodi Pasini painted a gorgeous red-haired girl with fierce blue eyes. Next to her, a white dove held in its beak yellow and blue ribbons. Due to a nearly complete language barrier, the only thing Ms. Pasini was able to explain was that she was from Mantova, Italy, in the Lombardy region. Mantova, which is somehow Mantua in English, is roughly halfway between Milan and Venice in the northern portion of Italy.

Interspersed throughout the Avenida de Colores were several smaller sections, being colored by smaller, younger artists.

“We’ve always tried to get students more involved in this event, and we’ve had lots of success through the years,” Ms. Kowal says. “I think we had close to 30 student artists come out. So, next year I think we’ll end up having a pretty large section of just students.”

“The goal with the festival is not only to have the best of the best,” she adds. “Our goal is to bring in people who can learn the art form, because most of the artists who are the really



CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

Are you tired of paying
TOO MUCH
for your Insurance?

CALL US BEFORE YOU RENEW!
941-484-1288

HOME • AUTO • FLOOD • BOAT • RV • BUSINESS



Switching your insurance
can all be done over the phone
and email without ever
leaving your home

SCAN ME



Schillinger Insurance Center of Venice, Inc.
555 E. Venice Avenue, Venice, FL 34285
941-484-1288

Flooring for your Lifestyle and Budget

HARDWOOD • WATERPROOF PLANK • CARPET • TILE & STONE • LAMINATE

- Complimentary Estimates
- Friendly & Experienced Design Staff
- Free Shop At Home Service
- Guaranteed Expert Installation



Lic. # AAA00101150

SINCE 1986

Friendly Floors

ABBAY DESIGN CENTER

Thankful to be Voted #1 Flooring Store
in Charlotte County for 18 Years in a row!



Experience the Friendly Floors Difference

941-624-0077 • FriendlyFloors.com
3785 Tamiami Trail • Port Charlotte, FL 33952

12 MONTHS INTEREST FREE FINANCING AVAILABLE
(W.A.C. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS.)

\$125 OFF

INSTALLED PURCHASES OF \$999 OR MORE!

(Offer cannot be combined. Must present at time of purchase. Expires 6/30/22 WP6/22)

skilled artists are getting older, so, we really have to teach the younger generation to carry on this art form.”

If the caliber of art represented at this year’s festival is any indication, Ms. Kowal and her army of volunteers are doing a great job of ensuring the longevity of the pavement arts. The festival is a production of the Avenida de Colores, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Over the life of the festival, volunteers have logged tens of thousands of hours, and raised millions of dollars’ worth of donations and in-kind support.

If you happened to miss this year’s International Chalk Festival, make plans to attend next year. Art represents one person’s take on life. It is colored by their own experience, their own perspective. Viewing art gives you a bit of insight into the life of another. Art is a beautiful way to participate, both for the artist and for the art lover. And taking a stroll around the International Chalk Festival is a fun, easy and incredibly affordable way to take a trip around our beautiful world. 🍷



CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

FITNESS QUEST PHYSICAL THERAPY

Where *Convenience* Meets *Excellence.*

At Fitness Quest Physical Therapy, we have extensive education in orthopedics, manual therapy, functional training and sport-specific rehabilitation.



Our Mission: To make patient care our top priority and improve quality of life through treatment tailored to individuals needs.

- Back and Neck Care
- Shoulder Pain
- Balance Evaluation & Training
- Knee Pain and Dysfunction
- Sports Injuries
- Oncology Rehab
- Total Joint Rehab Programs



941-275-6377

11045 S Tamiami Trail • North Port, FL
Located just minutes South of River Road
www.fitnessquestpt.com

welcome to Weller Park

Venice, Florida

Perfectly situated in Sarasota County between the Gulf of Mexico and Myakka River, the new community of Weller Park, Florida provides the opportunity do a little bit of everything. Just 15 minutes from beautiful beaches.

New Homes in America’s 5th fastest selling communities are available from the \$300’s and up. Contact Jan for details.



**Assisting Buyers and Sellers with their Real Estate Needs!
Complementary Price Opinion on your Home.**

**Give Jan a call!
203.982.4636**



Jan Hlywa, Professional Realtor

www.VeniceSarasotaConnections.com
email: jan.hlywa@cbrealty.com



Covering Venice to Sarasota plus surrounding towns.

Sell Your Car!

✓ **FAST, EASY, CONVENIENT & SAFE WAY TO SELL YOUR CAR**

✓ **FAIR APPRAISAL IN 15 MINUTES OR LESS - WE COME TO YOU!**

✓ **CALL TO SCHEDULE A FREE APPRAISAL!**



Howard Horowitz,
Owner

HOHO
Buys Cars

OVER 200 FIVE STAR
GOOGLE REVIEWS

Call or Text 941.270.4400
www.HOHOBUYSCARS.com



ALL WELLEN GOOD

Three exciting artists exhibit work inside the Wellen Park Welcome Center exhibit

BY CHARMAINE ENGELSMAN-ROBINS

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

The Wellen Park Welcome Center, with an assist from the North Port Art Center, brings three more exciting area artists to the Welcome Center: photo artist Sharon Eng, jewelry artist Cara Guagliardo, and watercolor artist Kathleen Wilke.

Ms. Eng, who works in mixed media digital photo painting, had lived in Utah, Georgia and North Carolina before settling in North Port. The variety of scenery and climates has likely contributed to the wide range of subjects and settings she portrays in her art.

"I take photos of (sometimes strange) things which I digitally enhance into 'representational abstracts,'" she explains, "meaning you can generally see what they're based on, yet each person may experience something different as interpreted by their own, personal, emotional response. So whatever you see is what it is."

She delightedly shared a comment left on her Facebook page, Doodleng – Art by Sharon Eng (www.facebook.com/sharonengart), in which a viewer looked at a certain image based on a landscape feature, and it made her think of "grandma's attic with sheets over everything." So there you have it — eye of the beholder.

Images such as "Foggy Morning



GUAGLIARDO

variety of the surroundings where she has lived. You can explore the many forms in which her art is offered at www.Sharon-Eng.pixels.com.

Mrs. Guagliardo creates fantastic art you can wear. The beautiful array on display at the Welcome Center features a variety of forms and styles. Her rings, bracelets and necklaces range from classic pieces to those with a southwestern accent to fine art — and even some steampunk-tinged pieces. As she says, it "runs the gamut."

Hailing from South Central New Jersey (where she attended Rowan University before beginning her career as an accountant), Mrs. Guagliardo moved to Florida in July 2019 and continued that career. Much as she enjoys her left-brain line of work, she still had a strong right-brain pull to tap into her natural artistic talent by taking classes at the North Port Art Center. Now



Cara Guagliardo jewelry

Lights" and "Impression of Ruby Falls" stem from her favorite themes, described by the artist as "coastal type art of marshes and wetlands" and "southwestern-theme" images (as represented by "Light in the Canyon"), undoubtedly drawing from the



COURTESY PHOTOS

"Coastal Abstract" by Sharon Eng

she's immersed in her art to the degree that she looks forward to when she'll have the luxury of being a full-time artist.

Surmising that her very left-brain occupation meshes with her right-brain love of art, she notes, "I initially learned about silversmithing and beadwork, and there's something exacting about that, too."

Perhaps, but rather than planning any exact design for her jewelry visions and then search-

ing out appropriate materials that will add up to create that vision, Mrs. Guagliardo works somewhat in reverse.

"When I am drawn to a specific medium and start working with it, it's a free-flowing process," she explains. "I feel that it leads me to 'reveal' what it's to become."

Ms. Wilke is a watercolor artist who creates with a little different twist: Her watercolors are saturated with brilliant color, thanks to her

Homeowners Insurance in Florida can be confusing!

With over 30 years in the business and 120+ insurance carriers, Kevin, Mary and their team are passionate about helping people protect their assets. We will research the best options while not sacrificing coverage.

Contact us today with any of your insurance questions.

941.474.3456

Brightway[®] INSURANCE



HOME FLOOD CONDO RENTERS AUTO MOTORCYCLE RV / BOAT LIFE UMBRELLA



We Provide a Safe Haven for Breeding Birds

We know it may be hard to believe. An area that once was part of an old mine site near Mosaic's former Hooker's Prairie phosphate mine is now a thriving bird sanctuary. But that's exactly what happened. In the spring of 2021, Audubon Florida, a decades-long community partner of Mosaic's, confirmed an estimated 30-40 pairs of breeding Roseate Spoonbills had chosen to nest near the reclaimed habitat which features abundant food

sources and protection from would-be predators. That makes the site near Hooker's Prairie one of the largest Roseate Spoonbill breeding colonies in our region, second only to the Alafia Bank Bird Sanctuary. Going forward, Mosaic will partner with Audubon Florida to census the breeding birds at Hooker's Prairie and document the nesting effort by the spoonbills and the many other wading birds that nest there.

To learn more, visit www.mosaicfloridaphosphate.com





COURTESY PHOTO

A watercolor creation by Kathleen Wilke



WILKE

special techniques, especially lots of pigment.

“Some people think it doesn’t look like watercolor,” she notes.

We think you’ll see what she means; we’d say it doesn’t look like the usual or expected watercolor. It’s joyous and upbeat and definitely

not made to fade into whatever background it’s hung against.

With about 30 years’ experience, Ms. Wilke has a B.A. in art education and teaches at the North Port Art Center. Having exhibited her work at the Visual Arts Center in Punta Gorda, the ArtCenter Manatee (Bradenton) the Venice Art Center and, of course, the North Port Art Center, her work has garnered numerous

awards — including first place at the Divers Community Gallery in Fond du Lac, Wis. She is also rightfully proud to have qualified as a signature member of the Florida Suncoast Watercolor Society.

Though she has been known to accept commissions to do portraits, she personally favors portraying beaches (especially at sunrise and sunset), Florida birds and wildlife (from panthers to pelicans) and more, ranging from realism (“Pretty Kitty”) to the whimsical Jungle Gardens flamingos in “Reflections.” You can see some of her work exhibited on the website of North Port Art Center (www.northportart-center.org) and, of course, at the Wellen Park Welcome Center.

Asked if there was anything special she wanted to say about her current showing, she replies with a simple, “I hope they like it.”

West Villages Animal Clinic



Focused on Your Pet’s Best Life

OUR SERVICES

🐾 Wellness Exams	🐾 Surgery
🐾 Vaccinations	🐾 Dentistry + Dental X-rays
🐾 Disease Management	🐾 Laser Therapy
🐾 Emergencies	🐾 Ultrasound
🐾 Laboratory	🐾 Echocardiogram
🐾 Pharmacy	🐾 Prescription Diets
🐾 X-rays	🐾 End of Life Care

PLEASE CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT



WEST VILLAGES
— ANIMAL CLINIC —
12121 Mercado Drive Venice, FL 34293

(941) 202-6750
westvillagesvet.com

INTERVENTIONAL PAIN MANAGEMENT



FAMILY SPINE AND PAIN CARE INSTITUTE
“Where trust and compassion are standard of care.”



Omar Henriquez, MD
Double Board-Certified in Anesthesiology and Interventional Pain Management

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The one thing missing in the medical field today: “Taking the time to listen and understand our patients. It is through this process where we formulate a comprehensive plan to produce the best possible outcomes.”

Pain Management Conditions Treated:

- Arthritis
- Cancer Pain
- Back Pain
- Head & Neck Pain
- Spinal Stenosis
- Joint Pain (*Shoulder & Knee*)
- Limb Pain (*Arms & Legs*)
- Compression Back Fracture
- Sciatica Pain & Nerve Block
- And More



VENICE
1505 S. Tamiami Trail, Suite 405
Venice, FL 34285

NORTH PORT
18669 Tamiami Trail, Suite A,
North Port, FL 34287

PORT CHARLOTTE
2484 Caring Way, Unit C
Port Charlotte, FL 33952

To Schedule an Appointment 941-237-0050
www.FSAPCARE.com

Always the Newest and Most Innovative in Lighting and Fans





Traditional to Contemporary

VISIT OUR SHOWROOM TODAY!
1089-B Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte | 941-627-5353
Hours: Monday-Friday 9am-5pm | Saturday Seasonal

Light Ideas

Lighting • Fans • Accessories

www.lightideasinc.com

SHOT AROUND WELLEN

Sidewalk Chalk Saturday at the Wellen Park Welcome Center



CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

THE VENICE SYMPHONY *A*

Patriotic Pops Concert and Fireworks

May 28, 2022 | 7:30 pm | CoolToday Park

Troy Quinn and The Venice Symphony with

Rockapella

TICKETS ON SALE NOW AT TICKETMASTER.COM

and CoolToday Park, 18800 W. Villages Pkwy, Venice
Box Office: (941) 413-5000

PRESENTING SPONSOR MEDIA SPONSOR

Explore WELLEN PARK ON A PEDEGO ELECTRIC BIKE!

hello, fun...

PEDEGO

ELECTRIC BIKES

Mention This Ad And Get A Free Gift Package Worth Over \$100 (With E-Bike Purchase)

3 Area Locations To Serve You:

Pedego Sarasota 941-260-5536	Pedego St. Pete 727-289-2847	Pedego Venice (Coming Soon)
---------------------------------	---------------------------------	--------------------------------

SALES | SERVICE | RENTALS

SHOT AROUND WELLEN



CHRIS TILLEY / WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

TRUSTCO BANK®

Your Home Town Bank

**Better Lending Options.
Fast Local Decisions.**

New Construction Loans*:

- FREE 330-day interest rate lock!**
- Low closing costs!
- No borrower paid PMI¹ required!
- Financing up to 97% of appraised value!
- No appraisal fee, no points!
- No prepayment penalty!
- No tax escrow required!
- Biweekly or monthly payment options!

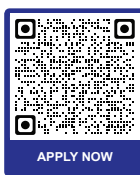


- 6 convenient locations:**
- Beneva Village - 941-923-8269
 - Bradenton - 941-792-2604
 - Englewood - 941-460-0601
 - Osprey - 941-918-9380
 - Sarasota - 941-929-9451
 - Venice - 941-496-9100




Home Town *in every way*

TrustcoBank.com | 800-670-3110



1- Lender paid Private Mortgage Insurance on loans over 89.5% Loan to Value. *Applicable to our portfolio mortgage product. If you fail to qualify for that product, you may be offered a mortgage that does have an appraisal fee, borrower-paid PMI, and a tax escrow account. Please note: We reserve the right to alter or withdraw these products or certain features thereof without prior notification. Subject to Credit Approval. NMLS #474376




Find Your Piece of *Paradise*




Let me help you with all your real estate needs - whether you are buying or selling; if this is your primary home or 2nd home, I will take you through the process from start to finish!

Jackie Robertson
REALTOR®

Full Time
Wellen Park Resident
since 2006



COLDWELL BANKER

www.jackievenicehomes.com
941.441.7223
jackie.robertson@floridamoves.com



TRYOUTS

COMPETITIVE SOCCER
BOYS AND GIRLS U8 - U19
MAY 2ND - 11TH

SIGN UP TODAY

COMPETITIVE PROGRAMS: \$675-\$725*
* DOES NOT INCLUDE UNIFORMS
* NO COST FOR TRYOUTS



VENICESOCCER.ORG

WHY I LIVE HERE

Author! Author! Grand Palm resident is a published novelist

BY PATRICIA HORWELL

Wellen Park Journal Correspondent

Palm trees lured Kate Nixon from Indiana to Florida, but it was the friendly neighborhood atmosphere that drew her to Grand Palm and Wellen Park.

Ms. Nixon grew up in a “one-block town” in rural central Indiana where the general store was the center of the community. The post office was next to the meat counter in the back corner of the store.



NIXON

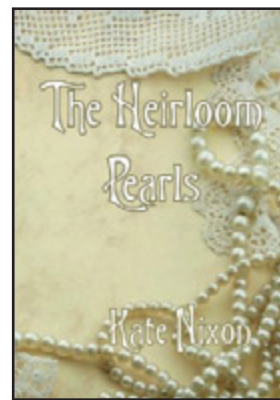
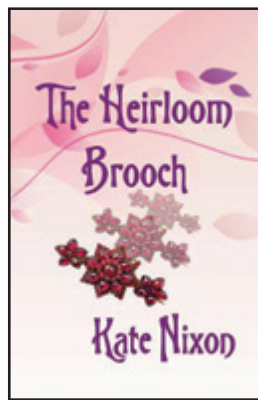
“I would look at the FBI wanted posters — as if any of them would ever come to our town,” she says with a chuckle.

The family’s telephone was on a party line where someone was always listening. She recalled an aunt who could smoke and breathe undetected while eavesdropping. But her parakeet chirping in the background often gave her away.

Ms. Nixon attended Indiana University, majoring in Latin and minoring in English. She taught Latin but had to resign because she was pregnant — at that time, women weren’t permitted to teach once their pregnancy began to show.

With two daughters 17 months apart, Ms. Nixon was not going back to work. Instead, she went back to college and earned a master’s degree in library science.

She recalls her grandparents buying what the family jokingly referred to as “swamp land” in Florida many years ago. “I wanted palm trees,” she says.



COURTESY PHOTOS

She and her second husband, Randy, moved to Florida in 2000. They eventually settled in a home on a corner lot in Englewood. At first they were “mowing in July in the heat.” With her husband’s heart problems, Ms. Nixon decided they needed to be nearer to his doctors. The couple also required a low-maintenance home.

“I wanted a brand-new house. I never had a new house,” she says.

That was when they discovered the cottages at Grand Palm.

Until she retired, Ms. Nixon worked as a librarian at Island Village Montessori School.

“Now I have fallen in love with not dealing with the tyranny of the alarm clock.”

She hadn’t considered a writing career until she was encouraged by her husband. He had been writing since high school.

Ms. Nixon had taken Randy back to a class reunion in her childhood community.

“I took him to my one-block town. ‘This is what you came from?’ he asked me. ‘There’s a story there and if you don’t tell it, I will,’ he said.”

And so, Ms. Nixon’s next career began.

She has been prolific, with three novels and one nonfiction book under her belt. Another nonfiction work is in its final stages.

Her first novel, “The Heirloom Pearls,” features two headstrong women who climb the ladder of high society with different consequences. Her family history inspired the novel. She had discovered that her great-great-grandmother was an orphan. The 1870 census lists her at age 15 in the Home for Friendless Women.

In Ms. Nixon’s family, an heirloom garnet brooch was passed down to the oldest daughter. And Ms. Nixon was a recipient. As it turned out, the brooch was found to be glass.

“Now I have fallen in love with not dealing with the tyranny of the alarm clock.”

— Kate Nixon

Ironically, the emerald her sister inherited was genuine. “The Heirloom Brooch” tells the story of a beloved family treasure as it passes through time from women who lived and grew up in Indiana, Ohio and Florida. Their triumphs, heartbreaks and challenges play against the backdrop of war, economic downfall, disease and deceit.

Her other works include “The Heirloom Ivory” and “Dear Fellow Cancer Warrior,” which she wrote about her own battle with breast cancer. Her second nonfiction book, “In the Company of Pets,” is in its final stages.

Her books are available on www.amazon.com. “Dear Fellow Cancer Warrior” is available in Kindle format only. It is free to those who have a subscription to Kindle Unlimited and 99 cents to everyone else.

Right from the beginning, Ms. Nixon has been involved in everything at Grand Palm, including book clubs and card groups. When the Writing Group appeared on the community calendar, she attended the first meeting and remains a member. The group is now called the Writing Appreciation Group and Ms. Nixon offers writing tips at each meeting.

Despite her love of all the activities Grand Palm has to offer, she says her neighbors are the best part of living here. When she was being treated for cancer in Tampa, they were there for her husband.

“The lovely people down the street told him they go to Publix every Thursday at noon. ‘Stand in the driveway and we’ll take you,’ they said.”

And people would call or text her with what she calls “Randy sightings.”

“Living here in Grand Palm is like growing up in my small one-block town,” Ms. Nixon muses. “But the best part is you can drink and there’s no curfew.” 🍷

Best Veterinary Care for Cats Only

As a Cat Friendly Practice®, we are committed to offering you and your cat the highest standard of feline health care.




GULF COAST SCRATCHING POST CAT HOSPITAL

Full Service Veterinary Care for Your Cat!

941-200-5779
3135 Bobcat Village Center Road, North Port
www.gulfcoastscratchingpost.com

Our Secret Ingredient is Love!

Kickstart your morning with us!





Home of the “Sticky Pig”

Scratch making DONUTS and slow smoking BBQ!
This is a special place where DONUTS and BBQ live happily ever after.

YUMMIES Donuts & BBQ

2001 S. Tamiami Trail, Ark Plaza • Venice, FL 34293
941-493-7170
www.yummiesdonuts.com

FUN-LOVING LIFESTYLE

EVENTS CALENDAR

May 1-31: Spring into Summer: Health and Wellness Challenge. Walk, run, bike, skip or roller skate your way through Southwest Florida's network of surrounding parks and trails — getting up and active never felt this good. FREE online interactive event health & wellness event. Register at www.wellenpark.com/events.

May 3 -June 30: Seahawks Lacrosse. Wellen Park will hosts the Boys & Girls Summer Lacrosse program at the Wellen Park community field adjacent to The CoolToday Park on West Villages Parkway. Registration is open now, with programming starting on May 3. www.seahawkslacrosse.com/clubteams.

May 6: Volunteer Happy Hour. Whether you have a spare hour per month, or you want to be more engaged we can find a place for you. Arts and culture? Parks and recreation? Family community events and education? There are opportunities for everyone. From 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Wellen Park Welcome Center. RSVP at www.wellenpark.com/events.

May 7: Whiskey & Rum Tasting. Get into the "spirit" of Kentucky Derby Day at the Welcome Center, for whiskey and rum tastings to celebrate and enjoy "The Most Exciting Two Minutes in Sports." Hard Truth Distilling Co. will have samples from its

range of premium spirits from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

First Saturday of each month: Walking Group Meetup. What better way to enjoy Wellen Park, stay in shape, and meet like-minded friends than participating in a walking group? On the first Saturday of each month, join fellow residents to meet at 9 a.m. at the Wellen Park Welcome Center to participate in a walking group. RSVP at www.wellenpark.com/events.

May 12: North Port Art Center's Artists in Residence Reception. Celebrate three amazing artists: Cara Guagliardo, Sharon Eng and Kathleen Wilke. Light snacks

and beverages will be served. This event is free! Bring a friend and enjoy conversation, friendship and camaraderie, from 6-8 p.m. at the Wellen Park Welcome Center.

May 21: Running Group Fitness Meet-up. A running group meets at 8 a.m. on the third Saturday of each month at the Wellen Park Welcome Center. A community ambassador will greet the group and share a map of our various trails and pathways. Participants are given two free drink tickets (for your choice of beer/wine/iced tea/coffee/water) to redeem at our adjacent café, Barrel & Bean. Register at www.wellenpark.com/events.

Venice Theatre

Great Stories.
Well Played.

HAMLET



MAY 13-29

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS



MAY 20-29

COMING SOON
aact
WORLD FEST



JUN 20-26

**AND, SUBSCRIBE NOW
FOR OUR 2022-2023 SEASON**

TICKETS | VeniceTheatre.org | 941.488.1115

PAINFUL VARICOSE VEINS?

Leg Swelling & Discoloration?



Varicose veins and heavy, painful legs can be treated in the office with the VNUS Closure procedure.



- Spider Veins
- Venous Ulcerations
- Varicose Veins
- Leg Swelling and Skin Discoloration
- Leg Aching, Heaviness, Fatigue
- Blood Clots of the Leg



All treatment performed in the office setting
Immediate return to normal activities
Covered by most insurances

ADVANCED VEIN CENTER of Charlotte County

Schedule an Evaluation,
Call: 941-627-6700

18316 Murdock Circle Suite 107, Port Charlotte, FL 33948



Laura A. Gruneiro, MD
Board-Certified in Vascular Surgery
Practice Devoted Entirely to the Diagnosis and Treatment of Venous Disease
Over 20 Years Experience
Friendly, Caring Environment

THE HAMELS TEAM COLDWELL BANKER REALTY

Delivering exceptional service built on
**TRUST, KNOWLEDGE, &
35+ YEARS OF EXPERIENCE!**

We Specialize in New and Resale Homes in Wellen Park.

Thinking of buying or selling?

CALL US TODAY, WE ARE HERE TO SERVE ALL YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS!

Full-time Residents of Island Walk in Wellen Park Since 2006.



Ann Hamels
Broker Associate
941-387-6564

ann.hamels@cbrealty.com

Henry Hamels
Broker Associate
941-321-9634

henry.hamels@cbrealty.com

GARDENS

From page 27

This is the first time that Selby Gardens has presented the work of a living artist (Ms. Smith) and a contemporary photographer in the series. Mr. Mapplethorpe died in 1989.

“This exhibition creates an immersive experience for our visitors,” said Jennifer Romini, president and CEO of Selby Gardens. “Our gardens and floral displays will set the stage for a unique cultural encounter and exchange with two of the most iconic artists of our time.”

The exhibit begins in the Tropical Conservatory. The greenhouse has been transformed into Mr. Mapplethorpe’s photography studio and gallery, complete with drop cloth, box lights, and living plants framed and suspended as still lifes. As you walk through the conservatory, listen to Ms. Smith’s iconic “Horses” album, the cover of which features her portrait by Mr. Mapplethorpe and serves as the first visual you see.

The two met in New York City in the summer of 1967. They were artistic collaborators, lovers and ultimately friends.

The Museum of Botany & the Arts presents Mr. Mapplethorpe’s flower photographs, including “Orchid, Irises, and Hyacinth,” made at Graphicstudio at the University of South Florida in Tampa together with Ms. Smith’s writings and lyrics. Reproductions of historic photographs of the two artists, their friends and lovers tell the story, accompanied by Ms. Smith’s words.

Some of the installations throughout the exhibit position the viewer as the photographer, looking through the viewfinder. Others feature a gallery with plants framed as living art or an urban landscape like



COURTESY PHOTOS / MARIE SELBY BOTANICAL GARDENS



the area around the Chelsea Hotel in New York City, where the two lived in the early days of their relationship. Archival images, music from two of Ms. Smith’s early albums, and her own narration of her award-winning book “Just

Kids” enhance the experience. A poetry walk includes excerpted verses from Ms. Smith’s work.

“These (Mr. Mapplethorpe’s) principles of classicism, sensuality and beauty are echoed

from the museum throughout the gardens and conservatory, and are highlighted by the resounding words of Smith, Mapplethorpe’s once lover, close friend, and muse,” said Carol Ockman, the exhibition’s curator.



Do You Have Pure, Clean, Odor Free, Chlorine Free Drinking Water?

Book A FREE Water Test Today and Find Out What’s In Your Water!

WE OFFER:

- Water Softeners
- Reverse Osmosis
- Home Filtration
- Sulfur Removal

- Iron Removal
- Water Heaters
- Certain Care Protection Plan
- Plumbing Services

FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY!

24 MONTHS DEFERRED INTEREST USE CODE NUMBER WP22




Call Us Today! 941-391-6817

We can do anything with water...except walk on it!

4220 Whidden Blvd., Suite G | Port Charlotte
www.CertainServicesInc.com
 Licensed and Insured #CFC1429699

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITY
WELLEN PARK JOURNAL

NEXT PUBLICATION DATE: JUNE 15, 2022





SPACE RESERVATIONS: Wednesday, June 1st • 12pm
ADS REQUIRING PROOF: Wednesday, June 1st • 12pm
CAMERA-READY ADS: Tuesday, June 7th • 2pm

Contact your account executive today to learn more about advertising in the Wellen Park Journal.

941.621.3422

WELLEN PARK
JOURNAL

Visit us online at www.WellenParkJournal.com

For service as elevated as your standards

A top-producing REALTOR® with over 10 years of experience, Kim Vogel offers her customers an elevated real estate experience. After moving from Massachusetts to Florida in the late 2000s, she has proudly served the Sarasota market while fulfilling the dreams of multiple buyers and sellers. From newly built homes to luxury listings and waterfront wonders, Kim specializes in a range of remarkable residences along the Gulf Coast.

Prior to real estate, Kim worked in business analytics for a financial company up north. Her vast knowledge of the local market, combined with a background in finance, affords her a unique approach when it comes to selling.

As buyers continue to search the Sarasota area for their newfound piece of paradise, there has never been a better time to list your home. For all your real estate needs, rely on Kim's expertise and the exceptional services of Premier Sotheby's International Realty to guide you in the right direction.



kv

KIM VOGEL

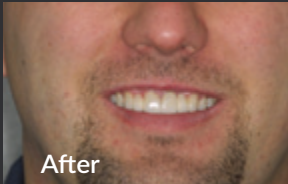
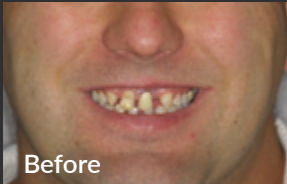
941.254.1996 | Kim.Vogel@PremierSIR.com | KimVogel.PremierSothebysRealty.com

400 Barcelona Avenue | Venice, Florida 34285

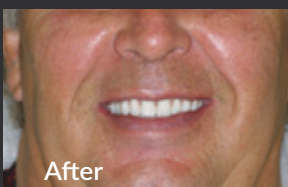
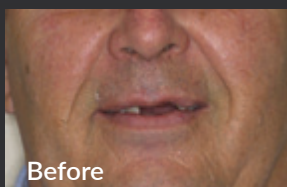
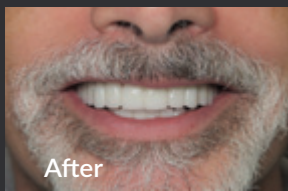
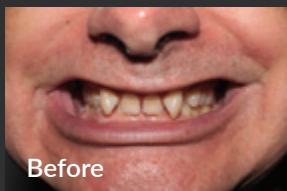
Actual Patients

Cosmetics, Implants and Bite Reconstruction

Smile Makeovers and Veneers



Dental Implant Surgery and Reconstruction



On-Site Laboratory with Master Technicians to Customize and Control Results

Implant Dentistry

- Digitally Guided Implant Surgery
- On-Site Cat Scan
- PRP and PRF Blood Enhancers
- IV Sedation
- Bone Grafts and Sinus Lifts
- Zirconia and Titanium Implants
- Laser Assisted Surgery

Cosmetic Dentistry

- Conservative 'No Prep' Veneers
- Nonsurgical Facelifts
- Bite Correction
- Bruxism Treatment
- Lumineers®
- Botox, Fillers, PDO Threads, Microneedling
- Laser Assisted Gum Tissue Treatment

Orthotropic Orthodontics

- Airway Ortho for Children and Adults
- Orthotropic Ortho for Children and Adults
- Crooked Teeth and Bite Correction
- Receding Chin Correction
- Smile Broadening
- Non-Extraction of Permanent Teeth



Real Patients. Real Results.

"I've had so much to smile about lately with so many blessings, and as a new mom, I let my confidence go to the wayside. I promised myself this year I would focus on healthy self care. World Class Dentistry - the name meets all expectations. I never thought the words comfort and dentistry would coexist. I've always been anxious about dental procedures, and Dr. Morris and her team took such amazing care of me and my teeth. I felt safe and comfortable from the consultation to the last appointment. I can't thank you enough, Dr. Morris and World Class Dentistry, for giving me something new to smile about and the confidence to do so!"

Alysha Shelby
Smile Makeover Patient



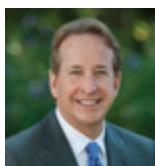
Actual Patient,
Alysha Shelby

Our team at World Class Dentistry treats patients with a multitude of concerns which streamlines treatment and maintains quality control. The doctors along with their master dental technicians and on-site laboratory offer complete cosmetic and implant solutions. We have been serving the Sarasota area since 1987. Call today for a consultation to begin your life-changing transformation.



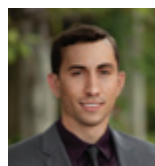
Jill Morris, DMD

- Accredited Member of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (only 550 accredited dentists worldwide)
- Fellow of the American Academy of Dental Facial Esthetics
- Post Doctoral Instructor of Full Mouth Reconstruction
- Member International Academy of Oral Biological Dentistry and Toxicology
- Practicing dentistry for 33 years



Burr Bakke, DDS

- Fellow of the American Dental Implant Association
- Fellow of International Congress of Oral Implantologists
- Fellow of the American Academy of Dental Facial Esthetics
- Member of American Academy of Implant Dentistry
- Post Doctoral Instructor of Full Mouth Reconstruction



Cameron Johnson, DMD

- Member of North American Association of Facial Orthotropics
- Member of the American Orthodontic Society
- Member of the International Association of Orthodontics
- Member of American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine
- International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology

Advanced Care and Dental Technology at One Location

Stay Connected With Us



(941) 241-3313 | 3951 Swift Rd., Sarasota, FL 34231

www.SarasotaDentist.com