

# The Ocean Breeze

The official newspaper of the Ocean Hammock Property Owners Association

Spring 2019 - Vol. 16 Issue 2  
A Florida NewsLine Publication

## Meet the Ulsamers: Couple believes in community service

By Martie Thompson

Jim and Mary Kay Ulsamer were among the first to make Ocean Hammock their retirement home back in 2004. Although they had owned a lot in Kiawah Island, S.C., for many years that they had considered their retirement “plan,” they saw an ad for Cinnamon Beach in 2002 and ventured south from their home in Charlotte, N.C., to check it out. They found a lot that faced east, over the 4th hole of the Ocean Course, and were hooked. They returned six months later, bought the lot and commenced construction of their new home in 2004 — right after Jim retired from his career with a large book and media distributing company.

“We actually moved into a rental here in the community first,” Jim said. “We wanted to become part of the community right away. Within three weeks of moving in and joining the club, we were so busy socially that we had to start picking and choosing events to attend.”

The Ulsamers moved into their newly built home in late 2005 and in addition to social engagements, jumped right into community service.

Jim serves as chair of the Flagler County Public Library board, which approves policy and provides guidance to the county commission on behalf of the library. From there, he said he was asked to get involved with an

organization that was in need of a make-over, Enterprise Flagler, a public/private partnership. Jim said he and others on the board reformulated the organization to become the Economic Opportunity Advisory Council, and he was appointed to the first board of directors. Finally, two and a half years ago, he ran for a seat on the Ocean Hammock Property Owners Association (OHPOA) and was elected right after Hurricane Matthew hit the area. He chairs the Community Affairs Committee, which is charged with finding a solution to restore dunes damaged in the storm.

“We worked with the county for a year and a half and completed the dune refurbishment of sand and vegetation in August 2018,” Jim said.

Mary Kay is likewise involved with the OHPOA, and served for two years about a decade ago as the first female member of the board. She was chair of the Communications Committee and also the Architectural Review Board (ARB). She’s now back as a member of the Communications Committee.

But Mary Kay’s passion is technology.

“I’ve always been an early adopter,” she said. “We had a smart home since 2008, before most people knew what that was.”

In April 2017, Mary Kay acquired her first drone. It was small



and would fit in a backpack, but took great photos and videos.

She said she looked at it as a flying camera. She said she had to learn to fly the drone, and did so on the golf course when it was

closed for renovations. She then took aerials of the various holes and course conditions, which was appreciated by absentee owners. It wasn’t long before real estate agents became interested in her work and she purchased another, larger drone.

“For commercial purposes, I had to become FAA-certified as a drone pilot,” Mary Kay said. “This required me to pass a two-hour exam and I’ll have to pass ongoing exams.”

Besides working for real estate agents, she volunteers for the Big Ten Network to provide aerial coverage of the Big Ten golf tournament at The Conservatory and Ocean Course. Since both she and Jim are graduates of Big Ten Conference universities (Michigan State for her and Rutgers for him), this is a natural fit.

Mary Kay said she likes the photos best, but flying the drones is a lot of fun, since she’s also seeing what the drone is filming in real time.

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## Those darn mailboxes!

By Linda Windsor

We are fortunate to live in a coastal community, but salt air and high UV brings challenges — especially to those darn mailboxes. However, with minimal maintenance, our mailboxes can look brand new for many years.

You may not be aware that our community has had three generations of mailboxes since its inception. In August 2002, our Architectural Review Board (ARB) approved what is now known as the Generation 1 mailbox. Many find the best way to maintain these are with a Rustoleum or Krylon paint.

In June 2003, the ARB approved our Generation 2 mailbox when the previous

company went out of business. This generation seems to do well when maintained with Fluid Film.

Then, in June 2008, the Generation 3 mailbox was approved when the prior mailbox became unavailable. This is our current mailbox style and the product can be purchased directly from the manufacturer, Whitehall Industries (231-981-3635). Please note that no other mailbox is approved for use in our community.

Whitehall includes maintenance instructions when a new mailbox is shipped. A

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## Dunes CDD Water Cooler Corner

By Gary Crahan, DCDD Board of Supervisors

As we look forward to the year ahead, I am pleased to report that conditions are in good order at your Dunes Community Development District (DCDD). Specifically, the major \$6 million project to expand the wastewater (sewer) processing plant continues on schedule and within budget. Completion is still expected in August 2019. We plan to hold an open house ceremony at that time to give you an opportunity to tour the facility.

**Jungle Hut Road/Hammock Dunes Parkway Intersection:** Local residents should have noticed that we have taken positive steps to improve driver sightline vision of oncoming traffic when approaching this intersection. Too many low shrubs were obscuring the ability to safely navigate that intersection as well as see walkers and cyclists emerging from the forested path on the west side of Hammock Dunes Parkway. We hope that you find that an improvement. Please provide comments to me if you think further clearing is required. In addition, please observe the posted traffic flow and do not stop (except for pedestrians) at the crosswalks or yield to cross traffic on Jungle Hut Road. Note that cyclists riding on their bicycles do not qualify as pedestrians, except when they fully dismount and walk their bikes across the highway at the crosswalks.

**Irrigation System Operation:** I hope everyone took advantage of the extended hours of reclaimed water system operation to test their residential irrigation system for proper operation. It is very important not to waste water and your lawn/shrubs

will appreciate not being over or under watered.

**Water Conservation:** This is an old story, but as everyone should appreciate, clean, fresh water (potable) is a precious commodity in Florida. That is why we take great effort to monitor consumption on an individual user level, both residential and commercial. Recently some residents were notified that their potable consumption significantly exceeded normal usage requiring investigation of leakage and/or payment for additional capacity. Our effort is to work with residents and commercial entities to identify water leak sources and make sure meter operation is correct. In those cases where leakage could be proven, water bills were adjusted to reduce the financial impact. We want to be a responsible utility provider, but need your help in monitoring unexplained trends on your monthly water bills and keeping an eye out for typical leak sources such as automatic pool filling, toilet tank flush levers stuck open, and outside hose bib leakage. One good news story is the Hammock Beach Resort identified more than one million gallons per month of water leakage associated with the Fantasy Pool complex and took significant maintenance action to repair the pools. We all need to be proactive to save water (and money).

**Online DCDD Billpay:** Please provide us feedback if you are having any difficulty using the DCDD Online Utility Billpay or Bridge Toll Card account systems. Just call the DCDD office at (386) 445-9045 for assistance.

### The 2019 Ocean Hammock Board of Directors

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- Dave Bull - Treasurer
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- Jim Ulsamer - Director
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- Flagler County Emergency 911
- Ocean Hammock Dispatch Center (386) 447-1808
- Ocean Hammock Main Gate (386) 447-1809
- Discovery Center Gate (386) 986-1154
- North Shore Gate (386) 986-1129

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Photo courtesy Linda Windsor  
Approved mailbox.

carnauba wax should be applied when the mailbox is first installed. The wax should be applied to the mailbox, post, bracket, finial and side plates and should be reapplied at least once a year thereafter. Before waxing, wash the mailbox with Simple Green All Purpose Cleaner. The use of a clear sealant made by Rustoleum can be used if your mailbox is starting to fade. Should the mailbox get scratched, you can receive from the manufacturer a small bottle of black paint to prevent rusting. Whitehall has very specific requirements when maintaining their mailbox; however, and perhaps most importantly, the third generation mailbox comes with a lifetime warranty so long as the mailbox is properly maintained and other requirements or conditions of the manufacturer are met.

Think of your mailbox as you would your vehicle: it is always good to periodically use your garden hose to clean off the salt spray on any generation mailbox. Following the simple care instructions above will keep your mailbox looking brand new.

Whitehall is willing to work with you if you find the mailbox is breaking down, but you must be maintaining the equipment per their requirements.

## Ocean Hammock community kicks off 2019 by serving others

By Pam Weber

The Ocean Hammock Community Outreach Committee would like to express its sincere gratitude to everyone who donated so generously to the 2019 pledge drive. As a result of your contributions, \$9,270 was raised and will be utilized to support various projects that will serve individuals less fortunate within our community.

Donations were received in honor of: Jessica Adolfe, Gilda Klimas, Chuck Larwood, Carl E. Lipton, Andrew A. and Mary V. Mihok; and Ann Petruno.

Donations were also given in memory of: Lee Ericsson, Steen Fortnum, Mickie Generazio, Geraldine and Rolland Kromer, Chuck Larwood and Bob VanNostrand, Claire Markowitz, Brian Riley Travis.

Following this successful pledge drive, on Jan. 2 committee members stocked the shelves and opened the doors once again at the Flagler County Resource Center. Community volunteers and members of the Ocean Hammock Community Outreach Committee manned the center throughout the month of January. A total of 619 people (230 families, 462 adults and 157 children) were served during this time.

As preparations were underway for the January opening, we learned that Flagler



Photo courtesy Pam Weber  
Volunteers pulling food items at the Resource Center.

County is going to demolish the building that the Resource Center occupies in the very near future. The building is in disrepair, and although it serves our purpose, the county does not want to spend any money to make any upgrades to a building that is essentially being condemned. The county administration does have a fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayers of Flagler County and it is just not financially feasible to fix the building.

Bette Roundtree, who heads Church Women United and oversees the Center, is closing its doors on Feb. 28. Upon learning the fate of the Resource Center, the

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## Be aware of dangers of built-in gas grills

By Lynette Overbey

A fireball exploded from our built-in gas grill five years ago, knocking Terry off his feet and badly burning his legs. Since then, there have been several more grill accidents. None have been fatal, but one would have been much more serious if the explosion hadn't thrown the victim into his swimming pool.

If your gas grill is built into an enclosed counter and if your propane is piped directly from a big storage tank, you could be one leak away from essentially having a bomb on your lanai. Propane is heavier than air, so gas from a leak will settle in the enclosure and start filling it up. When the grill is started, the trapped gas ignites. In our case, the enclosure's stainless steel doors blew open and the fireball whooshed out. A quick trip to grill burgers ended up in months of recovery from painful burns.

An easy-to-reach shut-off valve and a timer on the gas line will prevent a leak and an explosion.

Shut-off valves are required by code, but they are not required to be easily acces-

sible. Our shut-off valve was located in the far back corner of the enclosure, requiring a hands-and-knees crawl to turn it off. Needless to say, it was never used.

An easily accessible timer would also have prevented the accident. Having both is even better. The cost to add a timer and relocate the shut-off for accessibility would have run about \$200 – \$300.

Don't count on using your nose to detect a leak. Propane does not have the distinctive rotten-egg smell of natural gas. On the day of the accident I smelled it and thought it was insecticide from landscaper spraying. Another victim thought the odor was due to air conditioning maintenance work. Any unusual chemical smell should get your attention and make you suspicious.

Note, this is the second article about the danger from built-in gas grills. The first one appeared after our accident five years ago. There have been at least three more since then.

## Book Club makes trip to Kingsley Plantation

By Linda Hager

Have you heard of the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve located just adjacent to the Mayport Naval Station in Jacksonville? If you're looking for a nice day trip, this shouldn't be missed.

This National Park (free) is a 46,000 acre preserve and includes Kingsley Plantation, Fort Caroline National Memorial and more. The Timucua Indians lived here for thousands of years before the explorers arrived and were separate tribes united by a common language.

The Book Club read the books "Don Juan McQueen" and "Anna Madgigine Jai Kingsley: African Princess, Florida Slave, Plantation Slave Owner," the second of which told the story of this African Princess who was captured at 13, sold into slavery and is so intriguing as she experienced every level of plantation society — slave and free, land owner and slave owner, planter's wife and plantation manager. As Florida was a Spanish territory, slaves were able to work to buy their freedom — but once Florida became a state in the South, they were forced back into a traditional slave society.

Serving Others cont. from pg. 3

Ocean Hammock Community Outreach Committee decided to also provide food for distribution during the month of February. We are working with the county to find an alternative site and when we have more information, we'll publish it.

The committee would also like to extend its deepest appreciation to the Ladies Golf Association for donating approximately 100 beautiful Birthday Bags that were distributed to boys and girls celebrating their special day in January or February. Each



Photo courtesy Linda Hager  
The Book Club visited Kingsley Plantation.

The plantation itself has a main house along the Fort George River, kitchen house, bookstore, garden, barn and slave quarters and is the oldest still-standing plantation in Florida. The remaining 25 slave quarters are unique in that they're arranged in a semi-circle (similar to West Africa), and made of a resilient material called tabby which is cooked oyster shells mixed with sand to make cement.

There's lots more to the fascinating Kingsley story and it is well worth learning more about this piece of local history. While you're there you could also make a stop at Ft. Caroline Memorial, site of the first French colony in the United States.

Everyone in Book Club wants to say a special thank you to Ann Butler and Phyllis Pionzio who have arranged annual book club trips for more than 10 years. Each one has been unique, informative and so much fun for members who participated.

bag was complete with cake mix, icing, a baking pan, decorations and banners. Surprise puzzles and books were also among the many items included.

The committee will be meeting in March to determine additional goals and projects to complete during 2019.

*Pam Weber is Communications Director of the Ocean Hammock Community Outreach Committee.*



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# Hey Man! what's cookin'?

By Jim Owen

Hello, Ocean Hammock and welcome to spring — arguably our best season and the most pleasant for firing up the grill. First, it's time to tell you why I now dabble in the kitchen. The short story is my lovely wife of 40 years is a good cook, but has never really enjoyed it much. So, after my retirement, I sort of took over the reins for our dinners. I cook, she preps and cleans; works for both of us! With that as a backdrop, here is one of my favorite recipes, mainly because it is so easy and tastes great. Please remember this is written by a man so everything is flexible:

## Grilled Pork Tenderloin

I normally get a vacuum sealed pack of pork tenderloin from Publix or Costco. I prefer Costco, but it is larger and a lot more effort to get. I try to always get one that is more than two pounds, to allow for slight shrinkage and plenty of leftovers. I normally gauge approximately one-half pound per person. If I freeze it

prior to cooking, I make sure it is completely thawed prior to beginning.

### Other ingredients:

Olive oil (does not need to be XXOO) or some other oil or non-stick cooking spray to prevent it from sticking to the grill grates

- 1 small sweet onion
- 3 cloves of garlic
- 1 bottle of Ken's Steak House Greek with feta cheese and black olive dressing (16 oz.)
- Goya Sazonador Total (seasoning blend)
- Salt and pepper

### Prep:

I normally start this in the morning. Place the tenderloin in a large plastic container and put a liberal amount of salt, pepper and Sazonador over the entire meat. I chop the onion and garlic

and cover the tenderloin and then place this into the refrigerator for an hour or so to let the seasoning absorb into the meat. About an hour and a half prior to grilling, I pour the entire bottle of dressing over the pork. Put it back into the refrigerator, but remove it 20 – 30 minutes prior to grilling so the pork is close to room temperature.

### Grilling instructions:

Rub olive oil or non-stick cooking spray over the grates

Turn grill on to maximum or high temperature

Once grill is properly heated, sear the pork, rolling it to get some nice grill marks

Reduce heat to medium, cook until inside temperature is between 145 – 160 degrees. This is between rare and medium rare (depending on preference and to allow for additional cooking, per the next step)

Remove the meat from the grill, place on a platter and tent it under aluminum foil for 10 minutes. It will continue to cook while tented.

Remove foil and slice with a sharp knife into medallions about one-quarter inch thick or to your desired size. I remove it from the platter and slice on a cutting board since there is a lot of juice and it can get messy.

Return to platter to serve.

I usually serve this with grilled or steamed vegetables, a salad and a great red wine. I prefer a Pinot Noir since we just went to the Pacific Northwest in the fall and discovered some wonderful wine. Any leftover pork is great the next day for sandwiches or sliced on a salad. Do not reheat, let the pork come to room temperature before serving. Enjoy!

## Ocean Hammock Property Owners Association: Community wide development statistics

Of 1,078 units as of Dec. 1, 2018, the Gate Specific Percentage Developed (including active construction) is as follows:

**Hotel Trace:** (includes 275 allocated to the Cinnamon Beach condos) (Sections A-1, A-2, A-3, A-4, A-5, B-1 and B-2)

683 units of which 551 are developed = 81 percent

**Discovery:** (Sections B-3, B-4, B-5 Discovery Building, B-5a and B-5b)

183 units of which 122 are developed = 67 percent

**Northshore:** (Sections C-1, C-2, C-3 and C-4)

212 units of which 159 are developed = 75 percent

**Community Total:** 77.2 percent (compared to 64 percent in 2015) (less CNBC = 69.4 percent)



## Hammock Beach Resort executive chef returns to the Masters

By Charles Kerr

It's no secret, golfers gamble. So, when The Masters rolls around in April, they're thinking about which pro to pick for their Masters pool. What they're probably not thinking about is the amazing foodservice ballet going on behind the scenes during the tournament.

For 10 days, starting on April 5, there will be approximately 750 culinarians (250 chefs and 500 culinary students) working in the background to put on a feast for members, pro golfers and patrons that will last from breakfast through dinner.

Many of us will never have the chance to experience the Founders Room or Berckmans Place during the Masters, but diners at The Hammock Beach Resort can at least enjoy the amazing dishes created by one of those Masters Chefs.

Since 2016, Chef Kevin Luque has been the Resort Executive Chef at Hammock Beach Resort. Chef Kevin grew up in central New Jersey, the son of parents who both enjoyed cooking. Although his mother was the primary chef at home, he shared that his dad's chicken cordon bleu is still the best he's ever had.

Having developed an appreciation of good food and preparation techniques at home, Luque went on to graduate from college with a degree in Hospitality and Restaurant Management. It didn't take long before he discovered that he enjoyed working in the kitchen much more than the "front of the house." Luque started his chef career at the Hilton Short Hills, located in New Jersey, just west of New York City. After a couple of years at Short Hills, he was hired by the Sheraton Corporation to work at its property in New Orleans. This is where he learned the fine art of the banquet

business. Luckily, an opportunity to be the Executive Chef at Hilton's Kingston Plantation property led Luque and his wife to Myrtle Beach, where they enjoyed living for the next 10 years. With 13 dining venues and 70,000 square feet of meeting and banquet space at Kingston Plantation, Luque had a chance to experience every possible opportunity associated with being a chef at a major resort. That experience, and his talent for creating exceptional dishes, led to his invitation to be part of the Masters team in 2015.

This year will be Chef Kevin's fourth year working at the tournament. For his primary job, he will be one of four chefs in the Founders Room cooking lunch and dinner for the Augusta National members, the players and their wives. Working at a food outlet inside the Augusta National gate comes with a lot of rules and traditions. The four chefs, along with 32 culinary students, will be making sure that each and every guest in the dining room has their food in seven and a half minutes or less (the longest time in 2018) from order to table service. Try that at home.

Before the tournament there is a traditional dinner called the Returning Champions Dinner. The menu items for the dinner are chosen by the previous year's winner; for 2019, Patrick Reed gets to do the honors. But the food at the 2019 Champions Dinner, held at the end of this year's tournament, will certainly be more memorable than Reed's menu. The 2019 dinner will be planned and prepared by a team of five hand selected chefs, one of whom will be Chef Kevin. It's a high honor to be selected to be a member of the team preparing the

menu for this function. In the past, such celebrity chefs as Jose Andres and Jose Garces have been part of the event.

To those of us who have been lucky enough to have had Chef Kevin cook for us, either at one of the resort restaurants or for a special dinner at our home, we are not the least bit surprised that he was chosen to be a part of the 2019 Masters culinary team and this year's Champions Dinner.

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The winner of the Hammock Hot Shot photo contest in the Winter 2018 issue entitled, "Trees Galore," is Jeff Currie with his entry "Blue Skies Ahead."

For next issue's contest, get ready and look around! The next challenge involves anything that flies. From a bumblebee to a kite to a plane to a bird ... be creative and don't do the obvious! Hit us with your best shot. And make it local!



Photo courtesy Jeff Currie Blue Skies Ahead

Remember the rules: No identifiable people and keep it local, within a 30-mile radius of our Hammock area. Send all entries to hammockhotshot@gmail.com.

Thanks for your entry!

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# Guide to the Tides 2019

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## FLAGLER'S TURTLE TRAIL SHOWCASES ART

By Nancy Crouch

What do Claude Monet, Louis Comfort Tiffany, Marc Chagall, and Pablo Picasso all have in common? The obvious answer is that they were all famous artists. But did you know, they have been specially chosen by area supporters as influential examples that helped shape our perception of the art world?

A select work from each of these artists can be found on public sculptures popping up in Flagler County in the form of loggerhead turtles. The loggerhead turtle, deemed indigenous to our area, seemed a logical choice by the Palm Coast Arts Foundation to meld the past with the present. As an educational component to the project, works of historical artists are transformed by area artists onto these public life-size sculptures. These "nature-scapes" will add to the beauty of the community while engaging artists, visitors, and residents with public sculptures that provide a glimpse into these famous artists and the importance of the loggerhead turtle to this coastal community.

Local small business owner, Andy Barr of Tech Talk Studios (PCAF trustee), brought forward the idea of the public sculpture project as a branding idea for PCAF and Flagler County. A year later, "Claude" was created and can be found in front of the outdoor stage of the Palm Coast Arts Foundation in Town Center; "Tiff" is on display at the Long Creek Nature Preserve off Palm Harbor Parkway; "Marc-Sea" will soon be unveiled at the Village Center in Grand Haven; and "Pablo" is a work in progress by the Flagler Palm Coast art club under the supervision of art teacher Chelsea Schläfer and will find a home in the Spring at Old Kings Elementary School, a natural venue since it is the marine sciences flag-ship school.

The Turtle Trail will continue to grow as sponsors come forward to purchase the permanent sculpture. Once the sponsor determines what historical artist they would like to emulate on their turtle, the Palm Coast Arts Foundation introduces them to an artist who is up to the task, unless of course the sponsor already has an artist in mind. Each sculpture comes

with a bronze plaque indicating which number the turtle is, the name of the historical



Claude can be found in front of the outdoor stage of the Palm Coast Arts Foundation in Town Center.



Photos courtesy Palm Coast Arts Foundation  
Claude, named for Claude Monet.



"Marc-Sea" will soon be unveiled at the Village Center in Grand Haven

The loggerhead turtle, deemed indigenous to our area, seemed a logical choice by the Palm Coast Arts Foundation to meld the past with the present.

artist, a brief statement on the significance of the artist, the name of the artist who paints the turtle, the dedication date, and of course the name of the sponsor. A Turtle Trail map is in the planning stages.

The turtles are made of fiberglass and are approximately five feet by five feet in size and weigh about 60 pounds, arriving with a plain white base coat. Once painted, the turtles are sent to an auto-body shop where they are spray-coated several times with a clear-coat. The \$5,000 price of the sculpture includes everything including a stipend for the artist, supplies, installation, and transportation. The turtle takes six to eight weeks to be created by the fabricator, shipped directly to the artist as a plain white turtle ready for his or her transformation.

Interested in participating on The Turtle Trail? Contact the Palm Coast Arts Foundation at [info@palmcoastartsfoundation.com](mailto:info@palmcoastartsfoundation.com) or (386) 225-4394.

Nancy Crouch is Executive Director, Palm Coast Arts Foundation.



"Tiff" is on display at the Long Creek Nature Preserve off Palm Harbor Parkway

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# Resident Adventures

**Ireland**  
By Rosemary McCabe Travis



“Ballyjamesduff.” I first heard this word at age seven and found it quite magical...not exactly Neverland, but close. It was the place in County Cavan, Ireland where “Nana” McCabe, my paternal grandmother, was born. She never spoke about the first 15 years of her life, likely because, as I later discovered, it held painful memories. She came to America in 1892 with her mother and four younger siblings, settling in Brooklyn with the help of relatives. She never returned.

Matthew, and his family, tooling around Ireland in a coach with driver: 13 of us, including two young children. This was, indeed, an amazing birthday gift. After two days of enjoying the sights of Dublin and being surprised with a birthday dinner hosted by a dear Dublin friend, we

Nana died seven years after sharing this magical word with me, and I regretted

not asking her about the family who stayed in Ireland. I developed a great longing to visit Ireland and find cousins of the current generations. Never in my wildest imagination did I envision connections to my “Cavan Cousins” would highlight some of the most memorable moments of my life. Here are details of just one trip.

For 10 days, we were guests of my son,



Climbing one stone at Blarney, not kissing the famous stone.



Photos courtesy Rosemary McCabe Travis. Heading into the Gap of Dunloe in a jaunting car.

Blarney Castle and visiting the lovely seaside village of Kinsale, our driver headed out along the coast to Killarney, County Kerry. Using Killarney as a base, visitors can enjoy the Ring of Kerry, the Dingle Peninsula or The Gap of Dunloe. We chose to explore the Gap, a narrow pass between the MacGillycuddy Reeks mountain range and the Purple Mountain Group. We rode jaunting cars through the Gap and later returned by

left the big city for County Cavan, little more than an hour's drive northwest of Dublin. There, almost 50 cousins of three generations enjoyed my birthday luncheon. I was thrilled to see the younger cousins getting

to know each other. There was also tea at our family “home house” where my great grandmother was born.

We said farewell to relatives after planting a tree in a Cavan Town Park in memory of our late son, Brian, who loved everything Irish. The cousins now send

me photos of how his tree is growing.

On the road now, we visited the National Stud in County Kildare, where Ireland's thoroughbreds reside in lovely quarters. The horses eagerly ate the carrots we offered, while the sight of a mare with her two-day-old foal thrilled us. This visit also included walking through two beautiful gardens and visiting a museum.

The historic site of The Rock of Cashel next drew our attention. The traditional seat of the kings of Munster, this complex is one of the most remarkable collections of medieval architecture found anywhere in Europe.

After Emigrant and Titanic museum visits in Cobh, County Cork, a stop at



Members of the Cavan Council joined us in dedicating the tree in memory of Brian.



Treats for the horses at the National Stud.

motorboat down the Lakes of Killarney ... definitely a fun adventure!

All that remained of our trip was a ferry ride across the River Shannon to County Clare and a brief stay at Trump International Hotel at Doonbeg, an amazing golf and hotel property overlooking the sea. Nearby attractions included The Cliffs of Moher and the Aillwee Cave.

All too soon our trip was over. Heading to the airport, I wondered what Nana McCabe thought about it all!



Pretty seaside town of Bantry.

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Source: Flagler County MLS, area 4, 7/1/2013-6/30/2018.

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# THE TRUE STORY OF ROMEO AND JULIET

By Beth Kelly

Many of us who are long term residents or avid golfers have enjoyed spectacular sightings over the years of two famous bald head eagles, Romeo and Juliet, who especially love to canvas the area from a perch up high in a tall pine tree on the second hole of the Ocean Course. This is their story.

Approximately 11 years ago, Romeo and Juliet built a nest not too far from our community. That nest has grown considerably since then in size and weight and, today, the nest is estimated to weigh close to a ton. It is a formidable home, well suited for our proud resident couple.

Every fall, we eagerly await their return from their summers spent in Virginia Beach. Once Romeo and Juliet return, they are busy with their nesting cycle of bonding, mating, hatching, incubating, and, ultimately, raising their youngsters until they can fend for themselves. Once

the fledglings leave, Romeo and Juliet stay around for another month or two before starting their trip up north again. The following fall, they return like clockwork and the cycle continues.



Photo courtesy Tony Caruso

Beginning in October 2013, we have been fortunate to have the American Eagle Foundation provide live video streaming so that we can witness life firsthand as it unfolds in the nest. Each year, Romeo and Juliet never disappoint us and have two eggs; their baby eaglets enter the world in late December and we watch in awe as the babies are cared

for by their parents until they are ready to survive on their own. It has been an amazing experience to watch these babies grow until they can take their first flights from the nest.

For years, we became spoiled and eagerly anticipated the birth of the babies. As our holiday season approached, it was bittersweet when we heard the news that Juliet had been injured from a fight with another female eagle and was last seen on Dec. 17. Romeo stayed on to fight gallantly to protect their two baby eggs, ultimately to lose the hard fought battle. Romeo has not been seen since Dec. 26, after his newly hatched eaglet was unfortunately

killed. While we sadly don't know the ending of the story, we draw comfort in thinking that, if we faithfully look skyward, one day Romeo and Juliet will come back to visit us, soaring high over the second hole of our Ocean Course to perch on the lonely tall pine once again.

We are fortunate that the eagle popu-

lation continues to rebound and that Florida is one of the most populated states. We are also grateful to the American Eagle Foundation, which provides four different nest sites to observe these amazing birds in their natural habitat. These sites are viewed by people across the country and have provided much educational value. If you wish to visit the live cam where Romeo and Juliet lived, visit [www.nefleaglecam.org](http://www.nefleaglecam.org).

Today, the story continues to unfold as there appears to be a new younger couple visiting the nest. While we anxiously await the return of Romeo and Juliet or perhaps Romeo with a new mate, this younger couple may, indeed, be our new neighbors that we welcome to our community with open arms.

If you visit the site, you will see a quote from Baba Dioum, of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, who perhaps most aptly sums up the story of Romeo and Juliet: "In the end we will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught."

## Things to do in the garden for spring

By Allynne Jones

As spring approaches our thoughts turn back to our gardens and what we should be doing to get ready. Here are some suggestions for your spring "To Do" list:

- **Fertilize:** Wait until the end of February/mid-March before fertilizing your plants, palms and trees. We recommend Nurserymen SureGro slow release granular Palm Fertilizer 8-4-12, 6-8-10 for blooming trees and flowering plants. For those customers beachside use the 12-4-12 Nurserymen SureGro fertilizer. It is more adapted to high salt areas.

- **Trim:** Deciduous trees (like elms and crape myrtles) and some shrubs may be pruned now with some exceptions such as azaleas, gardenias and hydrangeas and any other spring bloomers. Trim camellias only if they are done blooming. Reshape your hedges now as there will be a large flush of growth happening in another three to four weeks and you won't have to look at twigs quite as long when they flush out. Trim crape myrtles toward the end of the month if necessary. Trim lightly to shape, remove crossing branches and suckers. Topping crape myrtles will not only shorten the life of the tree and create fewer flowers, it will result in long, leggy weak growth that

will bow over when flowering especially in heavy summer rains. Pruning citrus is not required; however, it can be done in late February or early March. Selectively prune the citrus tree — no shearing! Find a growth bud and make an angled cut just above it. Do not be afraid to keep the tree shorter to make picking easier.

- **Lawns:** The VerdeGo Lawn Calendar was designed to supply your turf with the products it needs at the time your turf needs it most. Staying one step ahead of insects and disease while supplying the proper amount of nutrients is key to having a great looking, healthy lawn. Remember, once the damage is done, it can be costly to replace your lawn. Your grass may be fairly brown now from the cool weather and lack of nutrition; however, do not be in a big rush to fertilize with straight fertilizer. The grass is still dormant and you will only be fertilizing the weeds. In addition, remember that when you apply Weed & Feed, the "Weed" part of these products is "pre-emergence," which means it will be taking care of dormant weed seeds below ground. If you can see the weed, there will be no change.

- **Bugs:** Plants are not the only things waking up after winter. Bugs are com-

ing back — so remember to continue to "scout" your yard. At least once every 10 days, wander around your yard and check the top, undersurface and stems of your plants. A small amount of bug damage can turn into an epidemic if left untreated too long. If you are in doubt about what is happening to your plants, bring us in a sample and we can guide you in the right direction.

- **Check all your tools for rust and debris.** Clean them up and sharpen if needed. Sanitize all pruners with rubbing alcohol or hydrogen peroxide prior to use and between trimming to prevent the spread of disease.

- **Reapply two inches of mulch** in areas that have become bare over the winter. New mulch not only freshens up the landscape, it will help deter spring weeds and help with moisture control during the heat of the summer.

- **Collect fallen leaves or pine needles** from your lawn in sunny locations to prevent damage to the grass. In shady areas where the grass doesn't grow, leaving the pine needles or leaves is not a problem.

*Allynne Jones is a Florida Certified Horticultural Professional with Verdego Garden Center.*

### Be a considerate dog owner

We all love our pets, but it is important to be respectful of our neighbors when visiting the community's common areas.

Please follow these regulations so that the common areas may be enjoyed by everyone.

- 1 **Keep pets on a leash at all times, as required by Flagler County ordinance.**
- 2 **Clean up after your pet. Doggy bags are available at multiple locations.**



## Golf Tip: Tee drill to cure the shanks

By Brad Hauer, PGA

Every golfer has experienced the dreaded shanks at one point in their golfing career. If you get them, it can be very discouraging and will destroy your confidence.

Shanking the golf ball is a result of hitting the ball off the hosel of the golf club and will cause the ball to go sharply to the right. This can be a result of flaws in your set up, backswing, or downswing positions. One drill that I have had suc-

cess with over the years is the "tee drill," which is a very simple way to get yourself out of the shanks.

To do this drill, place a tee just inside the ball. You will want to address the ball, but the key to this drill is that when you make your swing you will focus your attention to clip the tee out of the ground.

I love this drill because it gives you instant results. If you happen to still shank the ball with the tee in the ground, check

to see if you clipped the tee — odds are that you missed it. After 10 or so shots with the tee drill, you will regain your confidence and be ready to tackle the golf course again!

*Brad Hauer, PGA, is General Manager of Hammock Beach Resort.*



Photo courtesy Brad Hauer





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## Ask Sherry

By Sherry Babbitt

### Question: Heard you went to Cuba. What was that like?

Cuba – Not just old cars and cigars

When my husband Larry and I discussed going on a cruise to Cuba, it was exciting to me. I grew up in Fort Lauderdale and my parents used to vacation there often and seemed to love Cuba (until it was overthrown by Fidel Castro). We never considered the political controversy of visiting the country. Some people feel that since Cuba is an independent socialist republic and their constitution declares the Communist Party of Cuba as the leading force of society and the government, any money Americans spend there just goes to their government. But, after visiting Cuba, it seems the benefit of making human connections where both sides learn about each other outweighs the argument of staying away entirely.

We chose to take a cruise from Port Canaveral since it would be an easy drive to and from the port. In order to go to Cuba, you must declare which category of travel you will be making. We selected an educational experience — a farm-to-table excursion. When we arrived, we were treated to a delicious variety of fruits, all grown on the farm. Then we toured the farm, learned about how they grow their crops and about the process of animal breeding. For a country with little or no access to equipment and technology, it is amazing what they have accomplished. With

ingenuity and hard work, they continue to refine sustainable farming techniques where everything is natural and nothing goes to waste. The family and workers were impassioned about organic farming and took great pride in their 165-acre “privately owned” farm.

After an interesting and educational morning, where we learned all about the farm-to-table process, we enjoyed freshly made mojitos. Then, we enjoyed a delicious lunch where everything served was grown, raised or made there. Their goat cheese was amazing!

Tips:

- Don't blow your nose in public. Cubans consider public nose blowing to be extremely rude.
- Prepare to use cash in Cuba. There are two Cuban currencies: CUP (Cuban Peso) and CUC (Cuban Convertible Peso). To my surprise, during our visit, the American dollar was worth less than the Cuban Peso.
- Don't take pictures of police or soldiers. It's actually illegal to take a photograph of any military, police or airport personnel in Cuba.
- Keep your receipts and records. The United States government can ask receipts and records from your trip to Cuba for up to five years.\*

\* What a great movie plot: An average retired couple visits Cuba and don't save their records. Months later the CIA storms into their home. Why? Because a high-level operative in Cuba was assassinated the day they were there.



Photo courtesy Sherry Babbitt  
Cuban cars.

## Ready, set, bike!

By Susan Sedlak

People of all ages love to ride bikes. Whether on mountain bikes, a beach cruiser, a hybrid or road bike, there are many choices in the Flagler County area for cycling. Our area has an abundance of multi-purpose paved paths and dirt bike trails from which to choose. The trails are well maintained and offer scenic views as well as opportunities for exploring Flagler County and beyond.

Mountain bike enthusiasts can find two notable places to ride at the Mala Compra Greenway Trail and Graham Swamp Preserve Trail. The Mala Compra Trail is a five-and-a-half mile single track trail with the trailhead and parking at Bings Landing off A1A. The Graham Swamp Preserve Trail has five miles of black diamond trails, featuring exposed roots, sudden dips and uneven landscape. Parking for Graham Swamp Preserve Trail is located at 5135 Colbert Lane and hosts many competitive ride events throughout the year.

Multi-purpose paths for all abilities are found at all ends of the county. The Intracoastal Waterway Trail, stretching two miles, can be found between the Hammock Dunes Bridge and Waterfront Park. This wide path trail with several boardwalk sections provides excellent views of the Intracoastal Waterway, including a chance to see dolphins, manatees and turtles along with a wide variety of birds. Parking is found at Waterfront Park and under the Hammock Dunes Bridge. The Lehigh Trail is an eight mile path that parallels the Lehigh Canal and goes from Colbert Lane to US Highway 1. Parking is located at two trailheads at Colbert Lane and Belle Terre Parkway.

The regular sidewalks (multi-purpose trails) in and around Palm Coast and Flagler County are wide and smooth which makes for great walking and riding. One route to check out is the multi-use path on Pine Lakes Parkway (off of Belle Terre Parkway) and the one that connects Belle Terre Parkway to Matanzas Wood Parkway with a loop that runs along US



Photo courtesy Metro Creative

Highway 1. There are many great rides of all distances that can be created using these trails. Check out the routes at [www.discoverpalmcoast.com](http://www.discoverpalmcoast.com), [www.flagler-chamber.org](http://www.flagler-chamber.org) or pick up a trail map at the Historical Museum in Flagler Beach as well as the Flagler County Tourist Office at the airport.

All of the paths mentioned in this article, with the exception of the mountain bike trails, are paved and good for all types of bikes. Beach riding with the fat tire bikes is a fun way to spend an afternoon assuming the tide is low. The sidewalks in and around the Ocean Hammock community offer great views of the golf course and wildlife.

Outside of Flagler County, Florida offers many trails all over the state. Two of the closer trails to our area are the Palatka-Lake Butler State Trail, which is 20 miles in length and the Palatka-St. Augustine State Trail, which offers 18 miles of continuous riding. Transporting bikes is a must for these trails, but well worth the drive — and nearby restaurants for breakfast and lunch abound.

Bike safety is an important part of cycling. When riding anywhere, whether on sidewalks, trails or the road, helmets are a must. Bright lights, white in the front and red on the rear of the cycle, as well as bright clothing help make a cyclist more visible to cars, walkers and other bikers. Being an alert rider, by calling out your location to other walkers and riders that share the trails and sidewalks, helps keep everyone safe. So get out and explore the many options for bikes and ride safe.



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# Whale Tales

By Beth Kelly

Recently, there have been many sightings of whales along our coast in Flagler and Volusia counties. In particular, along our coastline in Hammock Beach, there have been several sightings of humpback whales, although others have seen right whales as well. For those of us long-term residents who have never seen a whale off our coast before, these opportunities have been exciting to see.

After spending summers in New England and Nova Scotia, both humpbacks and right whales migrate from December to March off our Florida Atlantic coast; the females come to give birth to their offspring. Both whales are known for their playful antics — flipper slapping, rolling, and breaching. In April/May, the whales head back up north, often riding the Gulf Stream so they travel farther offshore — making sightings from the coastline more rare. The most common time to see whales is the month of February when they are still enjoying our warm Florida waters.

Today, there are approximately 400 North American right whales of which only 100 are estimated to be breeding females. Although humpbacks are not as critically endangered, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration estimates that there are roughly 10,500 in the North Atlantic Ocean. Both whale populations have suffered unusually high mortality rates in recent years predominantly caused by blunt force trauma or propeller wounds from a boat.

So grab your binoculars and see if you can spot one! If you do, consider yourself among the lucky ones and have a whale of a good time. To report a whale sighting, call 888-97-WHALE. To report an injured or entangled whale, call the Southeast Marine Mammal Stranding Hotline at (877) 433-8299.

Other fun facts:

- Humpbacks typically weigh about 40 tons; right whales can weigh up to 70 tons. Called right whales because they

were the “right” whales to hunt, they are big, slow, and, given their high blubber content, float when they are killed.

- Both whales are part of the Baleen whale family and have no teeth.

The humpback's life expectancy is 45 – 50 years, while the right whale can expect to live between 50 – 70 years.

- The humpback has a dorsal fin and two blowholes with a broad bushy blow; right whales have no dorsal fin but they, too, have two blowholes with a v-shape blow.

- Humpbacks bear single offspring every two to three years with a gestation period of 11 – 12 months; right whales give birth every three to six years with a gestation period of 12 – 14 months.



Photo courtesy Tony Caruso

## Princess Place Preserve

By Marjie Maranto

Let's take a trip to the northern part of the county and visit Princess Place Preserve, the “crown jewel” of Flagler County. The property was once called Cherokee Grove, but later came to be known as Princess Place when the then-widowed owner married an exiled Russian prince.



Photos courtesy Lisa Fisher

Here you will step back in time to Old Florida, as you hike along the Matanzas River and Pellicer Creek, through trees dripping with Spanish Moss. It's a quiet, peaceful connection with nature. There are miles of hiking and equestrian trails, canoeing, kayaking, and fishing.

In addition to traditional camping, three eco-cottages are available for rental. Completed in November, the two-bedroom, two-bathroom cottages have full kitchens and screened in porches. They were designed to give scientists and researchers a base from which to study the preserve and surrounding areas.

The main attraction of Princess Place is the hunting lodge. Originally built in 1887, it is the oldest intact structure in Flagler County. The lodge is home to a museum, which tells the story of the park and gives a glimpse of what life was like in the early days. Tours of the museum are offered on Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m.

Two famous residents of the park are Prince and Princess, a pair of bald eagles. Their nest, once the second largest in

Florida, toppled in a recent December storm. I spoke to Joe Dziak, a member of the Audubon EagleWatch program, who has been watching the eagles at Princess Place for the last 22 years. He said that the eagles are trying to build a new nest, but it is doubtful there will be any eaglets this year. The eagles should be around the park through May and will return to nest again next year. When the eagles are here, Joe and his wife, Judy, host eagle-watching walks on Sundays at 10 a.m.

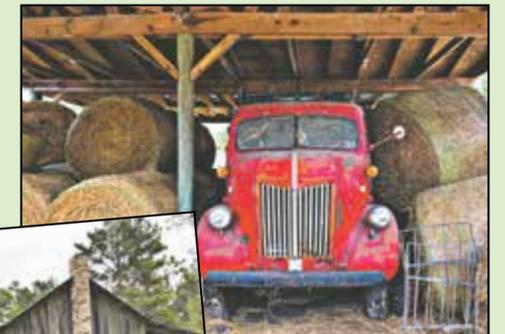
Princess Place has two popular annual events: the Native American Festival in February and

the Creekside Festival in October. Both events are a great time to visit the park, but you don't have to wait for an event to spend time enjoying this treasure.

See you at the park!

## Florida Agricultural Museum offers glimpse back in time

A farmer's market, historic reenactments, horseback riding, and family fun in Flagler County? Yes! Welcome to the Florida Agricultural Museum! The museum's 460 acres represents the entire State of Florida agriculture — past, present, and future. Educational programs build life skills and work ethics in children and the museum's collection of historic buildings and Florida Cracker farm animals are unparalleled. Did you know that Hewitt's Mill, the Revolutionary War era sawmill, cut the lumber that built much of old town St. Augustine? For information on tours, email [Info@FloridaAgMuseum.org](mailto:Info@FloridaAgMuseum.org) or call (386) 446-7630.



Photos courtesy Lisa Fisher



Meet the Ulsamers cont. from pg. 1

“I call it God's Eye View,” she said. “There is so much detail to be seen at 400 feet from the drone rather than 35,000 feet from a plane.”

In their spare time, the Ulsamers both enjoy golf and travel. They have been on approximately 15 cruises and visited Aus-

tralia/New Zealand, Alaska and Iceland. A recent trip to Ireland is a favorite of both; however, they always enjoy coming home to rescue cats Rocky and Lucy in The Hammock.

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## A designer's spring cleaning:

### Three easy tips to refresh your home

By Jessica O'Reilly

Spring is here! It's time to open our windows, breathe in the ocean air, and enjoy this gorgeous weather that graces our little island this time of year. We all know how bright and fresh this season feels, but does your home reflect our setting? If not, I have you covered. Below are three key designer tips to help make your home feel fresh and updated:

**1. Paint:** Lighten and brighten. Changing a home's interior paint color can have the biggest impact on changing the atmosphere of a home. The early 2000s was an era of beige, brown and mustard yellow to achieve a rich Mediterranean look. While this style is very beautiful, it is heavy and can feel dark. Many of my clients have grown tired of this style. If that's you, I recommend a light paint color that has a similar undertone to your floors, such as Shoji White (shown in the picture), Eider White, or Worldly Gray by Sherwin Williams. These are warm whites that tend to complement a home with Mediterranean finishes and architecture.

**2. Color:** Go coastal. Adding pops of coastal color can have a big impact. A dark sofa can look completely refreshed with a chunky knit throw layered under two or three light pillows. Replacing an area rug can achieve a dramatic impact and provide an easy alternative to replacing flooring. The textile industry is manufacturing beautiful jute area rugs that come in nearly any color and are ideal for high traffic areas. Another alternative is polypropylene rugs, which are incredibly durable,

mimic the look and feel of wool, and are very budget friendly.

**3. Texture:** Layer it



Photos courtesy Russ Maiorana / VideoGuy.com  
Before and after a bedroom redo with lighter, coastal colors

on. Oftentimes adding the simplest accessories to a room can transform it from dull to vibrant. For bedrooms, one of my favorite tricks is to frame a bed with statement table lamps and behind the lamps, hang a simple mirror. Framing a bed in mirrors gives the illusion of additional win-

dows and brightens a room by reflecting more light. Finally, never be afraid to go green. Tropical palms or banana leaf botanicals are a key element to creating layers that add interest to your space.

*Jessica O'Reilly owns Hammock Interiors, an award winning interior decorating firm located in The Hammock.*

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