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magazine



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SUNDAE BEST

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LAUGHS**
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DATE
NIGHT

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FUN:**
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THEMES

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& READY
TO GO.**
GRILLING 101

ENJOY
**BEAUTIFUL
SEASCAPES,
EH?**
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GOT 'EM

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Welcomes MetLife





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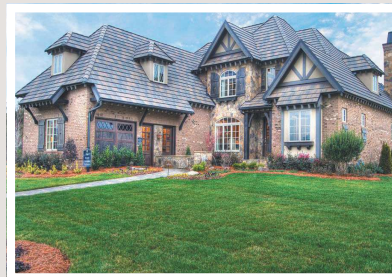
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FEATURES



Tasty, guilt-free
summer cocktails
abound in Ballantyne.

52 • The Skinny



ON THE COVER:
MetLife announced
in March that it is
bringing over 1,300
jobs to Ballantyne
Corporate Park.

Happy Dance!

Ballantyne welcomes
MetLife to Charlotte.

38



Unforgettable Fun

Make summer memories with
themed vacation activities.

66





N:

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DEPARTMENTS



WIRE 13
Catch up on the latest news in the 'hood.

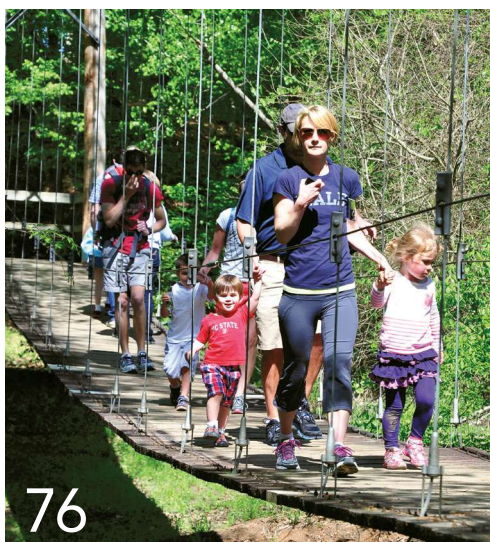
FACES 31
To discern the diversity that is Ballantyne, look no further than this trio of personalities.

EXPERT DIRECT 36
Great grilling has never been easier with this advice from The Meat House.

DATE NIGHT 46
Sun City couple supplies a live laugh track for their special night out.

FAB FARE 62
Toast Café gives traditional breakfast cuisine a contemporary flair.

STYLE POINTS 72
Roll out your sundae best to host an ice-cream party that's sweet!



WHO KNEW? 76
Only 15 minutes from Ballantyne, there's a natural treasure far larger than Central Park.

SOCIAL SEEN 78
Birdies, bagpipes and the Easter Bunny entertained guests at recent charity events.

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Two local optometrists provide captivating looks at their native Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

TEE IT UP 94
Perfect your pitch shot with this visualization tip from a pro.

INSIDE TRACK 96
Improvements to the Elm Lane intersection crank up this fall.



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magazine

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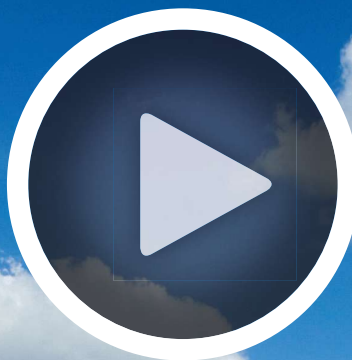
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SUMMER 2013 Vol. 13 No. 2



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Salute to Summer

From MetLife to Vacation Fun, It's All Good



BALLANTYNE HAS BEEN IN THE HEADLINES LATELY for all the right reasons. The announcement by MetLife to establish its retail headquarters at Ballantyne Corporate Park is a huge win for Charlotte and speaks to the vibrancy of this community in particular. MetLife has had a small presence in BCP for several years, and we're thrilled the company is making it a much bigger part of its corporate landscape.

In our cover article, "Happy Dance! Ballantyne Welcomes MetLife to Charlotte," we explore the MetLife story from a human perspective by connecting with Jay Kaduson, the company's national sales director. He is eagerly making plans to get involved in the community both professionally and personally.

Although the arrival of MetLife employees will evolve over a year, I can assure you that the Red Baron has already been scoping out Ballantyne.

Although the arrival of MetLife employees will evolve over a year, I can assure you that the Red Baron has already been scoping out Ballantyne. When Snoopy One, MetLife's blimp, recently flew in, I thought it would be fun to photograph it from a helicopter. Little did I realize that with both aircraft in motion, my idea would turn into an intrepid adventure, not to mention the toughest shoot I've ever attempted. You can see the results on page 38.

With the pleasures of leisure time on the horizon, our issue focuses on ideas for summertime activities. In "Unforgettable Fun," we share creative themes that families in Ballantyne have chosen for vacations that can make lasting memories of time together, whether at home or away.

The story concept was the brainchild of a reader focus group that also requested more DIY features, so the article gives you tips on how you can create the themes to fit your situation. For those seeking to get away from it all, "Going Home" recommends the spectacular Canadian seascapes of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, where you can explore fjords, go iceberg viewing and get a taste of Ireland and Scotland without crossing the ocean.

Summer mornings inspire us to rise earlier, so Fab Fare visits Toast Café for imaginative breakfast dishes like French toast stuffed with peanut butter and bananas. If sultry evenings are your preference, our story on "skinny cocktails" reveals the latest guilt-free alcoholic concoctions at neighborhood bars, including the "Ooh La La" and "Ballantyne Girl." Style Points also gets into the hot weather food mood by showing how you can set up your own sundae bar to splurge on America's coolest sweet treat.

Since summer wouldn't be complete without your favorite tunes, we're launching our first reader promotion in conjunction with the FM radio station 96.9 The Kat. The winner will receive two tickets to a VIP experience at the station's Kat Jam at The Fillmore on July 24, including backstage face time with the big-name performer. Check out the details on page 85.

No matter what your summer fancy, I hope this issue inspires you to let it take flight, giving you and your loved ones remembrances you will cherish for a lifetime. In the end, that's what time off is all about.

JJ Bissell
Publisher, Ballantyne Magazine

Correction - At Ballantyne Magazine, we are committed to accuracy. In our Spring 2013 issue, the correct location for Sherwin Williams should have been Hunter's Crossing, and for Cenegenics, SouthPark. Also, in "Global Glee," the girl pictured on page 38 is Zahra Afzal, not Laila Asmari.

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What's happening in and **around Ballantyne**



Y Sponsors Summer Races

The 2nd annual C2 Survival Race is Saturday, June 22 at 8 a.m. in Cane Creek Park, Waxhaw. Participants test their limits in a three-plus-mile, extreme-terrain race with obstacles and challenges. The event benefits the YMCA Community Support Campaign.

The 4th annual Tri! Ballantyne is Saturday, July 13 at 7 a.m. The event consists of a 300-yard pool swim, 12.7-mile bike ride and a 5K run through the Ballantyne community. The Y also stages the 4th annual Kids Tri! Ballantyne at 4 p.m. that day for 6- to 14-year-olds. Registration for both events is online at www.ymcacharlotte.org.

NEWS CUES

Lance Celebrates 100 Years

The Lance brand is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2013 with new product launches and improvements.

The brand was founded with \$60 by Philip L. Lance, a Charlotte food broker, who sold 100 pounds of unwanted peanuts on the street for a nickel per bag, eventually expanding his business to create the first peanut butter sandwich cracker. Today Snyder's-Lance Inc., headquartered in Ballantyne Corporate Park, manufactures and markets snack foods throughout the world.

For a century, Lance has supported a variety of causes and organizations. In recognition of its 100-year anniversary, the company is making one-time grants totaling \$1.5 million to 13 Charlotte-area nonprofit organizations. These grants benefit programs closely aligned with the focus of the company's foundation, which supports education, champions healthy living, fights hunger and assists military causes. Details: www.snyderslance.com.



Movies in the Park Returns

Next Level Church will sponsor Movies in the Park on June 21, July 19 and August 16. The family-oriented films start at dusk in the heart of Ballantyne Corporate Park just off Ballantyne Commons Parkway and John J. Delaney Drive. The church provides free bottled water, popcorn, door prizes and face painting for children. Bring your own lawn chairs and picnic. Details: www.nextlevelchurch.org/moviesinthepark.



Rockin' and Reelin' in Pineville

The Pineville Parks & Recreation Department is staging its family-friendly Rockin' and Reelin' Summer Movie & Concert Series again in Pineville Lake Park on various Fridays through September. Concerts and pre-movie activities start at 7 p.m., with movies beginning at dusk. Bring your own chair. Details: www.pineville.com.



The Village at Robinson Farm is hosting a farmers market on Wednesdays through Nov. 27. Pictured are shoppers at last year's market.

Farmers Markets Return

Farmers markets are back for another summer season of fresh produce in Ballantyne.

The Village at Robinson Farm sponsors a market every Wednesday from noon to 6 p.m. through Nov. 27, with vendors that include Cloister Honey, Duke's Bread and Daddy Girl's Dairy.

The Providence Produce Market is open Monday to Saturday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tina's Fresh Produce sells local fruit and vegetables seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. in front of Young's Plantation on Highway 521.

A new farmers market this year is at Elon Park every Thursday from 4 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

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Enjoy Summer Pops, Free Concerts

The Charlotte Symphony presents its Summer Pops outdoor concert series at 8:15 p.m. at Symphony Park in SouthPark on the last four Sundays in June — June 9, June 16, June 23 and June 30. The series concludes on Wednesday, July 3 with a patriotic program for Independence Day, featuring real cannons for the Tchaikovsky 1812 Overture and fireworks.

Single adult tickets for the series events are \$10, with free admission for those 18 and under. A Summer Pops season pass is available for \$35.

The orchestra also offers free outdoor community performances at two locations in June. On Friday, June 7, the orchestra performs at Stumptown Park in Matthews. On Thursday, June 20, it plays at Belle Johnston Park in Pineville. Both concerts start at 8:15 p.m.

Breakfast Club Plans June Meeting

The Ballantyne Breakfast Club's June meeting features a presentation by the developers of the Tanger Outlet planned for the Steele Creek exit on I-485. Once the date for the breakfast is finalized, it will be posted at www.ballantynebreakfastclub.com.

Meetings are held at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge starting at 9 a.m. The social hour begins at 8:30 a.m. with complimentary coffee and refreshments. Meetings are free and open to the public.

Harrison UMC Patriotic Musical July 7

Harrison United Methodist Church stages its annual patriotic musical at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. in the sanctuary on Sunday, July 7. The musical performed by the Harrison UMC Choir is free and open to the public. Details: www.harrisonumc.org.

Community House Hosts Lectures

The Lower Providence Community House 2013 Lecture Series features the following speakers this summer on Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m.: **June 2**, Tom Bartholomy from the Better Business Bureau on protection from scams; **July 28**, Taylor Piephoff, local naturalist and columnist for The Charlotte Observer on backyard birds; and **Aug. 11**, Catherine Rabb, senior instructor at Johnson & Wales University on wine and food pairings.

Tickets are \$10 at the door. Proceeds go for continued restoration of the facility.

Info: 704-905-8334, lowerprovidencecommunityhouse@hotmail.com or

www.historiccharlotte.org.

Enjoy Free Summer Concerts

StoneCrest at Piper Glen shopping center is once again sponsoring its free Summer Concert Series, with artists appearing every Friday and Saturday from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. on both the Plaza and Fountain stages. The concerts run through Saturday, Sept. 28. Details: www.shopstonecrest.com.



Smokies Begin Home Play June 3

The Ballantyne Smokies open their home season June 3 at 7 p.m. at Ardrey Kell High School. The Smokies won the Southern Collegiate Baseball League World Series last summer. All home games are at Ardrey Kell in June and July. For the team's schedule and more information, go to www.ballantynesmokies.com.

Tee Up Summer at The Golf Club

The Golf Club at Ballantyne is hosting the following summer events:

Cigar Dave's Live Radio Broadcast: Saturday, June 1 from noon to 2 p.m. nationally syndicated radio host Cigar Dave will broadcast outside at the Golf Pavilion at The Golf Club at Ballantyne to celebrate 15 years of broadcasting in Charlotte. The event will feature an a la carte menu and a selection of beers and cocktails.

Father's Day: Sunday, June 16 dads play free with one paid round of golf at the daily rate. Mention this offer when reserving a tee time at 704-248-4383.

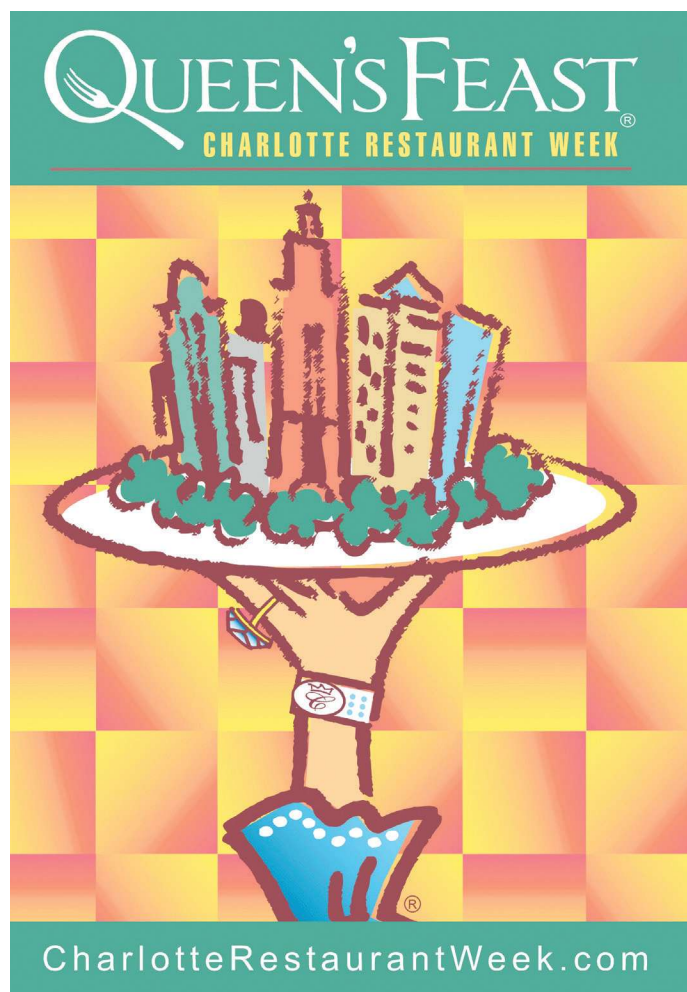
Community Service Providers Week: Teachers, police and firefighters can play 18 holes free with one paid round Aug. 5-11. Mention the offer when reserving a tee time at 704-248-4383. Prior to play, you must present a valid employment ID in the pro shop.

Family Golf Month: Children 16 and under receive a free round of golf with one paid adult round at the regular rate, Sunday through Thursday in July. Mention this offer when reserving your tee time at 704-248-4383.

Patriot Golf Day: Friday, Aug. 30 through Tuesday, Sept. 3, The Golf Club at Ballantyne will accept donations to benefit Folds of Honor, an organization that provides post-secondary education for children and spouses of military men and women killed or disabled while serving the country.

For a \$5 donation, receive a complimentary bucket of range balls; a \$35 donation, a complimentary weekday round of golf to be used Monday-Thursday (excluding holidays); \$50 donation, a complimentary weekend round of golf to be used on Friday, Saturday, Sunday or holidays. Details: 704-248-4383.





A Diner's Delight July 19-28

"The Queen's Feast: Charlotte Restaurant Week" is July 19-28. Diners enjoy three or more dinner courses for \$30 per person. Reservations are recommended.

Ballantyne-area restaurants that have participated in the past include 131 Main, Blackthorne Restaurant & Bar, Cantina 1511, City Tavern, Firebirds Wood Fired Grill, Global, Maestro's Bar & Bistro, Mickey & Mooch, New South Kitchen & Bar, Passion 8 Bistro, Terrace Café, Trattoria Antica, Trio, Vine American Kitchen and Waldhorn. Details and reservations: www.charlotterestaurantweek.com, beginning June 28.

Blakeney Concerts are Back

The free summer concert series at the Village Green is underway again at Blakeney every Friday and Saturday evening from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. The series goes through the end of September. Details: www.shopblakeney.com.

Ag + Art Tour June 8-9

York County, S.C. will hold its second annual Ag + Art Tour June 8-9. The weekend-long, self-guided tour links 20 agricultural sites and happenings in the county with an art component that includes potters, musicians, storytellers, jewelers, painters and a special quilting show entitled "Barns to Bedcovers."

The tour is free, and everything on it is handmade or homegrown.

This year's event introduces the county's newest agri-tourism destination, Inman Farms/Market at Inman Farms, built in 1893. Tour hours are 9 a.m.



Photo by Griffin Poulter Photography

YOUNGER SET

Endhaven Supports A Child's Place

Students, staff, faculty and families at Endhaven Elementary recently donated 1,256 snack bags to A Child's Place, which serves 2,300 homeless children in Charlotte. Students decorated each snack bag by hand. Erika Clarke, school counselor, reports that the project was accomplished through combined efforts of the character-education program, honor society, classwork assigned by teachers and the packing station at Jump Rope for Heart.



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J.M. Robinson Middle School Wins Quill Title

This spring Jay M. Robinson Middle School won the state championship of the third annual Quill on-demand writing competition, sponsored by the N.C. Association for Scholastic Activities.

Team members included Maura Boerio, Parker Wallace and Kate Welch. Kate was also recognized in the Argumentation category.

Each student had 90 minutes to create a written response based on the presented

prompt. The purpose of the competition is to allow future novelists, scientists and journalists to benchmark themselves against the best students across North Carolina. This was the second consecutive state title for Robinson Middle School.

BIZ BUZZ

United Faith Names Head of School

The board of directors at United Faith Christian Academy has chosen Daniel Patton as its new head of school. Patton has over 20 years of administrative experience, including serving as head of school for several Christian schools in Pennsylvania, Florida, Tennessee and North Carolina. He and his wife, Mary Ellen, served at Gaston Christian School, a school of almost 900 students, in nearby Gastonia for nine years.



Daniel Patton

Country Club Names New Tennis Director

Kevin Brandalik, USPTA, recently joined Ballantyne Country Club as director of tennis. He previously served as the director of tennis and as a high performance coach at the Five Seasons Family Sports Club. Prior to that, he was co-director of the Charlotte Tennis Academy.



Kevin Brandalik

Kennedy Lawyers Recognized

Kennedy Law Associates, specialists in family law, announced that Marsha C. Kennedy has just been named one of the "50 Most Influential Women" for 2013 by The Mecklenburg Times and that Sheila G. Passenant has received her board certification in family law. Contact them at 704-369-5600 or www.kennedyfamilylaw.com.



Marsha C. Kennedy



Sheila G. Passenant

Stevie Award Goes to Remi



Remi, a leading provider of equipment-maintenance management programs, received a bronze Stevie Award in the Contact Center Manager of the Year category during the 7th annual Stevie Awards for Sales & Customer Service.

Liz Barnes, Remi's service center manager, was nominated for Contact Center Manager of the Year. The awards recognize the achievements of professionals in sales, business development and customer service.



Chamber Business Event June 6

The Ballantyne Chapter of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce holds its annual Ballantyne Business Bash from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thursday, June 6 on Brixham Green at 15800 John J. Delaney Drive. The rain date is June 7.

The event features entertainment, food, networking and free items from corporate sponsors. Tickets are \$10 per person (www.ez-tixx.com). For sponsorships, contact cwalker@charlottechamber.com or 704-378-4106.

The chapter is also seeking applications from small businesses and entrepreneurs to compete for \$25,000 at its Power Up Luncheon on Thursday, August 1. Information: cwalker@charlottechamber.com. Chapter luncheons are at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Registration: www.charlottechamber.com. Fee is \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door subject to wait list.



Sign-Up Service Moves Locations

SignUpGenius, an online sign-up service for free volunteer and event management, has moved its office from the Village at Robinson Farm to a larger office on Ballantyne Commons Parkway. The move is designed to accommodate the company's continuing growth. More info: www.signupgenius.com.



Stan Roach

Golf School's Club Fitter Earns Honor

Dana Rader Golf School's club fitter, Stan Roach, has been named to Golf Digest's list of America's 100 Best Club Fitters. With more than 20 years of experience in the golf equipment industry, he utilizes FlightScope X2, one of the most advanced launch monitors on the market, to evaluate key factors specific to each golfer. Such factors include shaft length, lie angle, shaft flex, grip size and club head design, as well as how it affects the ball flight. Details: www.danarader.com.

Bechini, Limberakis Join Weichert

Weichert, Realtors®-Rebhan & Associates announced that Rinaldo Bechini has joined the company's sales team. A seven-year resident of the area with 25 years in real estate, Bechini has international business experience and is fluent in French, Italian and Arabic, with some knowledge of German and Spanish.

Patricia Ann Limberakis, a 26-year resident of the area with four years of real estate experience, has also joined the sales team. Reach both at 704-553-7777.



Rinaldo Bechini



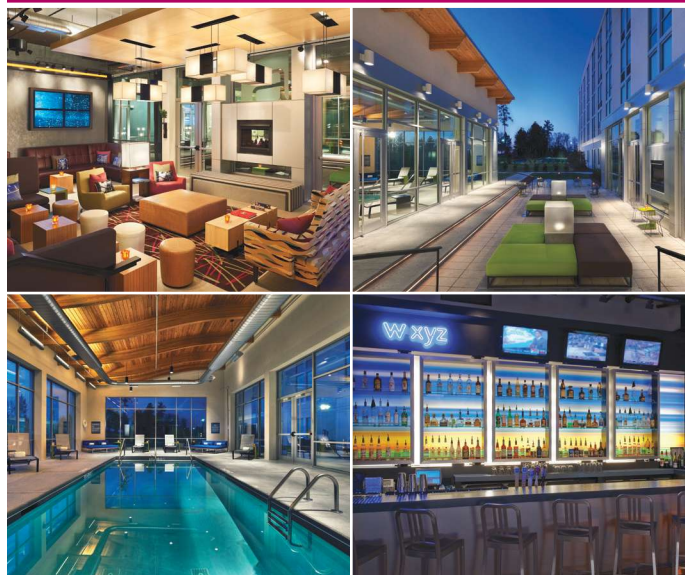
Patricia Ann Limberakis



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Jones Earns Service Certification

Lane Jones of Helen Adams Realty's Ballantyne office has earned the status of a Quality Service Certified Real Estate Professional. Reach Jones at 980-228-7598 or lane@helenadamsrealty.com.



Lane Jones

Agents Join Allen Tate Co.

Allen Tate Co. announced that Erin Gannett, Lenge Pena and Lisa Crawford have joined the Ballantyne office. Contact them at 704-543-5806.



Erin Gannett



Lenge Pena



The Bissell Property Services team received the Suburban Office Park of the Year award from the Building Owners and Managers Association International. Pictured (from left) are Paul Cattieu, Christine Sledge, Tom Pizzo, Michael Bowen, Blair Prentice, Larry Misner, Marc Stricker (president-elect, BOMA Carolinas-West Virginia Federation) and Michael Donald.

Bissell Property Services Wins 'Best in Industry'

Bissell Property Services, a division of the Bissell organization, has been named "Best in the Industry" and received the 2012 National Commercial Real Estate Customer Service Award for Excellence from CEL & Associates, a national independent real estate consulting firm.

The award recognizes Bissell Property Services as the top-ranked firm in the U.S. for providing the highest overall tenant satisfaction. Bissell Property Services' management responsibilities include Ballantyne Corporate Park, Providence Park, Airport Center and office properties in SouthPark. This is the second time Bissell has received this honor.

Also, Providence Park has been honored as the Suburban Office Park of the Year from the Building Owners and Managers Association International. Providence Park received the top award in the southern region.

Park Celebrates Earth Day

Ballantyne Corporate Park held its fourth annual Earth Day event on Thursday, April 18. The Shred-It organization securely shredded and recycled approximately 16,000 pounds of paper, while eCycle Secure recycled 5,800 pounds of electronics.

Curran Publishes Financial Book

R. Timothy Curran, a registered principal with TWC Wealth Management in Ballantyne, recently published "Keep It \$imple \$tupid: How to Protect Your Finances from Wall Street and Yourself."

The book explains in plain English the common sense principles that let investors master the variables that are important, avoid the pitfalls caused by Wall Street and themselves and help create a successful financial future. All royalties benefit research related to Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. Details: 704-540-2500, ext. 9703 or www.amazon.com.

KEEP IT \$IMPLE \$TUPID

How to Protect Your
Finances from Wall Street
and Yourself

RICHARD
TIMOTHY
CURRAN



Forbes Again Honors Hotel & Lodge

The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge has been honored again by Forbes Travel Guide with several Forbes Four-Star Awards for 2013. The Ballantyne is one of 226 four-star hotels worldwide. Gallery Restaurant is one of 143 four-star restaurants in the world. The Spa at Ballantyne is one of 136 four-star spas in the world.



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Bissell Announces Hires, Promotions

Dmitry Nerdinsky has been promoted to IT security and infrastructure manager within for Bissell Cos. Nerdinsky will primarily be responsible for network infrastructure planning and maintenance, as well as IT security efforts across all Bissell entities.

Woody Allen has been promoted to the newly created position of director of ancillary operations at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge, supporting operations of The Golf Club at Ballantyne, The Spa at Ballantyne and Dana Rader Golf School. Allen previously served as director of golf at The Golf Club at Ballantyne.

Alastair Jones has accepted the position of director of rooms at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge. Most recently, Jones served as general manager at Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne.

Amanda Saari has been appointed director of sales at Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne. Saari previously worked as sales manager and business travel sales manager at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge.

Nelly Kramer has been promoted to guest relations

manager at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge. She previously served as front desk supervisor at the same site.

Rebecca Whitmarsh has been promoted to general manager at Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne. Whitmarsh will oversee major operations of the hotel and work with the director of sales on generating revenue and on continually developing and maintaining quality standards. Whitmarsh was previously the assistant general manager at Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne.

Chad Olmstead has been promoted to assistant general manager at Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne. He will be responsible for hotel operations and guest-satisfaction initiatives. Most recently, Olmstead served as accounting supervisor at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge.

Angela Doyle has been appointed guest services manager at The Spa at Ballantyne. She will be responsible for ensuring guest satisfaction with spa services and products and managing the front-desk team and salon staff. She will also oversee the Spa Boutique and coordinate retail operations.



Dmitry Nerdinsky



Woody Allen



Alastair Jones



Amanda Saari



Nelly Kramer



Rebecca Whitmarsh



Chad Olmstead



Angela Doyle

Magazine Names New Ad Exec

Adam Stafford has joined Ballantyne Magazine as the account executive in charge of sales for the magazine, which is an operating division of the Bissell Cos.

Prior to joining the magazine, Adam worked as an account executive at Adams Outdoor Advertising. You may reach him at 704-248-2155.



Adam Stafford

OPENINGS



Casual Eatery: a 'Dogged' Pursuit

JJ's Red Hots, a casual restaurant featuring char-grilled frankfurters and handcrafted

sausages, will open its second Charlotte location this summer, in Ballantyne Commons East. The restaurant will also offer lighter fare and vegetarian options, along with a bar featuring local craft beers and select wines, an outdoor patio, live music and free valet parking. JJ's motto is "Don't Dis' the Dog!"

Organic Mattresses Now at Cedar Walk

Trusleep Organics, an organic mattress store, recently opened at 9608 Longstone Lane in Cedar Walk. The store offers organic bedding products of all kinds, including crib mattresses, pillows and pet beds. Info: 704-412-3034 or www.trusleeporganics.com.

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O'Connor Opens Allergy Practice

Maeve O'Connor and her clinical team have opened Allergy Asthma & Immunology Relief of Charlotte at 8936 Blakeney Professional Drive. O'Connor is a clinical immunologist who treats children and adults with immune disorders and immunodeficiencies and is board certified by the American Board of Allergy/Immunology and by the American Board of Internal Medicine. Info/appointments: www.aairofcharlotte.com or 704-910-1402.



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The Joint, a chiropractic care clinic, is now open in StoneCrest. Jason Argo, a licensed chiropractor, is accepting new patients. No appointments are necessary. Info: 704-544-4919 or www.thejoint.com.

ABC Store Moves in Ballantyne

The Mecklenburg County ABC Board recently moved its Ballantyne store to Capstone Commons at 16019 Lancaster Highway, not far from the intersection with Johnston Road.

Increased space provides room for a special section of North Carolina products from the following distilleries: Southern Artisan Spirits, Asheville Distilling Co., Carolina Distillery, Broadslab Distillery, Piedmont Distillers, Howling Moon Distillery, Muddy River Distillery, Top of the Hill Distillery, Covington Spirits, Blue Ridge Distilling, Brothers Vilgalys Spirits and Tobacco Road.

In response to customer requests, the board has established an email list by product category, new items and sale items. By law, 47.5 percent of profits go to Mecklenburg County, 47.5 percent to the City of Charlotte, and 5 percent to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Library. Info: www.meckabc.com.

Claims Firm Now Based at BCP

ICA Inc. has moved its corporate headquarters and an operations center to Ballantyne Corporate Park. The move enables ICA, a provider of claims-management services for personal and commercial lines of insurance, to accommodate its expanding business.

The company's 24,000-square-foot space will comprise the fourth floor of the Hayes Building. ICA has full-service operation and training facilities in Charlotte, Dallas and Sacramento, Calif. Info: 877-807-9669 or www.icaadjusters.com.



Pizza Restaurant Opens in July

Tony Sacco's Coal Oven Pizza will open this July in the Promenade on Providence. All cooking is done in a custom-built, 1,000-degree anthracite coal-burning oven, with all pizzas made with homemade sauce, fresh ingredients and filtered water used in the dough and beverages. Info: www.tonysaccos.com.



Age-Management Practice Opens

CeneGenics Carolinas has opened at SouthPark. It is the first Charlotte location for the practice that focuses on age management and personalized preventive care. Physicians Mickey Barber and Christopher Nagy lead the firm and are specialists in age management. Details: 704-945-7125 or www.ceneGenics.com.

SWEET CHARITIES

Event Honors Cancer Survivors, Victims

A special luminaria ceremony during the American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Ballantyne was held the evening of May 31 to honor cancer survivors and those who lost their life to the disease.

The annual fundraising event involves teams that camp out at the Morrison Family Y track with the goal of keeping at least one team member on the track at all times during the night. To learn more or donate: 704-553-5386 or www.relayforlife.org/ballantynenc.

Apricot Lane[®] BOUTIQUE

Boutique Debuts in StoneCrest

Apricot Lane Boutique is now open in StoneCrest at Piper Glen. The store sells celebrity-inspired branded apparel, fashion jewelry, handbags and accessories, including lines by Miss Me, Rock Revival, Lucky Brand and AG Jeans. Details: www.facebook.com/apricotlanecharlotte.



Fitness Group Serves Children

JumpBunch, a mobile provider of sports and fitness programs for children, is now offering such programs in the Ballantyne area. JumpBunch goes wherever parents and host organizations need structured sports and fitness activities for toddlers, preschool/kindergarten and school-age children.

JumpBunch provides experienced coaches as well as the equipment and music for over 70 different activities. More information: 704-608-1714 or www.jumpbunch.com.





Vivian Ware

Papa Murphy's Supports CF Foundation

Chris and Sally Ware, owners of Papa Murphy's of Charlotte in Capstone Commons on Highway 521, celebrated their grand opening last spring by hosting a pizza race at Ballantyne Elementary. The event raised \$1,182 to help their daughter, Vivian, who has cystic fibrosis, and other local children and families living with this disease.

For every lap a child completed, the Wares donated \$1 to Team Vivi. In addition, the couple gave 15 percent of sales from their Papa Murphy's store from one week in March, in Vivian's name, to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. At present, there is no cure for the disease, which afflicts 30,000 children in the country. To donate or learn more, visit www.cff.org.

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Steve Baune (far left), Meck-South Rotary Club's service chair and a board member at Beds for Kids, and Frank Henry (third from left), president of Meck-South Rotary, are shown with men from Beds for Kids.

Rotary Donations Aid Furniture Bank

Mecklenburg County-South Rotary recently provided woodworking tools to Beds for Kids, a furniture bank on South Tryon Street in Charlotte. With the new tools, Beds for Kids can repair and refurbish donated items and has begun to build tables for sale. Revenue from the tables will help sustain

the group's mission. Funds for this project came from the Rotary Club's annual wreath sale. Mecklenburg County-South Rotary meets Fridays at 7:30 a.m. at Skillet's Restaurant, 11324 North Community House Road. Info: www.mecksouthrotary.org.

Fundraiser Marks 10th Year, Seeks Volunteers

BCC Rally is already preparing for this fall's 10th anniversary of raising funds and awareness for Susan G. Komen for the Cure.

As BCC Rally has grown, so has its need for volunteers. "We already have commitments from more than a dozen businesses for our anniversary year, including presenting sponsor Snyder's-Lance Inc.," says Terri Williamson, captain of business partnerships. "We encourage local businesses to include this community event in their philanthropy plans for 2013, especially as 75 percent of the money we raise benefits Charlotte and the surrounding 13 counties."

The BCC Rally is Sept. 22-28 and includes a family event, women's and men's golf tournaments, a women's tennis event and a black-tie evening gala. Tickets will be available in August. Details: www.bccrally.org.



Tournament Benefits First Tee

Ballantyne Country Club recently held the 15th annual Rudolph-Dadey Memorial Golf Tournament, raising more than \$5,000 to benefit young golfers in the Charlotte region.

The tournament was established in memory of Ballantyne Country Club's first head golf professional, Craig Rudolph, and his first assistant, Kevin Dadey, who were in a fatal helicopter crash in May 1998.

All funds generated from the event go to First Tee of Charlotte, a youth development program that teaches life lessons through golf. Since the inaugural event, the tournament has contributed more than \$250,000 to First Tee, providing a scholarship to a qualified student every year.



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FASCINATING FOLKS

Meet this Trio of Ballantyne Personalities

Photos by Ray Sepesy

TO DISCERN THE DIVERSITY that is Ballantyne, look no further than this installment of Faces.

Our three featured individuals not only were born in three very different places — Washington, D.C., Charleston, S.C. and Skierniewice, Poland — their musings on a personal theme song run the gamut from Sade's "Smooth Operator" and ABBA's "Dancing Queen" to Garth Brooks' "Much Too Young to Feel This Damn Old."

Two even gave opposite answers to our popular fill-in-the-blank query: "I would be rather caught dead than wear a ____."

One proffered skinny jeans; the other, baggy pants. The third? Well, he'd rather be pushing up daisies than don the baby blue, a Tar Heel football jersey in particular. Having graced the gridiron at the University of Virginia just may have something to do with it.

But wait — there are a couple of commonalities. Two of the three work in the world of food, while two own their own businesses.

Okay, no more waiting. Turn the page and meet Anna Trybus, D. Jermaine Husser and Casey Crawford.



ANNA TRYBUS

Birthplace: Skierniewice, Poland,
40 minutes southwest of Warsaw.

Job: Owner/manager, On the Green Deli.

What do you like most about your job?

Interaction with people. Providing quality food and creating a happy atmosphere for my great customers.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Massage, manicure and pedicure.

Do you live in Ballantyne?

No.

What is your favorite Ballantyne-area restaurant?

Firebirds.

What is your favorite outdoor activity?

Camping, hiking and sunbathing on the beach.

Describe your dream vacation.

I would enjoy visiting a tropical island with my husband — watching the beautiful sunrise and sunset, walking miles on the beach and doing the Jacuzzi and a massage at the end of each day.

What would your theme song be for walking into a room?

"Dancing Queen" by ABBA.

What is your favorite news source?

Fox News.

I would be rather caught dead than wear ____.

Baggy pants.

What is your biggest pet peeve?

Insecure people and being lied to.

Share something that someone would never guess about you.

I know how to drive a tractor and a truck and ride a motorcycle. I also can milk a cow and make cheese out of the milk.



**D. JERMAINE HUSSER**

Birthplace: Charleston, S.C.

Job: former capital campaign officer, Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina.

What did you like most about your job?

I love to help individuals and corporations connect to their passion.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Gummy Bears.

Do you live in Ballantyne?

Close enough; I do everything in Ballantyne.

What is your favorite Ballantyne-area restaurant?

Bad Daddy's Burger Bar.

What is your favorite outdoor activity?

Golf.

Describe your dream vacation.

Golf at St. Andrews. It would be amazing to play the old course at the home of the sport.

What would your theme song be for walking into a room?

"Smooth Operator" by Sade.

What is your favorite news source?

Charlotte Business Journal.

I would be rather caught dead than wear ____.

A pair of skinny jeans. Awkward fit for me. LOL.

What charitable organization are you involved with?

Habitat for Humanity. It is amazing to see when a family gets its first home and captures a piece of the American dream.

What is your biggest pet peeve?

Poor customer service.

Share something that someone would never guess about you.

I love to read erotica books. It always made me laugh to see the expression on the flight attendants' faces when I would travel with the "Fifty Shades of Grey" series.

CASEY CRAWFORD

Birthplace: Washington, D.C.

Job: Founder and CEO, Movement Mortgage.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Lorenzo's Pizza.

Do you live in Ballantyne?

Yes.

What is your favorite Ballantyne-area restaurant?

Gallery Restaurant at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge.
Great breakfast and staff!

What is your favorite outdoor activity?

Fishing with my two little girls.

Describe your dream vacation.

Last summer we rented a place on the beach in Southern California. I got to train in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu in the morning with some of the best in the world. We hit Disneyland, SeaWorld and the beach in the afternoon. My wife, Michelle, and I would share a cocktail and watch the sunset over the ocean off our back porch in the evening. I can't imagine it getting much better than that.

What would your theme song be for walking into a room?

"Much Too Young to Feel This Damn Old" by Garth Brooks.

What is your favorite news source?

Facebook.

I would be rather caught dead than wear a

_____.

Tar Heel football jersey (played at University of Virginia).

What charitable organization are you involved with?

Movement Foundation. We support churches and ministries within cities that our organization serves to bring hope to the hopeless among us.

What is your biggest pet peeve?

Being late for church.

Share something that someone would never guess about you.

I started watching the Disney princess movies because my little girls love them, and now I've become a fan as well.





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Fired Up & Ready to Go

Great Grilling Has Never Been Easier

By Jackie Adams and Shawn Merrill

OUTDOOR GRILLING IS A SUMMER RITUAL, but many people find cooking over an open flame intimidating. These tips will dash the fear.

Charcoal vs. Gas

Most baby boomers grew up with the flavor of food cooked over charcoal briquettes. On the other hand, those who are 30-something and younger prefer the convenience of firing up a gas grill, having it ready in five minutes and being able to more readily control the cooking temperature. Charcoal briquettes take 20-30 minutes to warm up and are messy to clean up.



The Meat House

Jackie Adams (right) is marketing manager and Shawn Merrill is general manager for The Meat House, 8410 Rea Road, 704-542-4530.

Indirect vs. Direct Grilling

Use the indirect method for larger pieces of meat that require more cooking time — cuts of chicken, roasts, racks of ribs or steaks two inches thick or more.

On a gas grill, place the meat on one side of the grill with the gas off. On the other side of the grill, turn the gas on medium. With charcoal, start with a small fire of 30 briquettes on each side of the grill with a drip pan in the middle to catch fats and juices from the meat. Every hour add briquettes as needed to maintain a constant temperature. Be sure to keep the lid closed as much as possible; opening the lid too much lets out heat and increases cooking time.

Use the direct method of grilling when searing a piece of meat or cooking something that takes 20 minutes or fewer — thinner steaks, hamburgers, fish, pork chops and most vegetables. The two keys to direct grilling are: Turn your food only once, halfway through the cooking process, and keep the lid closed so heat doesn't escape.

Fish

Tuna, swordfish, mahi-mahi and salmon are awesome for grilling, and fillets such as flounder, tilapia and catfish can be grilled in a foil packet or grilling basket.

First, pat your fish dry and coat it lightly with oil. Then, get your grill as hot as you can.

When you place the fish on the grill, the high heat will sear it and lock in juices. Then turn the grill to medium. Flip the fish halfway through cooking time, which is approximately 10 minutes per inch of thickness. Remove from heat two minutes before estimated cooking time because fish continues to cook. It is done when it flakes and appears opaque.

Beef, Chicken, Pork


Four keys to perfectly grilled meats: **1.** Choose well-marbled beef and chicken with skin. With pork, coat it lightly with oil. **2.** All cuts should be at least one-inch thick. **3.** Turn only once with spatula or tongs; never use a fork because juices escape. **4.** Remove from heat when almost done — middle is soft and wobbly to the touch for rare and springy for medium.

Vegetables

The best grilling choices are corn, eggplant, peppers, asparagus, mushrooms and squash. For corn, remove the silk but leave the husk and soak the ears in water for an hour. The key to other vegetables is cleaning and cutting them into equal portions to cook evenly. Marinate them 15 minutes before grilling.

Place veggies over a medium-hot fire either directly on the grill, on skewers or in a grilling basket or aluminum foil pouch. Turn the vegetables frequently, brush more marinade on as needed and remove from heat when a fork will easily pierce them.

Safety Tips

1. Place grill in a well-ventilated area away from the house.
2. Use a wire grill brush after each use to clean grates, and empty drip pans.
3. Never leave an active grill unattended.
4. Use long-handled utensils.
5. Keep raw meat and raw poultry separate.
6. Wash hands after handling raw meat.
7. Put cooked food on a fresh, clean plate.
8. Keep a fire extinguisher or baking soda handy.
9. Charcoal: Be sure coals are completely cooled before dumping (it's best to allow 24 hours).
10. Gas: After food is done, turn heat to high and close lid to allow drippings to burn off. Then turn off burners and clean grates with brush.
11. Do not move a hot grill. 



Snoopy One, one of MetLife's iconic blimps, visited Ballantyne during the Wells Fargo Championship golf tournament played nearby this spring.



Happy Dance!

IN EARLY MARCH WHEN METLIFE ANNOUNCED THAT BALLANTYNE CORPORATE PARK would become the headquarters for the global insurer's U.S. retail business, the news sped through 28277 and beyond.

The headquarters is expected to employ more than 1,300 people, making it one of North Carolina's largest jobs announcements in recent years. Some positions will be filled by workers relocating from California and the Northeast. Others will be

filled locally, and MetLife already has begun a large-scale recruitment effort to attract local talent.

The economic impact is palpable. When a corporation stakes out a major presence in a new area, it enhances a community in numerous ways. It boosts the local economy, as workers and their families rent or buy homes, eat at restaurants and use other services. A company also can add to civic and cultural life, providing leadership and

Ballantyne Welcomes MetLife to Charlotte

By Kerry Singe

Illustrations Supplied By MetLife
Photos courtesy of the Bissell Cos.

GRAGG



When the newcomer is as powerful as MetLife, a Fortune 50 company with 90 million customers worldwide, the benefits can be significant.

PEANUTS © 2013
Peanuts Worldwide

MetLife will occupy the Gragg Building and two floors of the Woodward Building in Ballantyne Corporate Park.

financial support.

And when the newcomer is as powerful as MetLife, a Fortune 50 company with 90 million customers worldwide, the benefits can be significant, says Charlotte Chamber of Commerce President Bob Morgan.

"MetLife is an iconic brand name," Morgan says of the

company, whose mascots include Snoopy and the Peanuts gang. "These are highly skilled people who will be making a contribution to our city, to Ballantyne. And we'll be better for that."

Collaborative Culture

For MetLife, the move fits

with the company's goal of gathering employees in one location to support a collaborative culture. The company, whose products include life insurance, annuities and employee benefit programs, also wanted to be in a growing community.

continued on page 42

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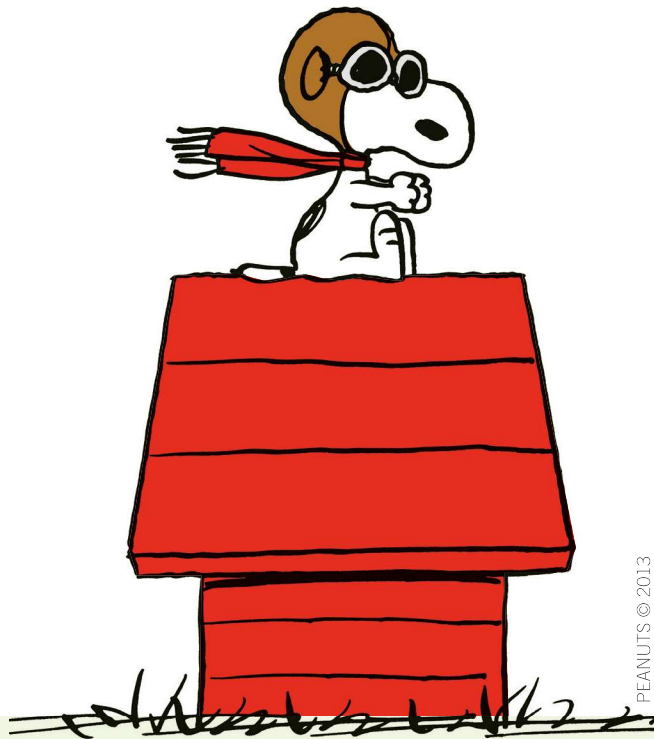
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WILL SNOOPY DROP BY MORE?

With MetLife becoming a big presence in Ballantyne, will residents see more of its blimp — the iconic blue and white dirigible emblazoned with the insurer's mascot, Snoopy?

Although the global life insurer is establishing its U.S. retail business headquarters in Ballantyne, residents likely won't be seeing the blimp more often. The blimp (or "blimps," as there are three) primarily travels to high-profile sporting events, such as the Wells Fargo Championship held annually in Charlotte.

Each blimp is supported by a 14-member crew that is on the road 365 days a year. The blimps are moored in executive airports or regional airports, according to the company.

Two of the blimps, Snoopy One and Snoopy Two, provide aerial coverage of about 70 events annually for television networks. The third blimp, Snoopy J, creates buzz and awareness for MetLife Alico, the company name in Japan..

MetLife's website lets fans track the blimps' travels. To learn more, go to www.metlife.com and click on the About MetLife tab.

■ continued from page 40

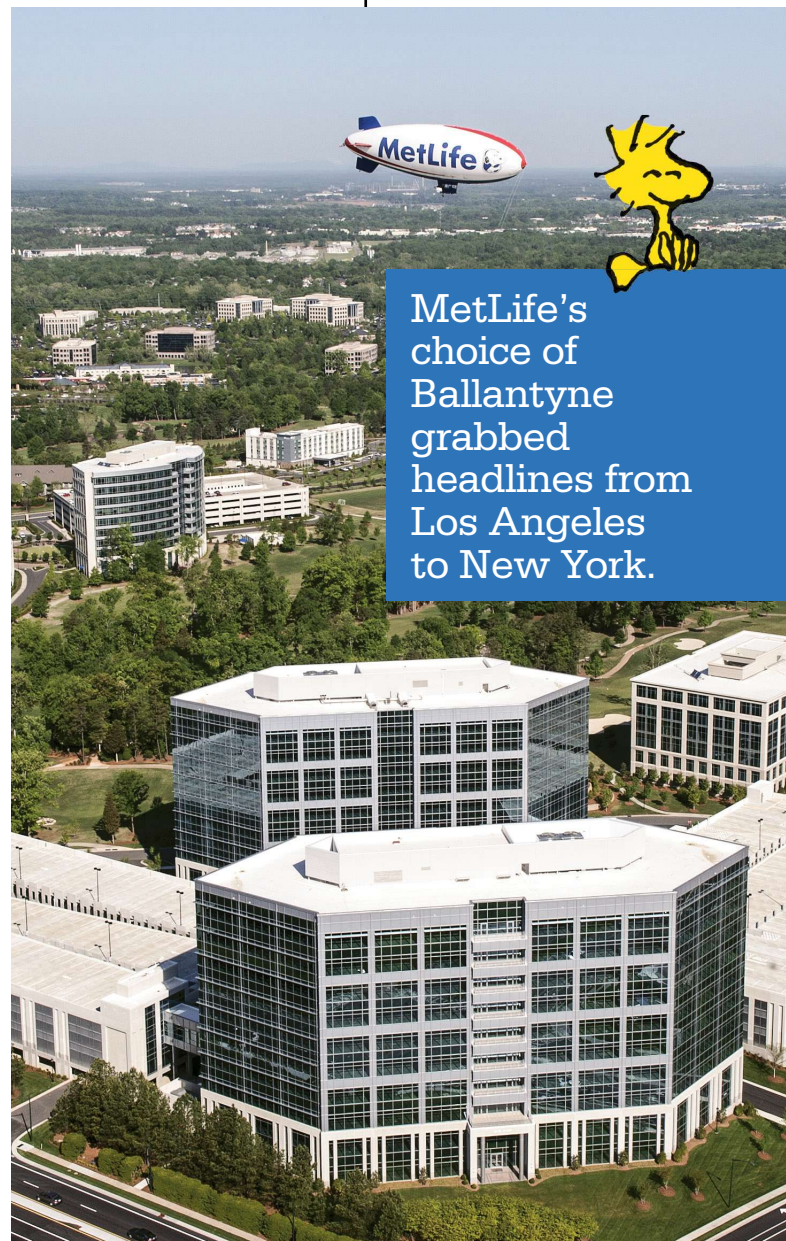
MetLife will occupy the Gragg Building and two floors of the Woodward Building at the corner of Ballantyne Commons Parkway and North Community House Road.

MetLife chose Ballantyne in part because of the quality of the buildings, proximity to the airport and abundance of nearby homes and services. When visiting earlier this year, MetLife's

Jay Kaduson remembers being wowed by how new and technologically advanced everything was, from the 535-acre corporate campus to the roads and schools.

As MetLife's national sales director, Kaduson has managed employees working at many locations across the

As Snoopy One moves over Ballantyne, it nears MetLife's new home in the Gragg and Woodward buildings, the two tallest structures in the foreground.



country. The Ballantyne headquarters, he says, will let him implement new cross-selling strategies that weren't feasible when his teams were scattered.

He's also looking forward to the sense of togetherness the new office can create. "Each physical location develops its own office culture nuances, and bringing us together is going to foster one, highly collaborative culture," he says.

On a personal level, Kaduson is also pleased. Having recently bought a house in the greater Ballantyne area, he's excited about having a shorter commute than he did up north. And he plans to coach one of his children's softball teams.

"The area is beautiful," he says. Add in the area's signature golf courses, and the avid golfer says Ballantyne is "pretty spectacular."

Community Involvement

As MetLife moves into its offices this year, Ballantyne residents can expect to see employees out in the community, the company says.

MetLife has encouraged workers to be involved where they live and work since the company's founding in the 1860s. Training manuals at the time called for MetLife agents to call on policyholders' homes at the same time each week to ensure familiarity and to listen to customers'

dreams and hopes.

In the early 1900s, MetLife distributed information about preventing tuberculosis and launched a public health program providing policyholders with free nursing care.

In 1976, the company created the MetLife Foundation to continue its community involvement. The foundation has awarded more than \$570 million in grants and will become active in sponsoring and underwriting local nonprofits, a spokesperson says. MetLife says local groups have already reached out to the company.

"In the Charlotte area, we are looking forward to continuing our commitment to supporting the communities where we work and live," the spokesperson says.

Charlotte real estate agent DJ Stephan noticed something special about the company's culture when she gave executives a tour in April.

As president of Allen Tate Relocation, Stephan has assisted with dozens of the area's largest corporate moves. While it's common for executives to ask questions about Charlotte, she says, MetLife leaders took their search a step further. "They were focused and had done their homework and had great questions," she says. "They really seemed to want to take great care of their employees. They had a passion for helping them."

Joan Thomas, vice president of relocation

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“MetLife is a marquee company. It adds another high-quality tenant to the roster of firms located in Ballantyne.”

— Mark Vitner,
Wells Fargo
Senior Economist

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Peanuts Worldwide

and corporate services with Wilkinson and Associates, traveled to New Jersey to speak with MetLife employees about life in Ballantyne. She says she was struck by how positive workers were about the move.

“Being relocated can be a stressful thing,” she says. “I remember thinking what quality people, how caring they were and nice. They’ll add so much to the community.”

Go-To Corporate Locale

As MetLife prepares to

open its headquarters, Ballantyne is already reaping benefits from the media exposure the announcement generated, experts say.

MetLife’s choice of Ballantyne grabbed headlines from Los Angeles to New York, solidifying the area as a go-to place for the country’s top companies, says Mark Vitner, senior economist with Wells Fargo. This, in turn, he says, will attract more firms.

“MetLife is a marquee company,” Vitner says. “It adds another high-quality tenant to the roster of firms located in


Ballantyne. And top-notch firms want to locate near other top-notch firms.”

Across the street from MetLife’s new headquarters, developer Doug Baumgartner is excited, knowing firsthand how a company can enhance the community.

He built the Ballantyne Quad shopping center near the Ballantyne Corporate Park six years ago, when the park was slightly less than half the size it is now. As the park grew, so did business at the shopping center. Thanks to the increased tenants, the area adopted a neighborhood feel, he says.

The Gragg Building (far right) is located on The Golf Club at Ballantyne.

Two years ago, Baumgartner developed the Ballantyne Corners shopping center across from the Gragg and Woodward buildings. He’s looking forward to seeing a surge in business when MetLife opens its office.

“Companies send their folks out to eat at lunch, or they cater in. Convenience is a huge factor,” he says. “Everybody stands to gain. It’s a win-win for the whole Ballantyne community for sure.” 



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Above: Since meeting at a potluck dinner, Jan Delbridge and Tom Cloos have been dating for over five years.

JAN DELBRIDGE AND TOM CLOOS are so comfortable together that they frequently finish each other's sentences. Having dated more than five years, they hold the title for longest dating relationship among their 2,500 or so neighbors in Sun City Carolina Lakes, just south of Ballantyne.

And if there were a yearbook predicting the couple "Most Likely to Laugh and Have Fun on Every Date," they would likely capture that prize, too.

Delbridge, 68, and Cloos, 66, have been dating since meeting at a singles potluck dinner organized by the Sun City Singles Club.

Bowling, Beer &

Belly Laughs



Sun City Seniors
Enjoy Night
On the Town

By Michael J. Solender Photos by Shane Baskin



Jan and Tom prepare to knock down the pins at Sports Connection.

"There were 27 women and three men," Cloos says with a smile. "The odds were definitely in my favor."

The potluck was held at Delbridge's home, situated about a half mile from Cloos' house. It wasn't long before Delbridge was orchestrating her morning dog walking to coincide with the precise moment that Cloos would pass her house on his morning constitutional.



They are both active and eager to keep pace with the myriad of activities offered in the nearly self-contained community at Carolina Lakes.



Above: Tom relished this roll, but his game was another story.

Left: Jan and Tom cut up so much that it took them an hour to play a single game.

Waiting to be Asked

"For six months I waited for him to ask me out to dinner," says Delbridge, giving Cloos a playful nudge in the ribs.

"And I waited for six months for her to have me over for dinner," Cloos remarks. "I guess my stubbornness won out as Jan finally had me over and we have been dating ever since."

The two "not-from here's" — she is most recently from Texas; his last pre-Charlotte stop was New Hampshire — relocated to be closer to children,

grandchildren and for the weather.

"I wanted cooler weather coming from Texas, and Tom was after warmer weather coming from New Hampshire, so we both got what we were after in a happy medium," Delbridge says.

They are both active and eager to keep pace with the myriad of activities offered in the nearly self-contained community at Carolina Lakes. She plays tennis, anchoring a mixed doubles team for both a spring and fall league, and he coaches softball and is former president of both the Sun City Softball League and the singles group.

"It is definitely a friendly crowd — there is always something going on and everyone is quite social," Cloos says.

'Who' not 'What'

When asked about her idea of an ideal date, Delbridge doesn't hesitate in responding that it is more about "who" than "what."

Right: Though the couple rolled only a collective 225, it didn't diminish their enthusiasm.



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After their bowlfest, Jan and Tom relaxed over salmon (Jan) and meatloaf (Tom) at PJ O'Reilly's Irish Pub.

"As long as you enjoy the company of the person you are with, that is the main ingredient of a successful date in my opinion," Delbridge says. "I like to talk and laugh and just feel comfortable being with someone I like."

"Ditto!" Cloos chimes in. "Common interests, a good sense of humor and the ability to laugh and enjoy yourself are the recipe for a great time together."

After Cloos scoffed at the suggestion of antiquing for this Date Night feature, rolling a few lines at Sports Connection seemed more up his alley, so to speak. The convivial couple ventured to the Ballantyne site near the corner of Ardrey Kell and Johnston roads.

Unfortunately for Cloos, though, more than a few of his balls went awry as the usually reliable bowler with a 150 average managed to turn in a barely respectable 115 on this couples-only game day. Delbridge, on the other hand, took her special orange (she swears it is "pink") custom ball and nearly clipped her partner with a 110.

"Too many distractions," protests Cloos, who is looking for redemption. "I'm not used to being photographed when I bowl."

It was all Delbridge could do to keep from breaking out laughing. "It's OK," she says with a wink. "And it's not like anyone will ever know."

Live Laugh Track

That the pair only managed to get in one game in an hour was due, they say, to the stop-and-go nature of being photographed for this feature. This writer has it on good authority that the laughs, continual joking and playfulness of the two principals were the main "distractions," however.


Neighboring lanes also slowed to a standstill to watch the

“celebrity” couple in action and try and figure out just exactly who they were to merit so much attention.

Rather than stay and sign autographs, the stars-for-the-evening had worked up enough of a hunger to check out PJ O'Reilly's Irish Pub next door for a few beers and some satisfying pub grub to cap their evening out.

Cloos made a beeline for the table situated in front of the Red Sox-Yankees game, ordered up drinks for himself and Delbridge and licked his wounds a bit. “I was looking for some help from the Sox, but that didn't go my way either,” laments Cloos.

Yet, salmon for Delbridge and meatloaf for Cloos were ample compensation for a tough evening at the lanes and the two settled into what they liked most about the evening's date — lots of chuckles and joking around.

For this fun couple, laughter is indeed the best medicine. 



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• Skinny



TASTY, GUILT-FREE SUMMER COCKTAILS ABOUND IN BALLANTYNE

By Michael J. Solender

SUMMER IN CHARLOTTE MEANS cruise wear, short shorts, flashy bikinis and swimsuits for weekend trips to the beach or just catching a few rays in the backyard. We all want to look our best and not worry about gaining weight just because we enjoy a warm-weather libation or two.

Savvy cocktail sippers have come to learn that there is no need to sacrifice the satisfaction of a well-mixed cocktail in deference to the diet — just make sure the cocktail you're enjoying is a "skinny."

While margaritas and Long Island Iced Teas maybe on your summer menu, it's an unfortunate fact that these drinks may contain as many as 500 calories or more. It's no wonder "skinny" cocktails, reduced-calorie alcoholic drinks under 200 calories (in some cases as low as 100), are finding their way onto menus throughout Ballantyne and are usually priced

similar to traditional cocktails.

"The trend towards healthier drinks has evolved over the years," says Catherine Rabb, senior instructor for Charlotte's Johnson & Wales University and a highly regarded wine and spirits expert. "From the light-beer and wine-cooler popularity in the '90s, to the spritzers and ultra-light beers that followed, people have always looked for less calories without giving up on the flavor profile of their favorite beverage. It is no different with cocktails; this is a shift that will undoubtedly continue."

Several Ballantyne-area restaurants and lounges are stepping up their game to feature flavorful summertime concoctions that pair wonderfully with lighter appetizers, salads, pizzas and grilled fare or simply stand up nicely on their own after work or out on the town.

Here are a few of our favorites at Ballantyne Magazine.



"The trend towards healthier drinks has evolved over the years."

— Johnson & Wales Senior Instructor Catherine Rabb



BAD DADDY'S SKINNY VOLITO



Photos by Ray Sepesy

Bad Daddy's Burger Bar

Just in time for summer, Bad Daddy's rolled out its new drink menu featuring two skinny cocktails that have debuted to amazing feedback.

The Skinny Volito is a fresh and fizzy citrus cooler that has Voli Lyte Vodka, muddled limes, mint, light agave nectar and soda. The Skinny

X-Rita, the restaurant's take on a margarita, features X-Rated Fusion Liqueur, el Jimador Tequila, light agave nectar and a splash of soda.

Amazingly, each drink weighs in at fewer than 100 calories. With drink specials every day of the week, Bad Daddy's is casual, friendly and a place that makes it a neighborhood favorite.

Firebirds Wood Fired Grill

The Firebirds in StoneCrest debuted a wood-fired grill concept that has now grown to 23 restaurants across the country. According to Vice President Gerald Pulsinelli, Firebirds is all about hospitality.

"For us that starts at our bar, where our famous pineapple (the symbol of hospitality), double-diamond martini display is a cornerstone," he says. "Everything in our bar that can be homemade, is — right down to the fresh lemon and lime juice and freshly made sour mix."

Two skinny cocktails reside on the menu, and each is fewer than 180 calories. The signature Skinny Red Head uses Dan Aykroyd's Crystal Head Vodka, fresh lime juice, sugar-free pomegranate and peach juice and is topped with sugar-free Red Bull.

The Skinny Mini takes Sauza Blue Tequila, Cointreau, fresh lemon and lime juice and sugar-free simple syrup to create a tasty version of the classic margarita.

Vine American Kitchen

A relative newcomer on the Ballantyne restaurant scene, Vine is an open and inviting establishment with a comfortable bar and great patio. The bar staff can "skinny up" just about any of the Vine's drinks by swapping out simple syrup or substituting low-calorie mixers.

Two of the most popular skinny selections, according to manager Mark Darvill,

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FIREBIRDS WOOD FIRED GRILL SKINNY REDHEAD



Photos by Ray Sepesy

are the Ooh La La (Absolut Vanilla Vodka, raspberry liqueur and fresh pineapple juice) and the Ballantyne Girl (Champagne, peach schnapps and raspberry liqueur).

“Whether it was the ‘Sex and the City’ craze that contributed to the healthier approach to eating and drinking out, or just a greater consciousness

in general, I’m not sure,” Darvill says. “We offer healthful options without sacrificing quality or taste.”

Mellow Mushroom

When Ballantyne’s Mellow Mushroom opened

continued on page 58

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VINE AMERICAN KITCHEN BALLANTYNE GIRL

Photos by Ray Saper



■ continued from page 56

in 2011, wait times to get into the restaurant were at times over two hours. Mellow has developed a cult following from its Atlanta base thanks to its signature pizza pies (Kosmic Karma, anyone?), huge beer list and great cocktails.

The restaurant's signature skinny is

named after one of its ubiquitous mascots, The Dude. The Skinny Dude Margarita is enormously popular with both men and women, according to Matt White, bar manager.

The Skinny Dude recipe contains Patron Silver Tequila, agave nectar, fresh orange and lime juice and a splash of Sprite Zero.



Photos by Ray Sepesy

MELLOW MUSHROOM THE DUDE

That's a lot of goodness at under 200 calories.

White says the drink pairs nicely with the Funky Q barbecue chicken pizza, providing just the right foil for the slightly spicy, slightly sweet pie.

Cantina 1511

Rounding out our list is StoneCrest stalwart Cantina 1511. Not content with just one skinny offering, this upscale but casual eatery offers several.

Two of our favorites are the El Delgado, Cantina's signature skinny margarita with Don Eduardo Blanco Tequila, Cointreau, lime and orange juice; and the Papa Grande with Patron Citronge for a great citrusy kick. Each is under 200 calories.

The cocktails pair well with spicy and milder items so you can't really go wrong. The vibe at Cantina 1511 is festive, the food flavorful and scene fun.

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BALLANTYNE | **feature**

Local humor columnist Tracy Curtis recently summed up her take on skinny cocktails this way: "If it says Skinny, I'm all for it," she says. "After all, whoever sat down and ordered a 'Chubby' Cocktail?"

We couldn't agree more. 



CANTINA 1511
EL DELGADO

CHECK 'EM OUT

Here are a few of Ballantyne Magazine's favorite spots for skinny cocktails.

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French toast stuffed with bananas and peanut butter is a popular dish at Toast.

Breakfast Breakaway

Toast Café Gives Traditional Menu a Modern Twist

By Amy Rogers Photos by Ray Sepesy

YOU'D HAVE TO GET UP AWFULLY EARLY IN THE MORNING to find a better breakfast spot than Toast Café.

It puts a modern twist on traditional fare, and like the Charlotte region, continues to evolve and grow.

The eatery may be new to Ballantyne, but it's well established in the area. Brian Burchill, who had worked for famed New York food entrepreneur Eli Zabar, was visiting Charlotte when he saw potential in this rapidly developing market. Burchill and lifelong friend Rob Maynard decided to become partners in the new venture.

But how did they make the leap from being restaurant workers to restaurant owners? Simple: "We just came to the table and opened our pockets," Burchill says with a chuckle.

That was about eight years ago, when Toast opened in Huntersville. It later moved to Davidson's Main Street, and Toast in Dilworth launched in fall 2011.

"We get lots of interest from customers who love what we do and can see it somewhere else."

— Toast Café Partner Brian Burchill

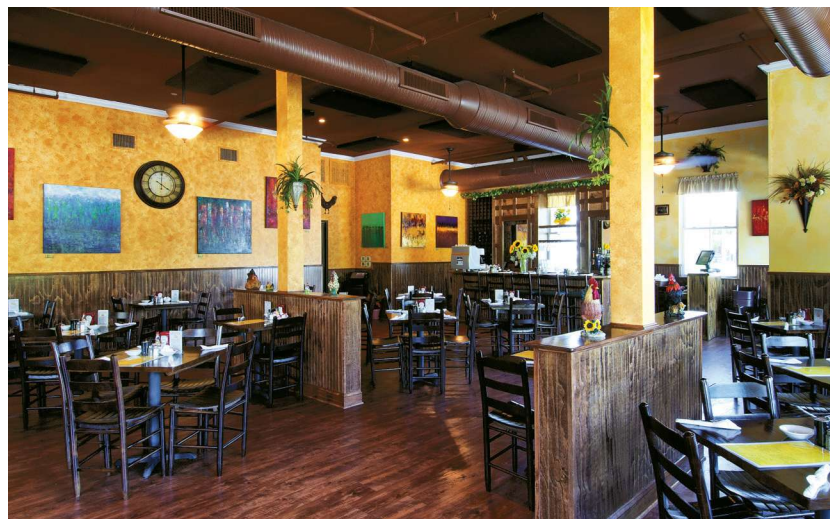
Ballantyne: Third Locale

Toast in Ballantyne, which opened last fall, serves breakfast, brunch and lunch. Customer favorites are French toast stuffed with peanut butter and bananas and blueberry flapjacks that aren't merely speckled with bits of berries — they're blue, through and through, thanks to a house-made fruit puree that gives the dish its distinctive color.

The Left Coast BLT arrives embellished with brie, avocado and pesto mayo. Fresh wraps, salads, and sandwich melts are popular, but it's hard to top the taste of a hand-pattied burger served with an indulgent European-style, Gruyère mac-and-cheese.

Frannie's Chocolate Delight, named for Burchill's mom, is a confection crafted from all things cocoa: pudding, cake, chips and brownies, then flavored with espresso. And gluten-free versions of many items are available.

Warmer weather brings lighter fare. A heavenly honeydew gazpacho with a strawberry and sour cream swirl and fresh basil is only one imaginative dish from executive chef Julio Heras. He, too, prefers the pace of life in Charlotte,



Above: Known for its friendly service and atmosphere, Toast serves breakfast, brunch and lunch.

Left: Frannie's Chocolate Delight is made with all things cocoa — pudding, cake, chips and brownies — and then flavored with espresso.

and says, "In New York, everything is rushed. The quality of life is much better here."

Cohesive Ambiance

While each Toast location has its own decorative flavor, they all share a cohesive ambiance, thanks to brother Patrick Burchill. A manager for the group, he faux-painted the textured walls in all three restaurants. Works from local artists are on display and available for purchase. Patio dining is popular in every location, and that's another reason the Burchill family chose Charlotte. "In North Carolina, the weather is beautiful. You can sit outside nine months a years," says Brian.

Just this spring, the restaurant's mascot, Mr. Toast, completed a 14-mile walk from Dilworth to Ballantyne to raise funds for Thompson Child & Family Focus. Dubbed the "Toast to Toast" walk, he braved windy conditions and a lot of stares along the way. (Mr. Toast wouldn't reveal his secret identity, but he did say the event generated lots of "bread" for the organization.)

Patrons are vocal about their loyalty. "We get lots of interest from customers who love what we do and can see it somewhere else," Brian reports. In response, Toast's owners have begun a program to franchise their concept selectively.

With its welcoming atmosphere, friendly service and satisfying offerings, it's easy to envision more good things to come as diners and future restaurateurs alike gather — to enjoy and make the most of Toast. 🍞

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www.toastcafeonline.com
[/ballantyne/](http://ballantyne/)



Left: On its textured, faux-painted walls, Toast showcases work of local artists.

Below: The restaurant's Left Coast BLT comes with brie, avocado and pesto mayo.





Whether they walk, ride or take the blimp to work, this is big.
Bissell welcomes MetLife to Ballantyne Corporate Park.



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Unforgettable FUN

MAKE MEMORIES WITH THEMED VACATIONS, ACTIVITIES

By Nan Bauroth
Photos by Shane Baskin

EVERY SUMMER FOR ONE WEEK Rick and Jeanne Puckett's home in Ballantyne turns into "Camp Nana and Chief," or "CNAC," a themed learning adventure for their eight grandchildren. "It seems that every grandchild accomplishes something or learns something at camp, and we get to be part of their memory of that moment," says Jeanne.

Without leaving Charlotte, the grandchildren have been to Africa, China, Italy and Mexico and learned about Native Americans. Through crafts and games they experience culture, customs and foods and study lives of famous people from the country.

When they focused on Mexico, each grandchild

Ballantyne resident Amy Trainor (far right) loves devising scavenger hunts using smartphones and tablets. Here, her partners in fun are (from left) Lincoln Baxter, Tiffany Leggett and Sofia Preslar.



Photo courtesy of Jeanne Puckett

decorated a sombrero and learned to sing "Happy Birthday" in Spanish. Even the neighbors get involved. "The year we did a safari to Africa, we had 16 neighbors who participated by putting stuffed animals on their mailboxes and in yards," says

Above: Jeanne Puckett enjoys having her grandchildren for a week each summer. She and her husband, Rick, host "Camp Nana and Chief."

Left: One year, the Pucketts' safari theme involved not only their family but their neighbors as well.

Jeanne. "We walked a mile and half looking for them."

This summer the entire family is heading to California to help the grandparents celebrate their 40th anniversary. "Our theme is the Nifty Fifty. We will have fun learning about California and the states in which the grandchildren live."

JEANNE PUCKETT'S ADVICE FOR STAGING A THEME CAMP

Let a child 10 or older choose the theme.

Make a list of suggested items for related games, crafts and activities.

Don't try to do it all yourself. Ask friends and neighbors for supplies and help with craft

projects during the camp.

Ensure children are active participants by having them help prepare meals, such as designing their own pizzas.

Camp out one night in the backyard to make it a special adventure.

Family Food Fests

Cooking is another popular theme that families use to bond on summer vacations. Ballantyne resident Marty Fuzia enjoys their family's dining themes at the beach.

Every summer for the past eight years his parents have rented a house at Seabrook Island and invited the whole family for a week. "We have a tradition of each member of the family and spouse choosing one night of that week to cook a themed dinner for everyone," he says. "It could be Caribbean, Italian, Hawaiian or a Low Country boil."

The first set of grandchildren now participates, helping to make potatoes or dessert. Fuzia says that his brother, who is a CPA and Excel freak, emails a spreadsheet two months in advance so everyone can sign up. "He wants to be sure we don't end up with fish or chicken two nights in a row," Fuzia laughs.



Marty Fuzia enjoys his family's tradition of taking turns cooking themed dinners at the beach.

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HOW TO HOLD AN 'IRON CHEF' COMPETITION

To spice up your summer food adventure, hold your own version of The Food Network's "Iron Chef" competition. Depending on your physical setup, basic steps include:

Divide the family into teams by age or unit.

Choose a secret ingredient that calls for imagination. For children, select items like marshmallows or popcorn. For adults, select challenging ingredients such as coconuts, anchovies, prunes, bacon or mushrooms.

If using one kitchen, set up individual team prep stations at the island, counter and kitchen and dining tables. Load

another table with ingredients that teams can use to create their dish, including chicken, beef, fish, greens, vegetables, bread, spices, etc. Or, if families are staying close by, send each team back to their own kitchen.

Give each team one hour to make a dish using their secret ingredient.

Conduct a taste testing of all the dishes before participants cast anonymous votes to choose a winner based on inventive use of the secret ingredient, taste and presentation. Give an award such as an apron or wooden spoon with "Iron Chef Winner 2013."

Entertainment Tonight

The arrival of apps has opened a whole new territory of high-tech themes for families with children who are into pictures, music and movies. Here are four ideas that cost very little:



PHOTO BOOTH NIGHT

Jennifer Mosblech, co-owner of FunkyTown Parties in The Fountains at Ardrey Kell, recently staged a photo party for her children and neighbors using her Apple Mac's Photo Booth software and a webcam. "I gathered props like crazy sunglasses, boas and hats, and everyone spent hours in the booth changing positions and props and having fun," she says.



MUSIC VIDEO TAKEOFFS

Another successful family theme Mosblech recently tried was a music video night using VideoStar software. "You download this app to your iPhone or iPad, and create your own music videos with real-time special effects," she explains. The app lets users select any song from their iTunes library and lip sync to it,



Crazy hats and sunglasses were among the props guests could use during Jennifer Mosblech's high-tech photo party.

creating a professional looking music video. "You can spend as little as 20 minutes on it or as long as you like."



FAMILY FILM FESTIVAL

With the advent of tablets, smartphones and digital cameras, everyone today can play Stephen Spielberg.

Each member of the family, or family unit with small children, creates a short film prior to congregating. On Family Film Festival night, the gang gathers inside a home theater with drinks and popcorn to laugh, cheer and award Oscars.



SMARTPHONE SCAVENGER HUNTS

Scavenger hunts are making a big comeback in the digital age. Ballantyne resident Amy Trainor has developed a reputation among friends for her creative hunts to celebrate special occasions. "Recently, I created an "Avengers"-themed scavenger hunt for a friend's birthday, complete with videos and costumes," she says. "We had a whole evening of fun, and it cost no more than \$25 to put together."

At the start of the evening, the friend received a video message on her smartphone from Iron Man (another friend in costume and mask) inviting her to dinner. The rest of the clues and evening activities were announced via video with a cast of characters.


"In one scene we had Iron Man, who is very high-tech, hold his iPad up

to the camera and share a message from someone with the birthday girl," says Trainor. "Videos were played on the phone and then later on TV as the party moved to an apartment." Trainor and her friends prerecorded everything using iMovies software on her Mac and included Robert Downey Jr. sound bites from the Web.

To obtain the sound bites, Trainor googled "Robert Downey Jr. soundboard" and found an Android cellphone app as well as downloadable clips at www.soundboard.com. "I got the idea from radio stations that play prank calls on listeners using celebrity soundboards," she says.

With her scavenger hunts, Trainor always begins by devising a clever theme. Next, she makes a list of each item collected or activity. She usually plans a hunt in about three days. For instance, she created "Sir Mannelot of Camelot" for a friend whose name is Manny. "I wrote cryptic clues on scrolls. He and his friends wore goofy costumes and had to find his sword and shield. His mission was to slay a dragon — a dragon piñata — which contained the final clue that led him to his birthday gifts."

Inventing brain-tickling clues is half the fun. Trainor recalls her mother creating a scavenger hunt for her and her brother one rainy day. One clue stumped them for hours: "This next clue is a secret. See if you can smell it out." After tearing the house upside down, the children finally discovered the clue — in the cap of Secret deodorant.

"Scavenger hunts are a great, cost-effective group activity and can be as creative as you make them," notes Trainor. "Whether you get the whole family involved or create one for your friends, they are fun for kids and 'big kids' alike." 



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Sweet!

Roll Out Your Sundae
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By Missy pinkpistachio.com





The family sofa table can be transformed into an ice-cream sundae bar.

INVITE FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS OVER for a sweet treat to celebrate the start of summer!

Transform a sofa table into an old-school ice-cream parlor, complete with chalkboard menu. Use vintage metal serving trays, dainty glass dishes, patterned serving utensils and fun toppings to keep the vibe happy.

Serving pint-sized containers of ice cream allows for a choice of flavors. Stock up on the classic flavors while providing a variety for those who are adventurous. Sorbet should be an option for guests who have milk-related allergies or are watching their caloric intake.

Regardless, keep the frozen delectables truly frozen in a galvanized bucket filled with ice. Couple the bucket with scoops for easy self-serving.

Add curb appeal with a bold banner made from circles cut from tissue paper and sewn together by machine.



An ice-filled galvanized bucket keeps the ice cream ready for scooping.

Keep cones (stored in an apothecary jar) on hand to welcome unexpected guests to join the party.

A spread of cookies adds dimensions of taste and texture while serving as another focal point.

A few simple toppings, utensils and other familiar items go a long way toward sweet success.



First, dip the rim of each chilled sundae dish in warm fudge.




Then, roll the rim in rainbow sprinkles and return the dish to the freezer.

Wow your guests with sundaes dressed in their Sunday best — rainbow sprinkles! Here's how.

Prior to the social, put glass sundae dishes in the freezer. After they are well chilled, warm fudge in a microwaveable safe bowl and fill another bowl with rainbow sprinkles.

Dip each frosted rim in fudge and then roll each rim in sprinkles to completely cover the fudge. Return the glasses to the freezer to harden the rims until ready to serve.


Chilling glasses in this way has more than a festive function. It keeps ice cream frozen longer once everyone is enjoying his or her sundae. It's a perfect touch for little ones who take their sweet time to finish. 

Spoons and topping scoops provided by Sucre Shop (www.etsy.com/shop/SucreShop).



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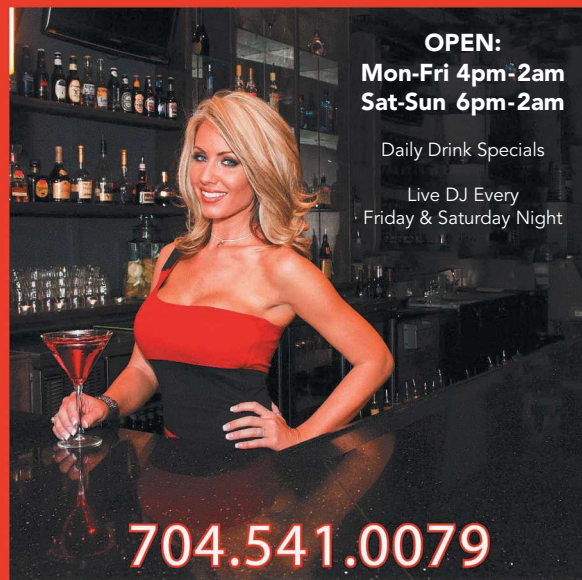
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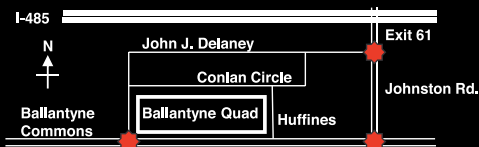
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Natural Treasure

Anne Springs Close Greenway Offers Fun in Ballantyne's Backyard

Photos courtesy of Anne Springs Close Greenway

WHEN ANNE SPRINGS CLOSE GREW UP IN FORT MILL during the 1920s, her German-born governess advocated outdoor exercise for children. The love of nature this training instilled in Close led her to preserve a portion of the land where she rode horses, hiked and fished as a girl. Today, just 15 minutes from the heart of Ballantyne, the Anne Springs Close Greenway in Fort Mill is a natural treasure undiscovered by many who live, work and play in Ballantyne.

More than twice the size of Central Park, this scenic natural preserve is open to the public every day from 7 a.m. to sunset. The greenway boasts 40 miles of hiking, biking and horseback-riding trails, a 28-acre lake for canoeing and kayaking and cultural assets that include circa 1800 log cabins, a 1946 dairy barn and a reproduction grist mill that gave Fort Mill its name.

Riders may bring their own horse, rent one or take lessons much of the year. Picnickers can spread out at tables, in meadows, along trails or under a large picnic shelter with a fireplace.

"I only set out to save a few trees, but I am delighted that people across the region are enjoying the greenway," says Close, 87, chair emeritus of the greenway. "I believe the Ballantyne community, with its close proximity, will play a huge part in our growth and success as we create new opportunities for people to get outside and enjoy nature."

More than 100 species of wildflowers flourish in the protected environment, along with birds and other wildlife. The countryside features hardwood forests, prairies, breathtaking vistas and Steele Creek, spanned by walkable swinging bridges. Visitors can take a self-guided

tour using a trail map or join a guided hike offered several times each month.

As it prepares for its third decade of service, the greenway is expanding its offerings. Trail runs and bike races occur all summer, and a new "100 Miles in 100 Days" challenge begins in July. The greenway also hosts summer camps for children.

The site will stage its first Summer Concert Series Thursday evenings at 5:30 p.m., featuring music from Cold River on June 13, the Hinson Girls on July 11, and the Moonshine Racers on August 8. Concerts are free for greenway members, \$3 for nonmembers.

Another highlight is the Great American Backyard Campout, June 21, modeled after the national event sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation. On the agenda: a twilight guided hike, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, fire building and safety, hot-dog dinner and stargazing (advance registration required).

Come fall, a BBQ & Bluegrass Festival is set for Sept. 20-21, and the Fall Festival runs each October weekend featuring horse and wagon

"I believe the Ballantyne community, with its close proximity, will play a huge part in our growth and success as we create new opportunities for people to get outside and enjoy nature."

— Anne Springs Close,
Chair Emeritus of the Greenway



Anne Springs Close (left) and volunteer Cathy Nechin assist a young rider at the greenway.



rides, corn maze and a pick-your-own pumpkin patch.

Greenway memberships provide a one-year pass for outdoor recreation, fishing, discounted events and subscription to the Greenway Guide. Cost is \$49 for individuals; \$99 for families.

Donors who give at least \$500 become "Friends of the Greenway" and receive a one-year family membership, guest passes and discounts on select activities. This group that has grown to 100 people share Close's commitment to protecting the environment and habitat in the Charlotte region. Her love of the land and the joy it confers on the community surrounding it is Ballantyne's gain. 

DIRECTIONS TO ANNE SPRINGS CLOSE GREENWAY

The most direct way from Ballantyne is U.S. 521 South, then west on S.C. 160 and north on U.S. 21 Bypass to the main greenway entrance at Coltharp Road. Info: 803-548-7252 or www.ASCGreenway.org.

SPEAKEASY PARTY SPOTLIGHTS 'GREAT GATSBY'

Nemo Productions, in association with Warner Bros., hosted a 1920s-inspired Speakeasy Party at the Piper Glen Ballroom on May 4. The event was held to celebrate the release of the movie, "The Great Gatsby."

Attendees dressed in their best Roaring '20s fashions and were treated to dance performances, dance lessons, Troy & Sons Moonshine, light fare and passes to a private screening of the film.

Photos by Hayley Brafford

1. Julie Saunders, Kim Wiley
2. Gina Sinacori, Russ Sinacori
3. Paul Montagnese, Masha Khazanova
4. Kate Weaver, Matt Weaver
5. Nataly Ramirez, Daniel Gonzalez
6. Larry Cornwell, Karolina Szpiech
7. David Bilotta, Terry Bilotta
8. Kristina Leskovskaya, Pavel Antanovich
9. Kristian DiGaetano, Lucianne Hamilton
10. Cindy Lyman, Susan Mayo, Kathy Falewee



HOP & RUN SUPPORT GREAT CAUSES

StoneCrest at Piper Glen held an Easter Bunny Hop and the Shamrock 4 Miler on March 16. Attendees enjoyed visiting with the Easter Bunny, family activities, music and refreshments.

Congratulations to Bert Rodriguez and Christine Witte for winning the race. Proceeds supported Novant Health Hemby Children's Hospital and the Ronald McDonald House of Charlotte.

Photos by Hayley Brafford



1. Colton Kaylor
2. The starting line of the Shamrock 4 Miler
3. Kaitlynn Anderson, Gracie Anderson, Gloria Anderson
4. Penelope Karagounis, Gloria Karagounis
5. Samantha Murdock
6. Malia Sheriff
7. Diana Camarda, Kathy Nesbitt
8. Kara Criswell, Heather Ryan
9. Back: Erica Brown, Alisha McFadden; Front: Ava Brown, Julia Brown
10. Tyler Green, Katie Green, Ben Green, Michael Green, Maggie Green
11. Heather Earnhardt, Michelle Walker, Wendy Amos

FASHION SHOW RAISES FUNDS IN STYLE

On April 14, more than 200 guests attended the Elegance for Education with Fashions by Coplon's event to benefit the educational scholarship fund for A.R. Rucker Middle School.

Hosted at a private residence within The Club at Longview, guest enjoyed poolside cocktails and fashions from Coplon's latest collections.

The fashion show included looks from designers such as Alice + Olivia, Diane von Furstenberg, Marc Jacobs, Monique Lhuillier, Milly and more. The event raised over \$15,000, which will support the aspirations of a deserving first-generation college student.

Photos by Hayley Brafford



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12

1. Brooke Josa
2. Ali Parker
3. Brooke Smith
4. Barb Jorgensen, Tracy Garrett, Tara Julian, Kate Kazmer, Jen Harding
5. Jayne Jones, Jennifer McNally, Melinda Hicks
6. Nicole Myers, Brittany Dankins, Audra Butler
7. Ellen Carter, Kristine Benton, Ruby Cooper, Lone Jamison
8. Lori Dominguez, Daffney Rucker
9. Deena Knight, Karen Jones
10. Stephanie Bryant, Melanie Trott
11. Andriette Farmer, Baige Edens
12. Brooke Josa



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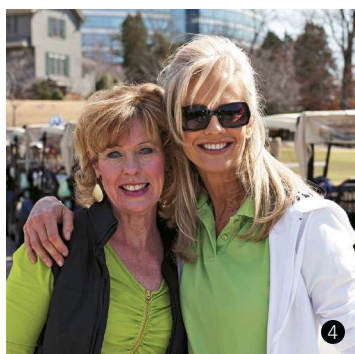
Party booking available!!

BIRDIES & BAGPIPES BENEFITS ALPHA-1

Golfers teed up for charity at the second annual Birdies & Bagpipes Golf Tournament March 15 at The Golf Club at Ballantyne. They also enjoyed lunch followed by a dinner and auction at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge.

The event raised awareness for Alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency, a severely under-diagnosed genetic disorder of the liver. Proceeds from the event support the Alpha-1 Village, which exists to provide educational, emotional, financial and medical support for patients and their caregivers.

Photos by Hayley Brafford



1. B.V. Belk, Mike Maynard, Mike Campbell, Jay Johnson, Billy Shaw

2. Amy Katz, Kim Alexander

3. Heidi Krause, Malaya Sealey

4. Bett Huggins, Allison Gale

5. Owen McFadden, Ben Hund, Drew Fowlie

6. Back: Rick Addis, Ben Hund, Lee Edmonson, Paul Harrold, Mark Sevchik; Front: Brittany Shelley, Karen Hund, Jay Johnson, Cindi Ryan, Mary Andujar

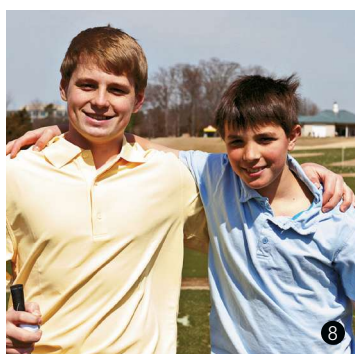
7. Jeremy Johnson, Bill Jollie

8. Benji Hund, Jude Harrold

9. Christina Gossweiler, Brittany Shelley

10. Russ Gard, Tony Visser

11. Over 100 golfers came out for the Birdies & Bagpipes event.



HUNDREDS GATHER TO CELEBRATE HOPE

The March Forth With Hope Foundation hosted its fourth annual Celebration of Hope Gala on March 9 at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge. Guests enjoyed a masquerade theme, dinner, dancing and a silent auction.

The annual event was a great success and will help the foundation's mission to provide financial assistance to families battling cancer or other life-threatening diseases. Stuart and Shelby Stout established the March Forth With Hope Foundation in memory of their philanthropic daughter, Hope Stout, shortly after she lost her courageous fight with cancer.

Photos by Hayley Brafford



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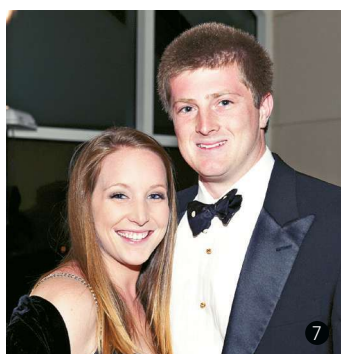
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1. Tripper Wood, Cooper, Jody Wood
2. Kendall Larson, Nancy Larson, Hallie Larson
3. Laken Cass, Aryn Ward, Kelsie Stroup
4. Celeste Shuback, Jim Shuback
5. Jennifer Plante, Julia Spring
6. Libbeth Hitchcock, Chuck Hitchcock
7. Kristin Lee, John Rush
8. Katy Kirby, Shannan Carlino
9. Del Turner, Kim Turner
10. Priscilla Perry, Julie Lopette
11. Stuart Stout, Shelby Stout
12. Denise Bucey, Sam Lograsso

BETS PAY OFF FOR EASTER SEALS

The Southern Classic Texas Hold'em Charity Poker Tournament & Casino Night was held April 25 at Piper Glen Country Club. Guests enjoyed delicious cuisine and cocktails, and the poker tournament winner received a seat at the World Series of Poker event.

The event also featured craps, roulette and blackjack. Proceeds benefited Easter Seals UCP North Carolina & Virginia, a nonprofit that helps people manage disabilities and mental health challenges.

Photos by Hayley Brafford

1. Phelps Sprinkle, Court Harrington, Tom Mann
2. Talia Orred, Chrys Kanos
3. Turner Dayton, Thomas Lawson, Stephen Arnold, Denny Fulk
4. Justin Allen, Chris Martinez, Michael Simpson
5. Tony Belk, Rick Bradford
6. Will Dolan, Chanthanome Inthisone, Phelps Sprinkle
7. Mike Kavanagh, Vivian Smith, Ryan Sonders
8. Steve Amedio, Court Harrington, Mike Gracz
9. Mike Gracz



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Canadian

Top Left: Children can ride Theodore Tugboat at this wharf in Halifax's Point Pleasant Park.

Above: This soldier stands guard at Halifax's Citadel National Historic Site.

Right: Gros Morne National Park in Newfoundland offers breathtaking views of fjords.



Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism



Photo courtesy of Nova Scotia Tourism Agency

Far Left: Mouth-watering seafood can be found at Halifax's Five Fishermen Restaurant & Grill.

Middle Left: Colorful homes in St. John's, Newfoundland are dubbed jellybean row houses.

Middle Right: Late spring and early summer are the best times to view icebergs off Newfoundland.

Right: Halifax is known for its pubs and street life.

Seascapes

NOVA SCOTIA, NEWFOUNDLAND OFFER SPECTACULAR SCENERY, SCOTTISH/IRISH CHARM

By Nan Bauroth

IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE TO VISIT NORWAY TO EXPLORE fjords, Alaska to glimpse icebergs or Ireland to hear a brogue, think again. Our Canadian neighbor offers all that and more in its easternmost provinces of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. Just a little over four hours by air lands you in a foreign country where they speak the same language as we do — almost.

"When I first took my husband home to St. John's, I had to translate for him," laughs Charlene Henderson, an optometrist at Blink Eye Care and Eye Wear in Cedar Walk, who was born and raised in Newfoundland's capital city. She and Blink co-owner and fellow optometrist Tracy MacIntyre Raykovicz, who hails from Halifax, Nova Scotia, discovered their common Canadian heritage after moving to this area, and since then, have become personal and professional soul sisters.

Both Nova Scotia, a peninsula off the province of New Brunswick, as well as Newfoundland, an island to the north



©Barrett & Mackay Photo

Newfoundland in summer is one of the best whale-watching sites in the world.





Photo courtesy of Nova Scotia Tourism Agency



Photo courtesy of Nova Scotia Tourism Agency

An absolute must is a trip to the Bay of Fundy, home of the world's most astounding tidal bore. Every day 100 billion tons of seawater flow in and out as the water level rises four stories within a six-hour cycle.



Photo courtesy of Nova Scotia Tourism Agency

accessible by ferry or air, have a rich cultural heritage rooted in their settlement during the 1700s by a mélange of Scots, Irish, English and French. Summer and early fall are the optimum times to visit, with daytime temperatures in the 70s and evenings a refreshing 10 degrees cooler.

Nova Scotia's Ocean Playground

Halifax is the epicenter of activity on Nova Scotia, and according to MacIntyre, has a Scottish/English and Irish feel despite its native Tartan plaid, which can be brought home in souvenirs.

A party town, Halifax is reputed to have the most pubs per capita in the world. The first week in August, Nova Scotia's capital stages its International Busker's Festival, a weeklong street event that MacIntyre loves. She also recommends the Canada Day celebration on July 1. As for the local lingo, she advises that people add an "eh" at the end of their sentences, such as "How's it goin', eh?" Referring to things as "some good" is also popular.

MacIntyre's top destinations include Peggy's Cove Lighthouse, perched above the surging sea on the south shore; the Citadel, a

star-shaped fort crowning the hill overlooking the harbor; and Halifax Public Gardens, a national treasure dating to 1867. Children especially love to ride the Harbor Hopper that stops at many sites, and Theodore Tugboat at Murphy's Cable Wharf.

"Yachting is very big," says MacIntyre, who suggests seafarers visit Mahone Bay with its 365 islands or make the beautiful drive to Bridgewater, a quaint yachting town with old churches and boutiques that is port of call for a tall ships festival in July. Challenging seaside links also abound, including Fox Harbor Golf Resort & Spa in Halifax, Chester Golf Club and Cape Breton Highlands Links, ranked among the top 100 golf courses in the world.

An absolute must is a trip to the Bay of Fundy, home of the world's most astounding tidal bore. Every day 100 billion tons of seawater flow in and out as the water level rises four stories within a six-hour cycle. "You can go rafting and be in peaceful waters, and within only a few hours, you're suddenly in Class 4 rapids," says MacIntyre.

Newfoundland's Wonders

Outdoor activities and scenic beauty are also hallmarks of

Far Left: Sea kayaking is popular in Nova Scotia, pictured here, as well as in Newfoundland.

Top Left: The International Busker's Festival draws crowds every August in Halifax.

Bottom Left: Bridgewater, Nova Scotia is a quaint seaside town.

Newfoundland. According to Henderson, it's a birdwatchers' paradise for the 325 species flitting about, including puffins nesting on coastal cliffs. Sea kayakers also find it a dream, with 5,000 miles of inlets where they can explore waterfalls, abandoned fishing villages and historic sites.

Newfoundland is one of the world's best whale-watching sites in summer, with 22 species of the majestic mammals breaching along the shoreline. Iceberg viewing is another popular pastime, although the best time is late spring and early summer before the frozen blue masses melt.

Gros Morne National Park, a UNESCO world heritage site, is a seven-hour drive, but Henderson says the trek is well worth it (camping and lodging are available). Nature lovers, walkers, hikers and mountain bikers can explore breathtaking views of awesome fjords, the highest waterfall in North America and the Tablelands, a barren stretch of the earth's original mantle.

Henderson says no trip to her homeland would be complete without a visit to Cape Spear, the easternmost point on the continent. She took her twins there on their birthday so they would be among the first to see the sunrise in North America.

Other points of interest include Mistaken Point, home of Precambrian fossils, and

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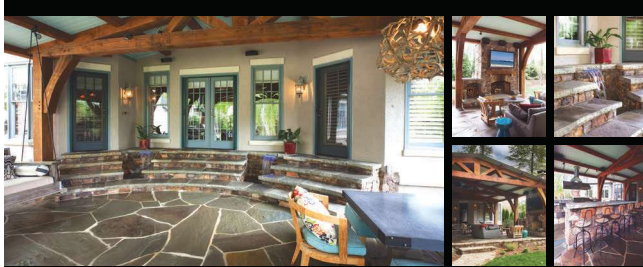
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Nature lovers flock to Gros Morne National Park, a UNESCO world heritage site.

Brigus, a historic fishing village that hosts one of the best blueberry festivals in Canada. Those seeking proof that Leif Erickson and his crews landed here over a thousand years ago can find Viking ruins and an interpretive center at L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site, the only authenticated Norse site in North America.

Jellybean Row

Henderson never tires of meandering St. John's cobblestone streets lined with homes in primary colors that are known as jellybean row houses. Signal Hill, where Marconi sent the first transatlantic wireless transmission in 1901, is another stop. Her favorite events every August are the Royal St. John's Regatta, the oldest organized sporting event in North America that is a rite of passage for locals, and the George Street Festival, an annual weeklong music bash with big-name bands from around the world.

If you really want to go local, Henderson suggests you stop in any pub and ask to be "screed in," a traditional initiation ceremony. "It involves taking a swig of some awful rum, kissing a codfish and reciting a creed," she says. "You'll get a certificate making you an official Newfoundlander."

The one thing MacIntyre and Henderson want visitors to know about their respective hometowns is the convivial nature of the people and their habit of talking to everyone.

On 9/11, Henderson's parents were among those

Elaine Eschert

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Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

Summer and early fall are the optimum times to visit, with daytime temperatures in the 70s and evenings a refreshing 10 degrees cooler.



Photo courtesy of Nova Scotia Tourism Agency

Left: A tall ships festival makes stops along the Nova Scotia coast. Pictured here is the harbor at Halifax.

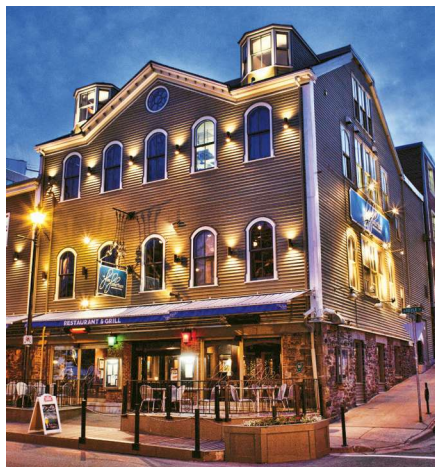
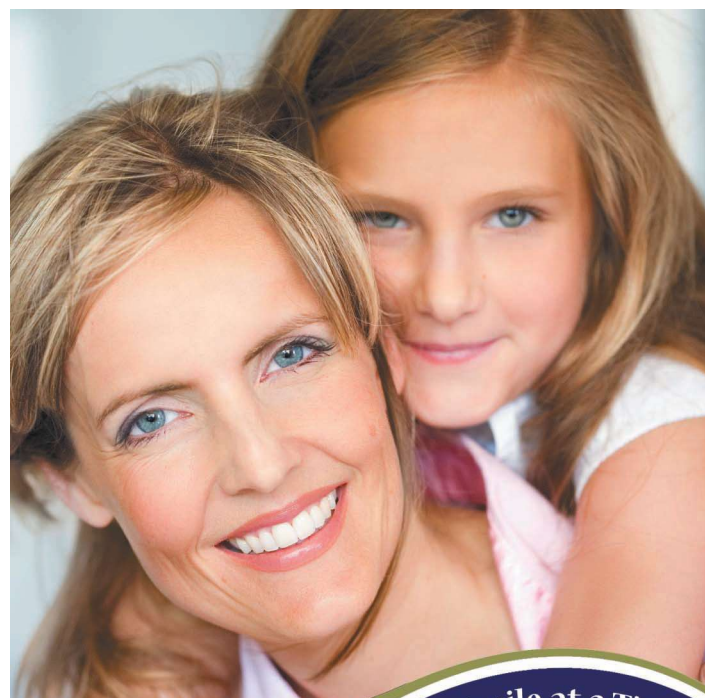


Photo courtesy of The Five Fishermen Restaurant & Grill

Right: The Five Fishermen Restaurant & Grill is one of Tracy MacIntyre Raykovicz's favorite dining spots.

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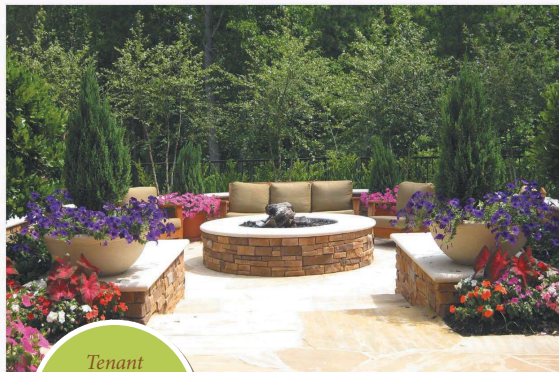
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Newfoundlanders who generously opened their homes to passengers on grounded international flights. "My parents took in East Germans and Koreans," she recalls. "Our people are hardworking, positive and friendly," insists MacIntyre. "Nobody is a stranger!" 



Photo by Ray Sepesy

LOCAL OPTOMETRISTS RELISH VISITING THEIR HOMETOWNS

Tracy MacIntyre Raykovicz (right) and Charlene Henderson, owners of Blink Eye Care and Eye Wear in Cedar Walk, are both doctors of optometry.

MacIntyre, a native of Halifax, Nova Scotia, who is married with two children, often returns home in early August for the International Busker's Festival. Henderson, who was born and raised in St. John's, Newfoundland, is also married with two children, and goes back every summer to visit family and collect beautiful beach rocks and replicas of jellybean row houses to add to her collections here.

Airlines

US Airways or United to Philadelphia, Boston or Newark, then Air Canada to Halifax or St. John's. The closest connection through Newark can get you to Halifax in a little over four hours.

Pubs

Halifax: Alexander Keith's Brewery, Triangle Irish Pub, The Lower Deck.
St. John's: Shamrock City, The Duke of Duckworth, the film site for the hit Canadian TV show, "The Republic of Doyle."

Hotels

Halifax: Marriott on the Waterfront, the historic Lord Nelson Hotel, bed-and-breakfasts.
St. John's: Delta, the Sheraton, the Spa at Monastery, Humber Valley Resort, B&Bs.

Mementos

Halifax: Seagull Pewter.
St. John's: Newfoundland Weavery.

Sightseeing Ideas

Halifax: Wander the eclectic boutiques on Spring Road.
St. John's: Enjoy blues and jazz at the Fat Cat, live music at Ship In.

Cravings

Halifax: Lobster, Tim Horton coffee and doughnuts, maple syrup.
St. John's: Ches's Famous Fish & Chips, Newfoundland Chocolate Company.

Tips

Passports are required for adults and children. Reserve rental cars in advance, as numbers are limited. Nova Scotia is on Atlantic time, one hour ahead. Newfoundland has its own time zone, 1.5 hours ahead.

Dining

Halifax: The Bicycle Thief, The Five Fishermen Restaurant & Grill.
St. John's: Chinchéd Bistro, Atlantica, Aqua.

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No Strings Attached!

Perfect Your Pitch Shot with this Visualization Tip

By Marc Lapointe, Director of Instruction, Dana Rader Golf School

Photos by Ray Sepesy




Marc Lapointe

ONE OF THE HARDEST SHOTS IN GOLF is the 20 to 30-yard pitch shot over a bunker. First, it's a hard shot because you must make good contact to get the ball in the air and then stop it on the green.

Second, you must trust the loft of your wedge (56 or 60 degrees is preferred) to launch the ball up in the air and not across the green. Third, it's a difficult shot because you must make a fairly large swing for a fairly small distance. In this article, you will learn how to make solid contact with your wedges and stop your pitch shot on the green.

The first thing you must do is to visualize a string attached from the end of your club to your leading hip (left hip for a right-handed golfer). As shown in the picture, the string is in line with the club and pointing directly at my left hip. This alignment is important because it positions the hands slightly ahead of the club head and ensures solid contact.

The key to this shot is to picture the exact same string attached in the follow through. To pitch the ball 20 to 30 yards, you must have the club pointing toward the leading hip at the finish position. To keep the club and the string in line with the leading hip, you need to make a good hip turn toward the target.

Trust your club and swing through at the target. Staying down will not help your pitch shot, but a good hip turn will. This may feel like a large swing for such a small distance, but the ball will only go higher instead of farther. As shown in the picture at immediate right, turn your hips and hold your finish with the club pointing at your leading hip. If you can picture this, I guarantee a better pitch shot — no strings attached! 



Above: Proper alignment on a pitch shot will keep your hands slightly ahead of the club head.

Right: On your swing, turn your hips and hold your finish with the club pointed at your leading hip.



Above: Visualize a string attached from the end of your club to your leading hip.



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The improvements feature turn lanes with additional islands and a westbound right turn lane on Ballantyne Commons Parkway, as well as northbound and southbound left and right turn lanes on Elm Lane.

On Ballantyne Commons Parkway the project extends from Ballantyne Trace Court to Rea Road. On Elm Lane work goes from Indigo Row to just south of Millwright Lane. The project will also encompass improving the profile of the intersection to mitigate the grade.

Completion is expected by the first quarter of 2015. “We will send mailers to residents in the area prior to the start of construction


and let them know how they can keep up to date with progress,” says Leslie Bing, project manager for the City of Charlotte, Engineering and Property Management.

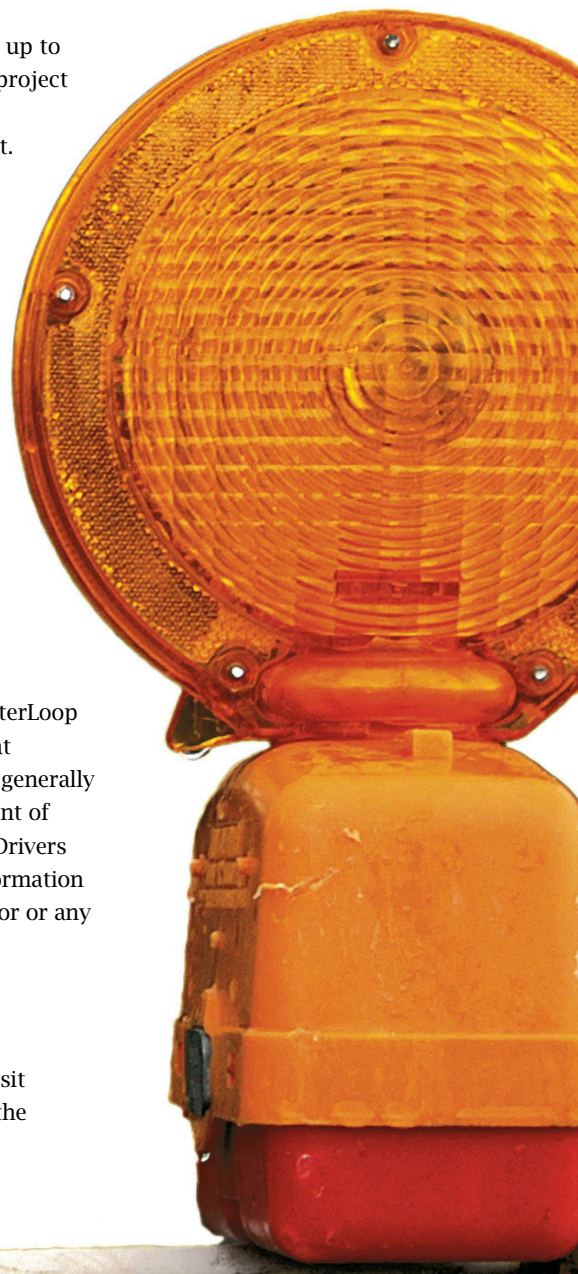
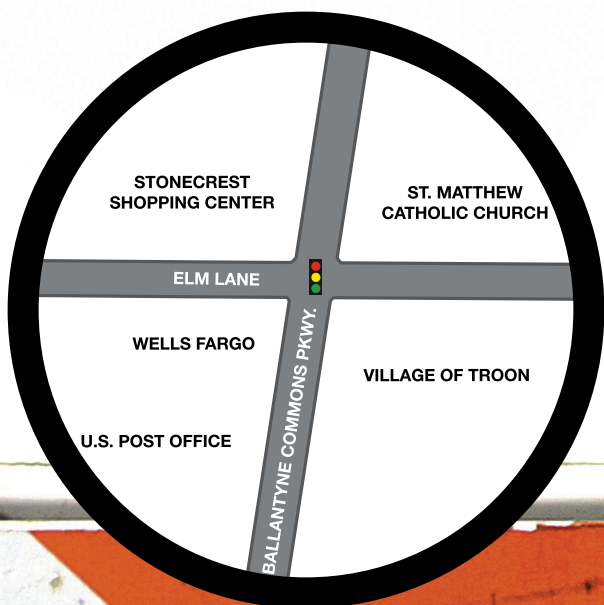
The Charlotte Department of Transportation will post detour and closure updates at its website (www.charmeck.org/city/charlotte/Transportation/Pages/Home.aspx) once the engineers have them ready. Commuters can also request to be added to CDOT’s “Notify Me” list (on the same website at top right of the page) to automatically receive updates as they are posted.

I-485 Construction Updates

Get information about current detours and closures by visiting www.ncdot.gov/projects/CharlotteOuterLoop or signing up on Twitter for updates at www.ncdot.gov/travel/twitter (tweets generally go to the department’s N.C. Department of Transportation and Charlotte feeds). Drivers can also always call 511 to access information on traffic updates for the I-485 corridor or any other road in Mecklenburg County.

Ballantyne Corporate Park Updates

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