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Orchid Extravaganza

Winter 2016-2017 Vol. 16 No. 4

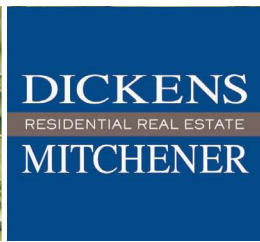
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Bissell

FEATURES



Despite challenges, six locals are focused on wellness.



ON THE COVER
The Cymbidium hybrid is among thousands of orchids at Daniel Stowe's Orchid Conservatory.
Photo by Ray Sepesy

Orchid Extravaganza

Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden is bursting with these winter wonders.

36



Special Deliveries

Two families welcomed children into the world along Ballantyne roadways.

66



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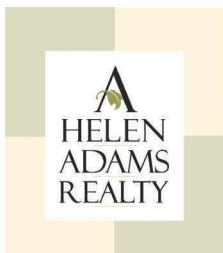
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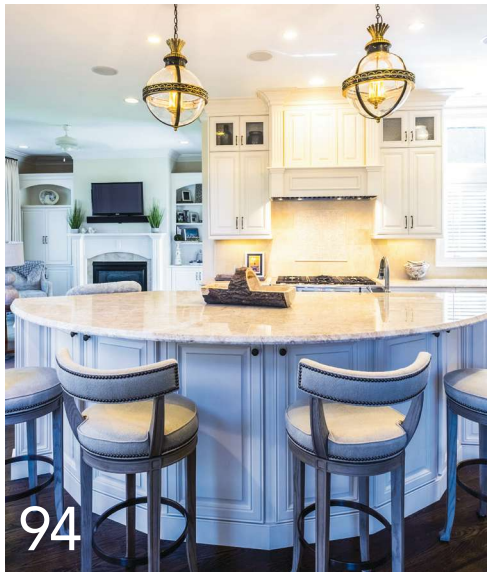


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Ballantyne is always in motion.
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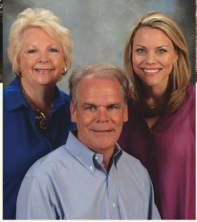
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Cindy.Gwin@allentate.com

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Beautiful, well-maintained custom home which has been professionally updated. Custom cabinetry throughout home, top of the line appliances, built-in Miele coffee maker, Sub-Zero, gas cook top. Bathrooms all remodeled with designer fixtures, granite and beautiful tile. Master bedroom has two walk-in closets, additional closets and a studio/sitting area. Billiard room has ice maker, fridge and wine cooler. Entire yard is landscaped, has slate courtyard with built-in grill and stunning water feature.

MLS#3179593

5400 MEADOW HAVEN LANE
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Shelley Spencer

Charlotte-SouthPark
704-907-3800
Shelley.Spencer@allentate.com

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Southern charm abounds in this stately custom home on a private cul-de-sac. Quality construction is evident with gracious millwork, 10-foot+ ceilings, 8-foot doors, three fireplaces, grand staircase, custom iron work and the list goes on. Comfortable floorplan with master suite on main and all bedrooms have ensuites. Entertain with ease in a huge kitchen that opens to great room and inviting screened porch. The basement is incredible: full kitchen, wine and billiard room, full bedroom, two full baths.

MLS#3225079

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MLS#3193629

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JUNIOR YEAR IN HIGH SCHOOL I JOINED THE SWIM TEAM. I had never swum competitively, but I wanted to try something new and the boys on the team were cute. So I dived in.

Two things surfaced quickly: My lungs were the size of peas, and the water was freezing. Most days I didn't want to enter the pool at all. The coach had me swimming laps with my head in the water clutching a kick board. His instructions were, "Don't pick up your head until you feel like your lungs will explode." Often, that's just how they felt.

It was the hardest fitness experience of my life. But, by the end of the season, I had improved. I was able to swim 20 laps without stopping. I also practiced in the second-slowest lane, not THE slowest lane, which was an accomplishment. After all, I was competing in the presence of lifelong swimmers, a Junior Olympian among them.

Sometimes we set whimsical fitness goals like I did when I joined the swim team. Other times, we make dramatic lifestyle changes at the urging of loved ones, health providers or simply our inner voice.

In this issue of Ballantyne Magazine, we explore six of our neighbors' fitness journeys, which cover the spectrum of motivations and results. We hope their stories of weight loss, increased endurance and renewed faith in life will inspire you to keep resolutions at New Year's or anytime.

My lungs were the size of peas, and the water was freezing.

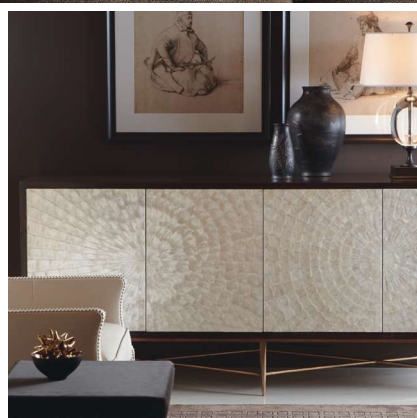
In this issue as well, we travel to Park City, Utah, in Escape and learn more about outdoor winter activities. If skiing's not your thing, there's fat tire biking, a virtual ski-jump experience and more.

After my only season on the swim team, I reached two personal goals: I earned my lifeguard certification and landed a sweet summer job at the local swim club. There, as you may have guessed, I was in the company of more cute boys, which was my motivation as a teenager!

Whatever your personal wellness goals may be, I hope you tackle them with dedication and a fun spirit. Each day in beautiful Ballantyne is a great time to try something new. So, get moving!

Jodi Werner Greenwald
Editor-in-Chief

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



Photo by Ray Sepesky

At Audubon Amphitheater in Ballantyne Corporate Park, Margaret and Smoky Bissell celebrate The Bissell Companies' gift with third graders from seven local schools.

Bissell Honors Tenants with Literacy Gift

The Bissell Companies recently donated \$25,000 to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) to enable seven elementary schools based in the 28277 ZIP code to receive funding for books.

The gift, made in honor of Ballantyne Corporate Park tenants, supports the North Star Reading Partners Initiative, a CMS effort to work with the community to ensure that every child is reading on grade level or higher by third grade.

NEWS CUES

Developers Acquire Site Near Waverly

Commercial developers Crosland Southeast and Childress Klein, along with the Matthews family, have partnered to acquire an 8.5-acre site on Providence Road adjacent to the planned Crescent Providence Farm residential community and next to Waverly, a master-planned development under construction. The venture plans to develop several single-tenant and multi-tenant retail buildings.

Breakfast Club Kicks Off 2017 with Priorities Meeting



The Ballantyne Breakfast Club will hold its annual Priorities Meeting in February at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge at 9 a.m. For the meeting date, please check the club's website closer to the event.

Meetings are free and open to the public. Details: reschert@aol.com or www.ballantynebreakfastclub.com.

Y Hosts Events, Camps, Preschool

The Morrison Family YMCA hosts a Bench Press Clinic from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 10, and a Family Cooking Workshop from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 17.

Registration for kids' summer camps begins Feb. 1. for Y members and Feb. 15 for nonmembers. Registration for the 2017-2018 preschool program also begins Feb. 1. Details: www.ymcacharlotte.org/Morrison.

BIZ BUZZ

Realty Firm Opens Second Office

Dickens Mitchener, a residential real estate firm, has opened a Ballantyne-area location at 7810 Ballantyne Commons Parkway, Suite 103, across from StoneCrest. More than 20 full-time real estate agents work at the new location. Info: 704-342-1000.



Karla Shields

CPCC Center Hires New Director

Karla Shields has been named the new director of the CPCC Ballantyne Center, located at 11430 North Community House Drive. Shields, who has extensive experience in business development, will oversee a team focused on preparing south Charlotte residents and employees for career and professional success through year-round continuing-education courses and seminars.

YOUNGER SET



Hawk Ridge Celebrates the Olympics

Hawk Ridge Elementary School recently held a field day to celebrate the Olympic Games in Brazil. During the "opening ceremony," children exited the building to the Olympic theme song, holding up flags they had made in art class of various countries. Students also learned the national anthem and studied Olympic athletes. The field day ended with a medal ceremony.

Metrolina Student Selected for Pageant

Emily Inch, a resident of Pineville who is a fifth grader at Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy in Charlotte, recently participated as a state finalist in the National American Miss Pageant, where she told people about her charity, "Sole for Kids," which takes in new or gently used shoes for children who need them.



Emily Inch



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Knock the chill off with hot chocolate and cider at the Veranda and Gallery Bar Dec. 9-28 from 2 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Cost: \$5; \$8 with liqueur.

Holiday Tea

Holiday Afternoon Tea is served Wednesday through Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. (except Christmas Day) through Dec. 31, with live music in the main lobby. Cost: \$49 for adults, \$29 for junior patrons. Reservations required: 704-248-4100.



Gingerbread Lane

An enchanting collection of gingerbread creations is on display daily Dec. 8-28. Attendees may vote on their favorite house, with \$1 minimum donation per vote. All proceeds benefit Levine Children's Hospital.

Christmas Eve Dinner

Gallery Restaurant will be open for dinner Christmas Eve from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The restaurant will feature its regular menu and prime rib dinner special. Reservations required: 704-248-4100 or www.gallery-restaurant.com.

Christmas Brunch

The hotel will offer an elaborate Christmas Brunch Dec. 25 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. with live holiday music. Cost: \$75 per person, \$35 for children 5-13, and complimentary for children age 4 and under. Reservations required: 704-248-4100 or www.gallery-restaurant.com.



New Year's Eve Overnight Package

Welcome 2017 with an overnight stay that includes room, valet parking, dinner for two and festive party admission. Dressy attire recommended. Pricing starts at \$439 plus tax for two; package requires 48-hour cancellation policy. Reservations: 888-627-8048.



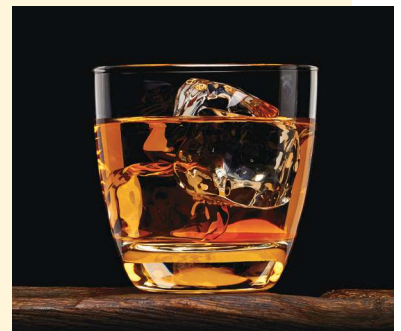
New Year's Eve Party

Ring in the new year starting at 9 p.m. in the Carolina Room with DJ, live music, drink specials, party favors and a champagne toast. Open to guests 21 and over staying at the hotel.

2017 Happenings

Tastings: Gallery Restaurant offers weekly tastings on Fridays at 6:30 p.m. with light bites. The first and third Fridays of the month usually feature wine; the second Friday focuses on cocktails. Cost: \$25-40 per person.

The Whiskey Club of Ballantyne: Explore the nuances of whiskeys served with small plates in Gallery Restaurant on Fridays from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. 2017 events include: "New Year, New Macallan" on Jan. 27; "Whiskeys of Japan" on Feb. 24; and "Utah's Whiskey History" on March 31. Cost: \$50 per person.



Special Teas: A Winter Wonderland Tea will be held 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Jan. 11-14, featuring warm savories and hot toddies. Cost: \$40 for adults, \$20 for junior patrons. A magical Princess Tea will be held from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Feb. 15-18, featuring a special menu and decor for royalty. Attendees are encouraged to dress up in their favorite princess gown, jewelry and tiara. Cost: \$40 for adults, \$20 for junior patrons.

Valentine's Day: Enjoy an intimate three-course prix fixe dinner at Gallery Restaurant Feb. 10-14. Cost: \$75 per person.

RE/MAX Agents Honored

Patrick Nooney and Steve Onisick, vice presidents and co-owners of The Premier Team at RE/MAX Executive in Toringdon Way, have been chosen as 2016 Five Star Real Estate Agent Award winners for excellence in client satisfaction. Reach them at 704-405-8800.



Patrick Nooney



Steve Onisick



Rachael Bryant



Mike Harris



Suzanne Madden



Maggie Miller



Jennifer Sanford



Hany Solh



Patty Page



Sandy Sharer

Agents Join Allen Tate Co.

Rachael Bryant, Mike Harris, Suzanne Madden, Maggie Miller, Jennifer Sanford and Hany Solh have joined the Ballantyne office of Allen Tate Co. as real estate agents. In addition, Patty Page and Sandy Sharer have joined the company's Indian Land at Doby Bridge office.

'Be Well' Program Ranks High

OrthoCarolina's employee wellness program, Be Well, recently ranked No. 23 out of the top 100 wellness programs in the country for 2016, according to the Healthiest 100 Workplaces in America. OrthoCarolina, which has offices in Ballantyne and Blakeney, also ranked first in the Charlotte region for Healthiest Employer.

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Advisers Form Blue Cardinal Wealth

Bret Urbanski, Tommy Truman, Mitch Hodgkiss, Melissa Saleeby and Abby Kerr, financial advisers with Ameriprise Financial, recently joined and changed the name of their practice to Blue Cardinal Wealth Solutions, a wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services. The firm is located at 13830 Ballantyne Corporate Place, Suite 200. Info: 704-916-6878 or www.bluecardinalwealthsolutions.com.

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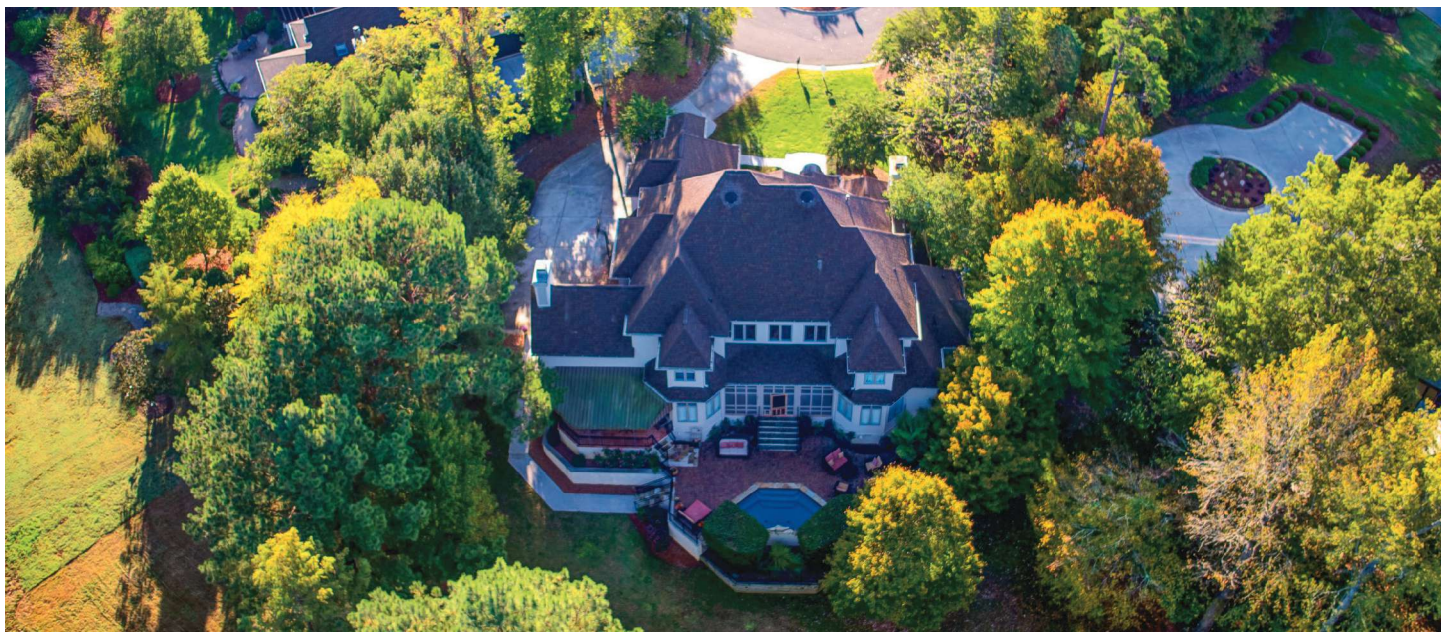
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NSC Financial, a member of the MassMutual Financial Group, is now affiliated

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Local Chamber Meets Jan. 5

The Ballantyne Chapter of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce meets Thursday, Jan. 5, at Ballantyne Country Club from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Fee: \$25 in advance for members, \$45 for nonmembers. Registration/info: www.charlottechamber.com.



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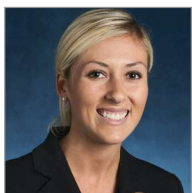
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Kimberly McRae
704.274.1466



Courtney Adams



Sarah Connell



Mitch Bonner



Jana Powers



Billy Russell



Doreen Sellitti

The Bissell Companies Make Appointments

The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge has promoted Courtney Adams to front desk manager, Sarah Connell to assistant front desk manager and Mitch Bonner to assistant director of housekeeping.

Among other Bissell organizations, Jana Powers has been named spa director at The Spa at Ballantyne, Billy Russell has been promoted to lodge and cottage manager at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge and Doreen Sellitti has joined Ballantyne Business Center as a client services representative.

Four Tenants Announced for Waverly

Via Roma restaurant, Wildology wild bird boutique, Little Nest Portraits and Wells Fargo have signed leases at Waverly, announced developers Crosland Southeast and Childress Klein. Waverly is near the intersection of Providence and Ardrey Kell roads. Details: www.waverlyclt.com.

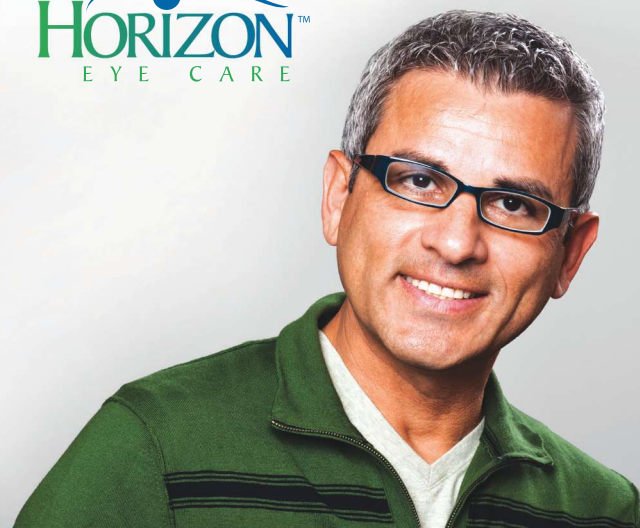


Noelle Gogg and Ben Kallenbach

Hotel & Lodge Wins Recognition

The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge was named No. 6 on Condé Nast Traveler's 2016 Readers' Choice Top Hotels in the South list.

In addition, Executive Pastry Chef Ben Kallenbach recently won the Dessert Competition at Pastry Live in Atlanta. Pastry Sous Chef Noelle Gogg won the Pastry People's Choice Award at the N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association's North Carolina Chef Showdown.



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Locals Enjoy Yard Art Day

Raeburn neighborhood residents Peaches and Eric May participated in Yard Art Day 2016 with their metal sculpture honoring Firebird at the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art. Info: www.yardartday.org.



Mark Antonich

Wealth Adviser Receives Award

Mark Antonich, a wealth adviser with Ameriprise Financial in Ballantyne, has received the 2016 Five Star Wealth Manager Award by Five Star Professional. The award goes to less than 7 percent of wealth managers in the region based on research by Five Star Professional, a third-party research firm.

Bank Adds New Staff

Craig Beasley has joined Carolina Premier Bank as branch manager in the Ballantyne branch and corporate headquarters, located in Ballantyne Corporate Park. Lauren Ashley, Cindy Chan, Mike Fitzgerald and Elsa Bostick have joined Shaw Moore on the retail staff team at the branch as well. Info: www.carolinapremierbank.com.



Sabrina Winters

Publisher Honors Estate Attorney

Matthew Bender & Co., a law book publisher, has identified Ballantyne attorney Sabrina Winters of Sabrina Winters PLLC as a top estate-planning attorney in the state and asked her to author the "LexisNexis Practice Guide: North Carolina Estate Planning," a legal guide for attorneys new to estate planning, to be published in 2017. Reach her at 704-843-1446.



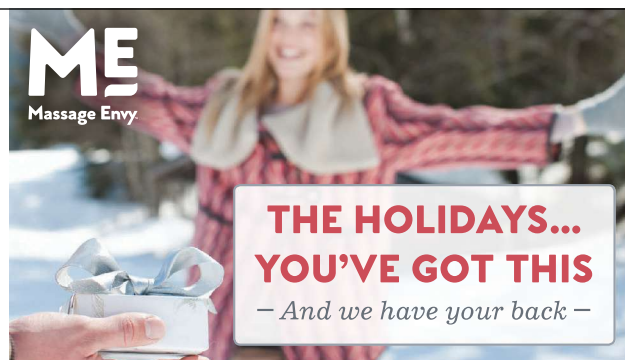
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OPENINGS

Clinic Targets Reversing Diabetes



The Metabolism & Wellness Clinic is slated to open its first Charlotte location in December at Blakeney Professional Center. Drs. Andrew Timothy and Hany Youssef offer programs targeted to reverse pre-diabetes, diabetes and insulin-dependent Type 2 diabetes. Info: www.tmwclinic.com.

Fitness Group in Ballantyne Village

Orangetheory
Fitness is now open in
Ballantyne Village.
Classes are designed



to push participants into the "Orange Zone" — which means reaching 84 percent or higher of maximum heart rate for 12 to 20 minutes of the workout, leading to greater fitness. Info: www.orangetheoryfitness.com.

Village Adds Fashion Retailer



GoldKloth, an upscale women's boutique featuring fashion trends for women size 12 and up, is now open in Ballantyne Village. In addition to apparel, the retailer sells jewelry,

accessories and gifts. Info: www.goldkloth.com.

The Liberty to Open in Blakeney

The Liberty is opening a second Charlotte location this spring in the Shops at Blakeney. The upscale gastropub features comfort food from renowned Chef Tom Condrón, a large craft-beer lineup and a wide selection of wines by the glass. Liberty Blakeney will also have a large patio with roll up doors. Details: www.thelibertycharlotte.com.

Realty Firm Moves to Toringdon

Keller Williams Ballantyne has moved to 3430 Toringdon Way. The Keller Williams Ballantyne office is now the number one office in profitability out of more than 700 offices worldwide, says a company release. Info: 704-887-6600.

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Gourmet Shop Offers 50 Flavors

Popcorn Heaven has opened at 16011 Lancaster Highway next to IHOP. The shop sells 50 flavors of fresh gourmet popcorn and offers gift tins as well. Details: 803-216-5197 or www.mypopcornheaven.com.

Tuesday Morning*

Retailer Moves to Promenade

Tuesday Morning has moved its local store to Promenade on Providence. The retailer specializes in discounted, upscale decorative home accessories, housewares, seasonal goods and famous-maker gifts.

BBQ Eatery Now Open

City Barbeque, offering "low and slow" smoked meats along with a variety of side dishes and desserts, has opened a new restaurant at Providence Road West and Highway 521. The grand opening featured the City Barbeque Sauce Contest, inviting people to share their best barbecue sauce recipe. Info: www.citybbq.com.

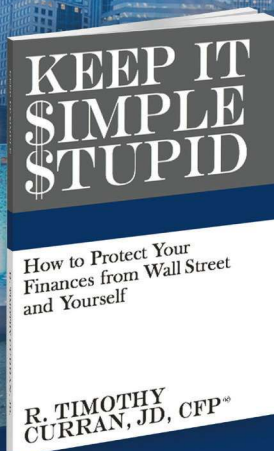
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Restaurant Adds Location

Jim 'N Nick's Community BAR-B-Q recently opened in Indian Land at Highway 521 and Highway 160. The restaurant focuses on Hickory-smoked barbecue and offers full-service dining, drive-through, carryout and catering. Details: www.jimnnicks.com.



Soothe: On-Demand Massage

Soothe, an on-demand massage and wellness company with staff in 38 cities, has opened in Ballantyne. Soothe delivers a licensed, vetted, certified massage therapist for Swedish, deep-tissue, sports or prenatal massage. The service is available for individuals and couples for a fixed fee from 8 a.m. to midnight at the client's home, office or hotel room. Info or to book: www.soothe.com.



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SWEET CHARITIES

Ballantyne Ball Aids Trafficking Victims

The masquerade-themed Ballantyne Ball, "Be Enchanted. For a Cause," is Saturday, Feb. 11, at 6 p.m. at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge. Net proceeds from the third annual event, a 501(c)(3) charity founded to support local causes, will benefit Lily Pad Haven to further its efforts to assist victims of human trafficking. Information: chair Allen Starrett at allen@ballantyneball.org or www.ballantyneball.org.



ANSWER Wins 25,000 Grant

The Leon Levine Foundation has awarded a \$25,000 grant to ANSWER Scholarship to help send mothers in Mecklenburg and surrounding counties to college.

Established in 2006 by Ballantyne resident Susan Andersen, ANSWER provides financial assistance to mothers raising school-age children who are pursuing a four-year college degree in the field of their choice, or an associate degree in nursing. To find out more or to make a tax-deductible gift to ANSWER, visit www.answerscholarship.org.

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Stiletto Sprint Exceeds \$87,000

Hundreds of community members gathered at SouthPark Mall to participate in the 6th Annual Stiletto Sprint Sept. 17. With the support of generous donors, including presenting sponsor Bissell, the event raised more than \$87,000 to benefit ovarian cancer research and patient programs at Levine Cancer Institute. To donate or learn more: stiletto sprint@carolinas.org or Carolinas HealthCare Foundation at 704-355-4048.

Photo courtesy of Daniel Coston Photography

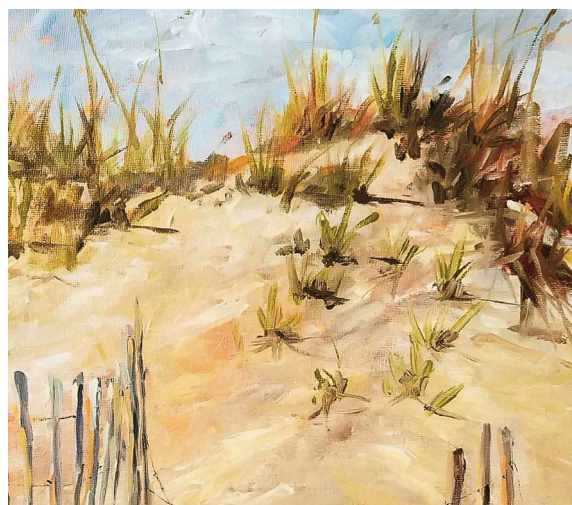


Former Charlotte Bobcats player Matt Carroll was a celebrity at the Allegro Invitational this year.

Photo courtesy of Andrew Harrison



Allegro intern Karah Grossman has a special bond with this Allegro student, inspiring him to do more.



Art Sales Benefit MS Research

A portion of all fine art sales at a Jan. 3-28 event at Charlotte Fine Art Gallery in Carmel Village Shops will go to help find a cure for multiple sclerosis. As a bonus, artist Larry Christensen and Charlotte artist/curator Joni Purk will donate 50 percent of their sales during the month to the cause. Details: www.charlottefineart.com.

Tourney Helps Children with Disabilities

The Allegro Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to helping children with disabilities, held its 7th Annual Allegro Invitational at The Golf Club at Ballantyne in September. More than 100 golfers participated, and 200 guests attended the dinner reception.

All proceeds go directly to Allegro's free movement-education programs that benefit more than 700 children with disabilities in Charlotte and Fort Mill. Info or to donate: www.allegrofoundation.net.



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5K Lures More Than 1,100 Runners

The Big South Conference, an NCAA Division I league headquartered near Ballantyne, hosted its seventh annual Big South 5K Road Race on Oct. 22 at the Blakeney Shopping Center. The race featured more than 1,100 runners, with proceeds expected to top \$20,000. The money benefits middle school athletics programs in the greater Charlotte area. Info or to donate: www.bigsouth5k.com.

Club Tops \$42,500 for Folds of Honor


The Golf Club at Ballantyne raised more than \$42,500 in September to support the Folds of Honor Foundation, which provides post-secondary educational scholarships for children and spouses of military service men and women killed or disabled while serving the nation. The club's total exceeded last year's amount by more than \$17,500. More info or to donate: www.patriotgolfdays.com.



Photo courtesy of Bruce Williams, BA/W Photography

Children with Autism Receive Support

CrossFit S3 locations in the greater Ballantyne area raised \$30,000 in October at its third annual AMRAP 4 AUTISM Hope for Landon fundraiser at BB&T Ballpark. Landon and his family are Waxhaw residents.

More than 325 people of all ages participated in the event. All proceeds go to Autism Speaks of the Carolinas. Info or to donate: www.amrap4autism.com. 

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PASSIONATE TRIO

These Diverse Personalities Enjoy Life

Photos by Ray Sepesy



BINGE-WATCHING '90S TV SHOWS, buying shoes at Saks and savoring a good creme brulee are guilty pleasures of this edition's three featured "Faces" of Ballantyne.

What keeps them busy at work is equally diverse — matchmaking, running a high-profile breakfast club and making moments special with the right piece of jewelry.

People with passion? Yes!

Meet Julie Wadley, Jenn Snyder and Sami Tekin.

JENN SNYDER

Birthplace: Adopted from Fort Wayne, Ind.; grew up near Akron, Ohio.

Job: Executive Director, Hood Hargett Breakfast Club.

What do you like most about your job?

I love my job! I'm fortunate to help Charlotte business leaders connect with one another and provide opportunities for our organization to make a real impact in the community. In addition, I plan more than 40 events annually with such prominent speakers as Bob Woodruff, Mark Cuban and Elizabeth Smart.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Shoe shopping at Saks Fifth Avenue in New York City. The shoe department is so big it has its own ZIP code! It's where I channel my inner Carrie Bradshaw.

Do you live in Ballantyne?

I've lived in Ballantyne for 16 years.

What is your favorite Ballantyne-area restaurant?

This is a hard question; I'm such a foodie. I'd say it's a toss-up between 131 Main and Firebirds at StoneCrest, but I'll never say no to the guacamole at Cantina 1511.

What is your favorite outdoor activity?

Nothing brings me more joy than playing with my sweet labradoodle, Bentlee.

Describe your dream vacation.

The four on my must-see list are Hawaii, an Alaskan cruise, Paris and Italy.

What is your favorite news source?

I'm such a news junkie. For local news, I turn to WCNC and WBT Radio. For national news, I'm a big fan of my friend Bob Woodruff on ABC World News.

I would rather be caught dead than wear ____.

Pantyhose or a Michigan Wolverines jersey — never, ever, ever!

What charitable organizations are you involved with?

I'm especially proud of the Liz Murray Scholarship Fund that I oversee for the breakfast club. I'm also involved with Classroom Central, Second Harvest Food Bank, American Red Cross, March Forth With Hope Foundation and many other meaningful nonprofits.

What is a hidden gem in the Ballantyne area?

My trainer, Nick Bucci, at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge is the best money I spend each week.

Share something that someone would never guess about you.

I have three tattoos.



SAMI TEKIN

Birthplace: Istanbul.

Job: Co-owner, Ballantyne Jewelers.

What do you like most about your job?

Helping make the moments in people's lives truly special.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Crème brûlée.

Do you live in Ballantyne?

No.

What is your favorite Ballantyne-area restaurant?

Gallery Restaurant and Viva Chicken.

What is your favorite outdoor activity?

Swimming with my children.

Describe your dream vacation.

A yacht cruise on the Mediterranean.

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

"My Way" by Frank Sinatra.

What is your favorite news source?

The Wall Street Journal.

I would rather be caught dead than wear ____.

A Speedo swimsuit.

What charitable organizations are you involved with?

Mitey Riders. My son is involved in the program.

What is your biggest pet peeve?

Complainers.

What is a hidden gem in the Ballantyne area?

Amelie's.

Share something that someone would never guess about you.

I love to cook and host dinner and drinks for family and friends.

JULIE WADLEY

Birthplace: Washington, D.C.

Job: Owner, Eli Simone Matchmaking & Coaching.

What do you like most about your job?

I love hearing great client feedback. Whether it is about a wonderful date that I've set up for them or when they have made purposeful choices that help move them toward their relationship goals — I just love seeing people happy.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Binge-watching classic television shows from the '90s.

Do you live in Ballantyne?

Very close. I live in Weddington.

What is your favorite Ballantyne-area restaurant?

Hands down, Basil is my favorite restaurant (Thai 1st Bistro is a close second).

What is your favorite outdoor activity?

Taking the kids to Carowinds. Great exercise for me, loads of fun for them!

Describe your dream vacation.

I would love to go to Bora Bora. I am "plugged in" an average of 18 hours a day, so a place that allows you to tune out the world sounds like heaven.

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

"It's My Time" by Kelly Price.

What is your favorite news source?

CNN.

I would rather be caught dead than wear ____.

Anything tie-dye. What an eyesore!

What charitable organizations are you involved with?

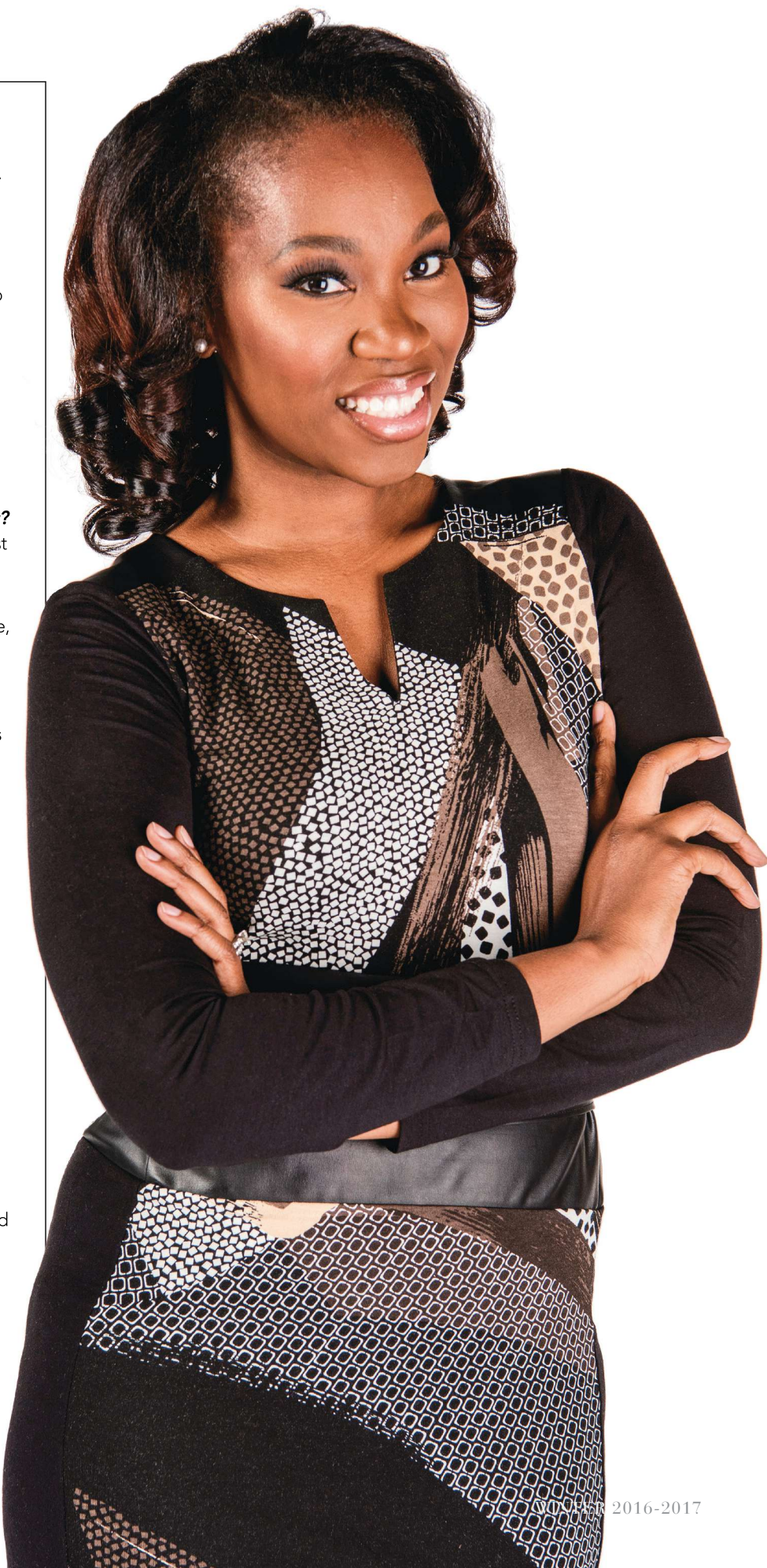
I am a member of the Union County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., which supports the American Red Cross, Turning Point, St. Jude and other organizations.

What is a hidden gem in the Ballantyne area?

The Ballantyne Corporate Park Card. There are so many wonderful small shops and restaurants in the area, and it offers (park tenants) great discounts and ideas on things to do. My business recently joined.

Share something that someone would never guess about you.

I am SUPER competitive. Last summer I was asked to be part of a local charity Lip Sync Battle for Citizen Schools. Picking a fun song to perform was not enough. I learned a choreography routine and got two professional background dancers to boot. Over the top? Maybe a little, but hey — I won! 🏆



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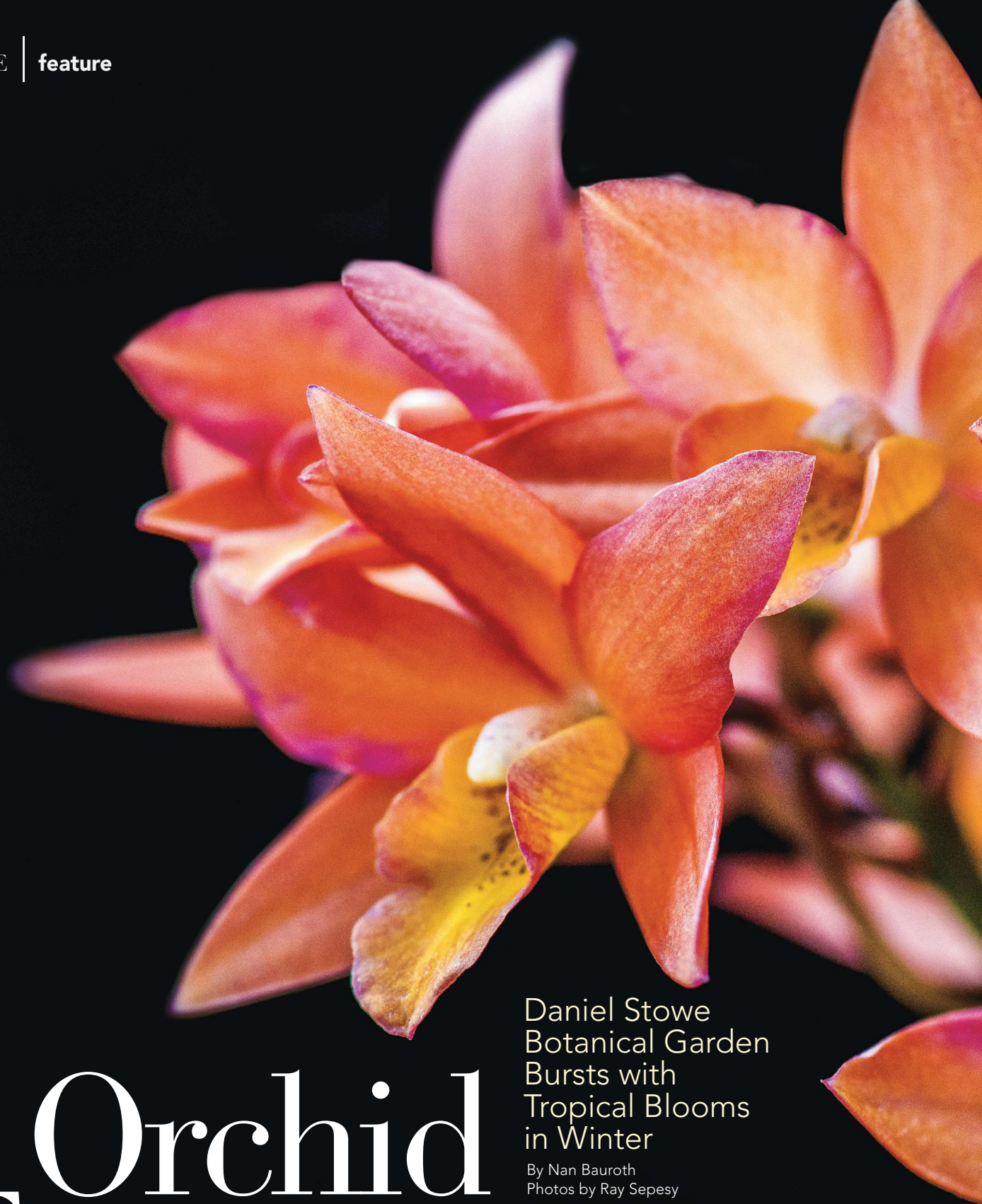
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Orchid Extravaganza

Daniel Stowe
Botanical Garden
Bursts with
Tropical Blooms
in Winter

By Nan Bauroth
Photos by Ray Sepesy



"IF YOU ARE IN THE COMPANY OF GOOD PEOPLE, IT IS LIKE ENTERING A ROOMFUL OF ORCHIDS," Confucius observed, believing these exotic flowers possessed a noble character for their lasting fragrance and tenacity.

Fortunately for those who live and work in Ballantyne, an orchid extravaganza featuring more than 250 of these exquisite plants at their peak of glory awaits this winter at nearby Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden (DSBG) Orchid Conservatory, one of the

largest glass orchid display houses in the Southeast.

"The nearest comparable conservatories are in Atlanta and Norfolk, Va.," says Joe Dorrian, manager of the orchid conservatory, noting that DSBG's glass house stands three stories tall and contains almost 9,000 square feet. Since it opened in 2008, the orchid population on the DSBG property, mostly in production greenhouses, has grown in excess of 10,000 plants and 800 species, with around 30 of these species in bloom at any one time. "Our orchid collection has one of the largest densities of cattleyas in the U.S. because we are attempting to become

Iwanagara Apple Blossom 'Elfin Magic' is one of more than 10,000 orchids at the conservatory.

Winter is the height of orchid season because it is summer for these tropical plants.

the premier destination for this species," Dorrian notes.

Winter is the height of orchid season because it is summer for these tropical plants. Entering the orchid conservatory, massive arches of tillandsia usher visitors into a lush habitat that imitates the three distinct growing climates of an Andean mountain, starting with drier lowland foothills that are home to succulents, including a 100-year-old sago palm.

Next is the mid-mountain

rainforest featuring a spectacular "Cascade Wall" bedecked in vibrant orchid blossoms. The final zone emulates the highland with its cooler temperatures ideal for fruit trees. This section also includes a rare vanilla plant with seed pods, as well as a cacao tree with chocolate growing on it. "If you are a plant geek, you can spend a whole day in the conservatory and be dumbfounded by the diversity of over 200 tropical species," Dorrian says.

Orchids you can see at Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden include *Doritis pulcherrima* (clockwise from upper right), *Beallara Marfitch* 'Howard's Dream', *Phalaenopsis Sogo Yukidian* variation 3, *Cymbidium* hybrid and the Cascade Wall of rainforest varieties.





Orchid Conservatory Manager Joe Dorrian oversees the care of orchids as well as arches of tillandsia (left) that greet visitors.

Elegant Beauty

Orchids have long enchanted people for their elegant beauty, sensuality and unusual form. According to Dorrian, an orchid is three sets of three: three petals, three sepals and three sexual organs — pistol, stamen and ovum — combined into one. “That is the defining pinnacle of an orchid, what differentiates them from any other plant on the planet,” he says.

Despite their seemingly fragile blossoms, orchids appear everywhere on the globe with the exception of aquatic and arctic extremes. Some grow right up to the edge of glaciers, and others thrive underground in Australia, including three species that never see daylight. Here in the Carolinas there are 65 native species.

Every week Dorrian and his staff spend eight hours freshening the orchids on display in the conservatory and main building.

The conservatory relies on state-of-the-art equipment to maintain an ideal interior



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“Stepping inside the orchid conservatory in the middle of winter is an instant escape to a tropical paradise.”

— JJ Bissell, The Bissell Companies

environment for tropical species while preserving natural resources. Water comes from an aquifer on the property. The lower story of the conservatory houses furnaces and water purifiers, along with computers that run the atmospherics and

track humidity, temperatures and wind variances — even opening windows when needed for a breeze. A special fogging system increases humidity every 10 seconds. “We used to do all that by hand,” Dorrian says, “but now we have fully automated

greenhouses. This is space-age technology.”

JJ Bissell, senior vice president and director of The Bissell Companies serves on the DSBG Board of Visitors. “Stepping inside the orchid conservatory in the middle of winter is an instant escape to

a tropical paradise,” he says.

As part of its corporate mission of sustainability, The Bissell Companies gives a DSBG membership to every fulltime employee to encourage them and their families to appreciate the beauty of nature and the need



The Cymbidium hybrid (clockwise from left), Cattleya hybrid, a bay of epiphytic blooms and the Phalaenopsis hybrid are part of the Orchid Conservatory.

Photo by Annie Arntz

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to protect the environment for future generations.

Orchid Tree and Show

Through Jan. 1, DSBG is staging its annual 20-foot tall "Orchid Tree" in the main lobby, featuring 300 individual orchids and 165 Boston ferns. Dorrian believes DSBG is the only botanical garden in the country that creates one of these magnificent decorations.

Following that, Feb. 3-5, the North Carolina Piedmont Orchid Society kicks off DSBG's "Art & Orchids" exhibit with the society's annual show and plant sale, an event that features orchid displays and art, as well as classes for orchid beginners.

The theme for this year's Art & Orchids — which runs through March 19 — is "Victorian Botanicals," highlighting botanical illustrations of orchids and non-orchids from the Victorian era, the heyday of orchid discovery.

In addition to orchids, DSBG offers visitors three miles of woodland trails, a gift shop and guided tours by appointment.

"We have a special tour called the Orchid Expedition where you see the conservatory and my growing greenhouses, which are where the real magic happens," Dorrian says.

As for the fine art of growing orchids, he says a greenhouse isn't necessary, but there is a continuum of difficulty. "It goes from ridiculously easy to standing on my head and performing a black magic ritual in the middle of the night."

Greet the Holidays Smiling

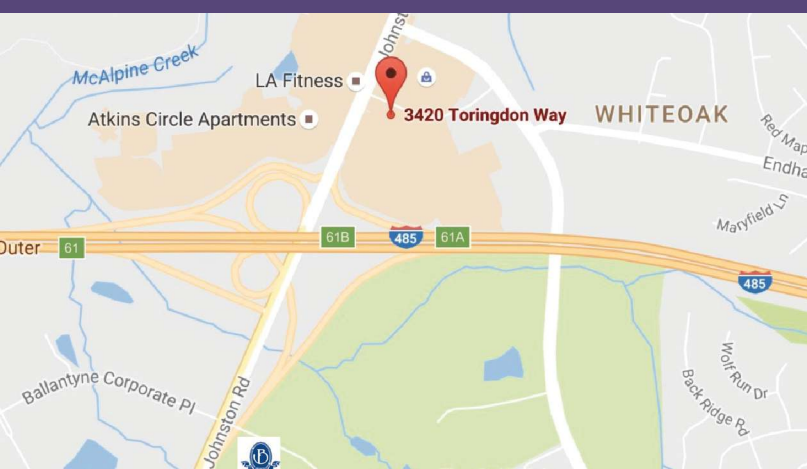


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Winter Wowza


WARM UP WITH HOT LOOKS

By Whitley Adkins Hamlin
www.thequeencitystyle.com

Photos by Ray Sepesy

FROM CAMEL TO CAMO, fashionistas are stepping out in classy winter styles. We spotlight four of the most popular looks you'll see this season.

They are camo's tough-girl cool, camel's timeless luxe, gray's one-note chic and prep's maritime panache.

If you assemble your own take on these trends, share your creation on social media and tag #ballantynemag. We'd love to see your fashion statement! 

Camo Chic

For ultimate downtown style, (any Kate Moss fans out there?), pair a couture camo coat with a pair of dark grey or dirty black jeans. Add biker boots for full on head to toe tough-girl cool, or create a little tension by wearing your coat and denim with favorite stilettos.



Mr&Mrs Italy
Chinchilla
Camo Parka,
\$4,195, Capitol

Chloé Kurtis
Shoulder Bag,
\$1,750, Capitol

Moto Boot,
\$525, Coach

Illesteva Mirrored
Lens Sunglasses,
\$290, Innovative
Eye Care

Camel Couture

The eternal standard for timeless luxury, camel takes a walk on the fashion-forward side with distinguishing details that include substantial zippers and buttons, contrast stitching and a daringly sized fur collar. Paired with lace-up velvet boots, you're right in step with one of the season's biggest fabrics and trends.



Andrew Gn Wool Blend
Coat with Fox Fur Collar,
\$3,895, Coplon's

Gucci Marmont Small
Top Handle Satchel Bag,
\$2,300, Neiman Marcus

Tabitha Simmons Afton
Velvet Ankle Boots,
\$845, Coplon's

Rag & Bone Floppy Brim
Fedora, \$195, Coplon's

Chanel 5328 Sunglasses,
\$450, Innovative Eye Care



Pas de Calais Acrylic,
Alpaca, Nylon Sock
Coat \$975, TRC W

Stuart Weitzman Lowland
Over the Knee Boot,
\$798, Nordstrom

Chloé Marcie Medium
Leather Crossbody Bag,
\$1,490, Neiman Marcus

Faliero Sarti Cashmere and
Silk Scarf, \$395, TRC W

Iconic Leather Gloves,
\$115, Coach

Chanel 5349 Sunglasses,
\$350, Innovative Eye Care

Gray Day

For a smart monochromatic twist, layer a sweater dress of a similar hue under a head to toe look of gray. Paired with the always in style Stuart Weitzman Lowland suede over-the-knee boot, this sophisticated look is comfortable yet subtly commanding. It works exceptionally well for the frequent flyer or any other on-the-go gal.

continued on page 50



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Naval Officer Coat,
\$995, Coach

Rogue Bag 25, \$595, Coach

Aldo Jackie Boot,
\$160, Aldo

Sofia Cashmere Cable-Knit
Cashmere Fur Pom Beanie
Hat, \$125, Neiman Marcus

Barton Perreira Seraphina
Sunglasses, \$485,
Innovative Eye Care



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MLS# 3198548 / \$899,000



Bridget Graves
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8950 N DORCHESTER TRACE
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MLS# 3146791 / \$509,000



Vickie Crawford
704.942.8086



4610 OLD COURSE DRIVE
Piper Glen / 5 BR / 4.2 BA
MLS# 3220466 / \$1,000,000



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The broccoli rabe and sausage pizza is a favorite at True Crafted Pizza.

Pull-up Party

Vintage 'Big Red' and True Crafted Pizza Deliver Fun

By Amy Rogers | Photos by Ray Sepesy

NOW THAT IT'S THE SEASON OF PARTIES THAT CARRY US INTO A NEW YEAR AND BEYOND, you might be surprised to learn that one of the "hottest" trends making its way around town is literally doing just that. Yes, "Big Red," the vintage truck with its own mobile pizza oven, is on the road.

Big Red is the event-catering vehicle from True Crafted Pizza, a Ballantyne restaurant known for fresh, good food. When the shiny truck pulls up, chefs emerge to cook and serve everything from fresh-baked pizza to grilled shrimp to roasted filet mignon.

It began when members of the Callaghan, Gallinek and Martino families decided to take part in Charlotte's emerging culinary scene and open a restaurant. Ken Martino and Todd Gallinek traveled the U.S. sampling and scrutinizing pizza. They commissioned the creation of their own proprietary dough and opened True Crafted Pizza in May 2013. It's a modern space with a comfortable vibe, and the thoughtfulness is evident. Co-owner Ken Martino explains, "We want to elevate the quality and the service experience."

Pizza Creations

Menu standouts include the applewood bacon and egg pizza with roasted potatoes, perfect anytime, even for breakfast. A hybrid of modern and traditional ingredients results in a delicious broccoli rabe and sausage creation.

These and many others are oven baked in time-honored style, but the eatery is especially favored by people who crave a newer style of cookery: pizza prepared on a grill. This imparts a smoky flavor to the crust. The signature prosciutto di Parma pizza is grilled with tangy arugula, fig preserves, balsamic glaze, and topped with Asiago and Parmesan cheeses. On chilly days, a grilled four-cheese sandwich is a simple pleasure, served with



A former farm truck, Big Red contains a Valoriani oven and is fully reconditioned.

"There's a fine line between a perfectly cooked pizza and a fireball."

— Chef Brendan Treyball



The restaurant's elongated table showcases pizza selections and the popular four-cheese sandwich.



True Crafted Pizza co-owner Ken Martino

house-made tomato soup and basil oil.

The owners had seen mobile rigs in other cities, so it wasn't long after opening their storefront that they'd found a truck of their own to be upfitted with everything they'd need to stage an outdoor pizza party. The candy-apple red 1947 Ford, formerly a farm truck, is fully reconditioned with a Valoriani oven that can reach 1,000 degrees, a large grill, refrigeration units, firewood and running water. Pop-up awnings, rough-hewn tables and lights complete Big Red's gear.

Custom Menus


As a native New Yorker and veteran of the restaurant trade, Brendan Treyball knows all about pizza and the quirks of mobile cookery. The personable chef says, "There's a fine line between a perfectly cooked pizza and a fireball." (Not to worry — Treyball and Big Red have produced as many as 200 pizzas in an hour without incident.)

More than 50 rigs are listed on the Charlotte Food Truck Association's website. Big Red is different than most in that it's not a vending truck that parks on city streets to sell to passersby. But that's not to imply Big Red is hard to find: It's a familiar fixture at neighborhood block parties as well as golf outings at Piper Glen and The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge. One of the Carolina Panthers booked Big Red for a private party. So did the Symphony Guild of Charlotte during its



Chef Brendan Treyball travels with Big Red to cook pizza and other dishes.

"Heart of the Home Kitchen Tour" in fall 2016 (see page 94).

Couples have even turned to Big Red to cater their weddings. It's just another of the many ways that True Crafted Pizza really delivers. 



The signature prosciutto di Parma pizza is grilled with tangy arugula, fig preserves, balsamic glaze, and topped with Asiago and Parmesan cheeses.

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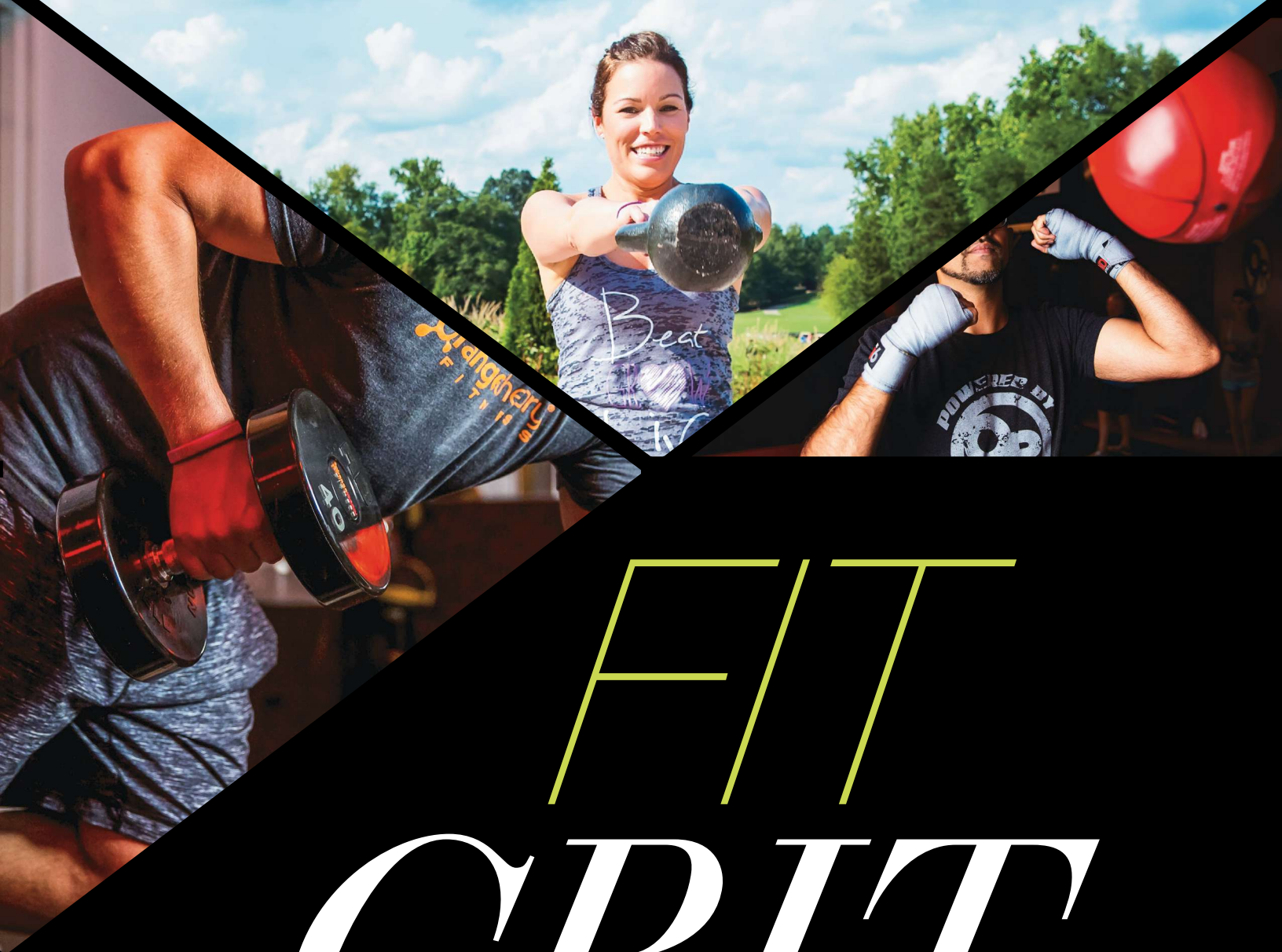


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FIT *GRIT*

Meet Six Locals Who Focus
on Wellness Despite Challenges

By Dawn Liles | Photos by LunahZon Photography

INJURY, LACK OF TIME AND ABSENCE OF MOTIVATION are popular excuses why many people abandon their fitness routines.

Yet, these Ballantyne-area residents prioritize exercise on their weekly calendars — no matter how busy they are or what challenges they face. Read on to see what inspires your neighbors of all ages to get fit and improve their health.



ANKUR SHAH

39, Pediatrician

Member, 9Round Ballantyne

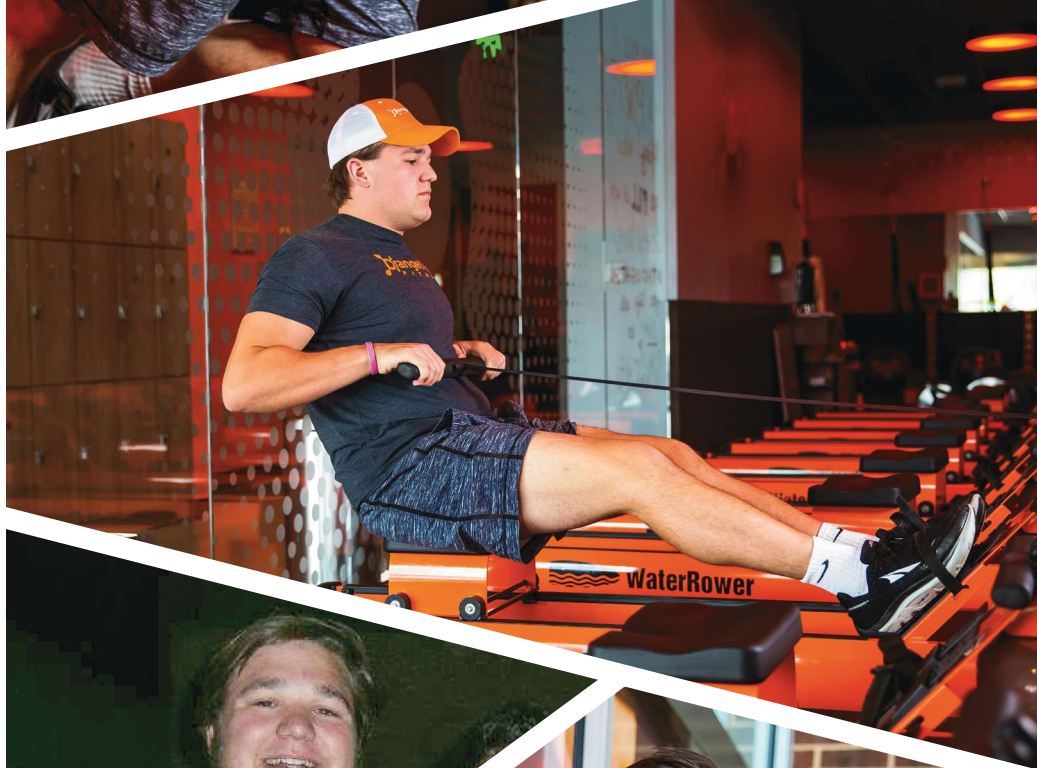
“ With my roles as a husband, a physician in a medical practice and a father of two very young children, it's easy to say I'm too busy to exercise. But I started to put on weight, had some back issues and knew I needed to do something consistently. I started here (9Round Ballantyne) about 18 months ago and have never wanted to quit. (Owners) Mark and Suzy made this experience transforming for me. The environment here is small and family friendly, and the workouts change daily. Three to five days a week I work out at 5 a.m. and often see the same people. My long-standing back issues have been reduced significantly since I've been working out. I've always eaten pretty healthy, but I've gotten better about portion control and eating more protein, which vegetarians don't always get enough of. I've lost 15 pounds since April, but more importantly, I have increased energy and actually look forward to working out again. ”



NICK DECARLO

**24, Studying to Obtain his
Personal Training Certificate**

**Sales Associate,
Orangetheory Fitness**



“ I’ve always been an active guy, but my eating habits in college weren’t the healthiest. By age 22, I weighed 315 pounds. My mom is into health food, and she made me realize you can’t outrun a bad diet. You can easily get confused by all the information out there, so I keep my diet simple and basically drink only water. I lost 100 pounds in a year. I started working at Orangetheory, and I’m never bored working out, since the workouts change every day. The workout is half cardio based and half strength based and it has helped me develop lean muscle. For me, consistency is key; once you start to see things change, your motivation will definitely increase. ”



“ I have always worked out, but I've never been much of a runner. My friend DeeDee asked me if I wanted to join the Isabella Santos running team last year, but I declined due to intimidation of the distance. But this year she convinced me to try it, and I'm hooked. There are 150 of us on the team training for different half marathon races, but Coach Tom makes each of us feel individually important. I have always been thin but not muscular, so my trainer Betsy (Shuster) helped me to significantly increase my strength and muscle. I only weigh myself once a year at the doctor. I listen to my body and know I need to make a change if my clothes don't feel right. I drink mostly water or coffee and occasionally, Deep Eddy (vodka). It's all about balance! The older I get, the more I am willing to spend the money to invest in my health. I have a 4-year-old daughter and want to be able to keep up with her. ”

MARY SCHMITT

38, Works in Information Technology

Trains at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge



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HARRY DILL

70, Retired Business Owner

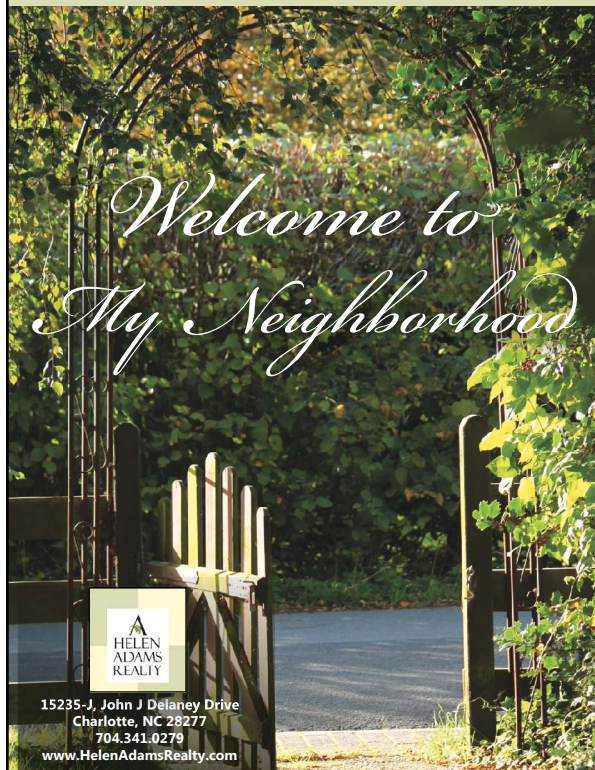
Patient, Carolina Neurosurgery & Spine Associates

7.7 Golf Handicap

“ The love of golf has kept me actively in the game for 30 years. I've had back, rotator cuff and knee surgeries in order to keep living an active life. A PT (physical therapist) can get you started, but people have to be responsible for their own health and actually follow through and do the exercises prescribed for them. Every day I do a lot of stretches, core work and try and stick to a low-carb diet. I've lost 30 pounds, and being healthier helps me reach my goal every year: to shoot my age. ”



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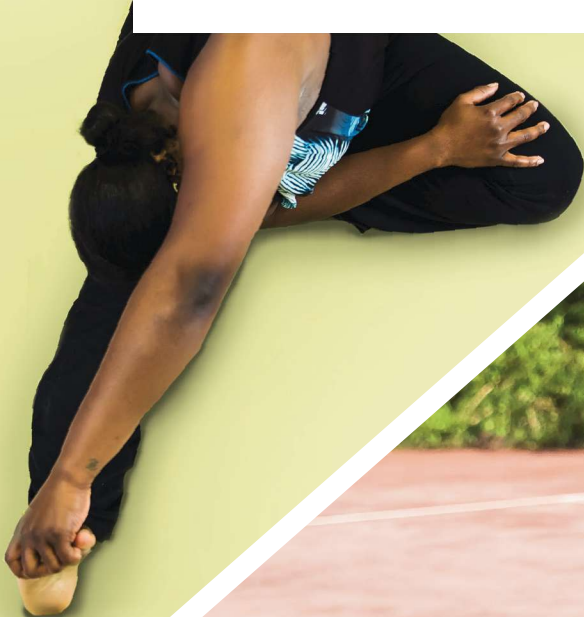


JENNIFER VAN DYKE-MENSAH

34, Co-owner, Green Village Children's Academy

Enjoys Going to Yoga One and Yoga2

“ Yoga and my faith have been constants for me. I was a competitive soccer player and by age 19 my knees were shot. While in college, I went into a depression, gained weight and hardly wanted to get off the couch. Yoga saved me when I could no longer run 10 miles a day. It only took me about a week to feel the benefits of practicing yoga. I do my best to eat organic, and I love to cook and try new foods. My business partner and I opened a new green and environmentally friendly child development center this past July. We teach yoga to the children and they love it! Kids get the same positive benefits from yoga that we do. ”





DAVID GUY

**60, Retired Army Master Sergeant,
Guitar Player**

Member, Blakeney Racquet and Swim Club

“ I attempt to stay active and positive. I suffer from various disorders and past injuries after serving in the military for almost 23 years, which hasn't always been easy. Being a part of this (tennis) club has in essence saved my life. I try to play mindful tennis or Zen, if you will. It helps keep me in the moment. The people keep me coming back; it's like my refuge. The social nature keeps me interested! ”

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Special Deliveries



Two Babies Make their Debuts along Well-Known Ballantyne Roadways

By Michelle Boudin
Photos by Ray Sepesy

ANNIE BRANNON AND DANNY FERMAGLICH SHARE AN UNUSUAL CONNECTION: their first breaths came not in the hospital or birthing center their parents planned but alongside well-known Ballantyne blacktops.

Annie's mom, Shayne Brannon, knows she sounds just a little bit crazy. She tells people she had a dream about giving birth to her fifth child in the front seat of the family mini-van — and the dream came true.



“It happens so fast; you don’t really think about it. You just do what you need to do.”

— Shayne Brannon



Photo courtesy of the Brannon family

Annie Brannon (top) enjoys celebrating annually at her birth site. Brothers Jim and Jacob (right) and parents Mike and Shayne (left) commemorated Annie’s 20th birthday with her last fall. The whole family (bottom) gets a kick out of Annie’s birth story. Joining her and her parents are siblings Jacob, Michael, Erin and Jim.

“I remember I told my neighbor I had the craziest dream,” she recalls. “I don’t usually remember my dreams but that morning my friend called me and I told her I dreamed about having the baby in the car.”

It was November 1996 and Brannon’s four older kids kept the family in a perpetual state of activity. “Life was very busy back then trying to get everyone where they were supposed to be,” she says laughing.

Her oldest was in the ninth grade, her youngest in pre-school, and that fall day she and husband Mike were running to teacher conferences.

“I was in labor, but I didn’t tell anyone,” she says. After all, Shayne had been down this road four times before. She knew the drill.

“My labors had always been kind of long except for the one right before my daughter,” she says. “He came very quickly at the hospital, but the doctors thought it was a fluke.”

It wasn’t.

“It happens so fast; you don’t really think about it,” she says. “You just do what you need to do.”

They’d finished with the school conferences and were home for the night when she calmly told her husband it was time to go to the hospital. He didn’t understand just how urgent the situation was.

Laced with Meaning

“We needed to leave the house, but he was getting his boots on and he was trying to



“Mike was really freaking out because he didn’t hear the baby cry.”

— Lauren Fermaglich



Photo courtesy of the Fermaglich family

tie up his boots and taking so much time,” she remembers. “I was like, ‘Just put shoes on!’”

Turns out the boots were a good call.

The laces came in handy when on the way to the hospital Shayne knew they weren’t going to make it. “We got to the intersection of Ballantyne Commons Parkway and Elm Lane and that’s where my water broke.”

Less than a quarter mile later, she gave birth to Annie.

Mike barely had time to pull over and catch his daughter as she came out. Then he called 911 and listened as emergency dispatchers explained that he should use

the shoelaces from his boots to tie the umbilical cord.

Shayne sat there with newborn Annie on her chest while they waited on the ambulance, and it suddenly occurred to her that they should take some pictures. “In my dream that’s what we did,” she says, “so that’s what we did!”

Flashes of the dream she’d had kept coming back to her — and coming true. The one thing she hadn’t dreamed about, or found out ahead of time was the sex of the baby. “At first Mike thought it was a boy; he just didn’t look that closely!” she recalls.

Once the ambulance arrived,



Danny Fermaglich (top left, foreground) poses with dad Mike, sister Shoshana, mom Lauren, brother Jonah and the mini-van Danny was born in. Lauren and Danny (top right) at the hospital soon after his birth. Jonah (bottom), Danny and Shoshana.



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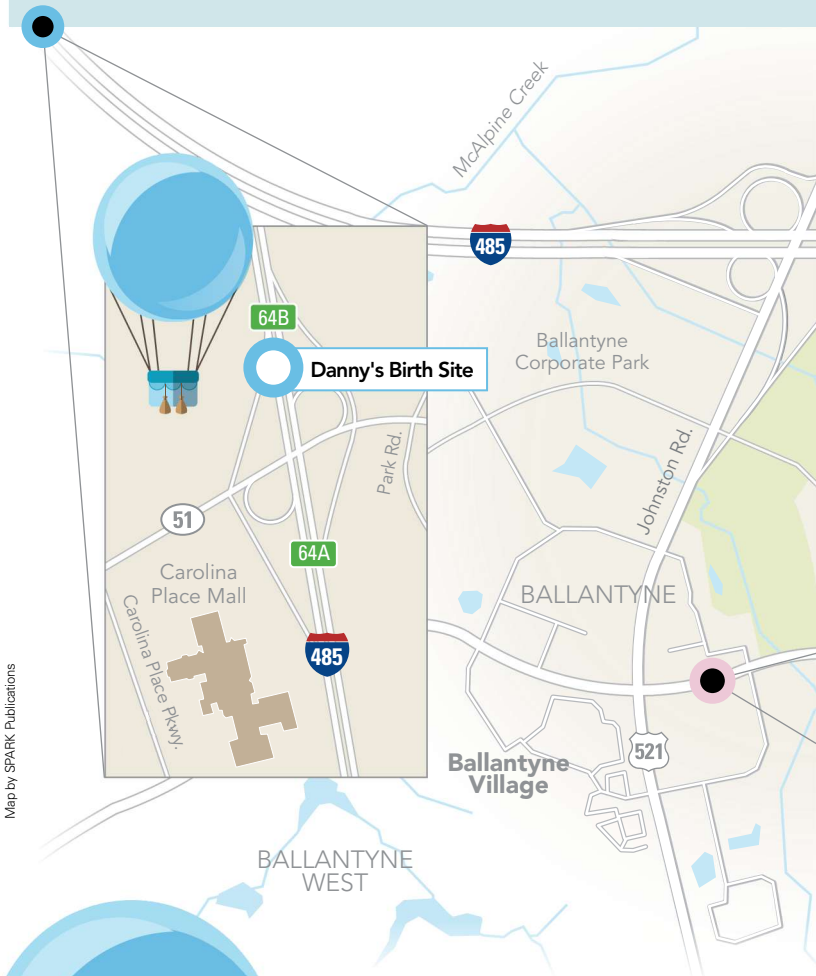
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Map by SPARK Publications



DANNY FERMAGLICH

Born: April 5, 2011

Location: Alongside Exit
64 B of Interstate 485.

they went to the hospital and mom and baby were healthy. But the family loves Annie's birth story so much they go back every year to the intersection where the now 20-year-old was born and leave a balloon on her birthday.

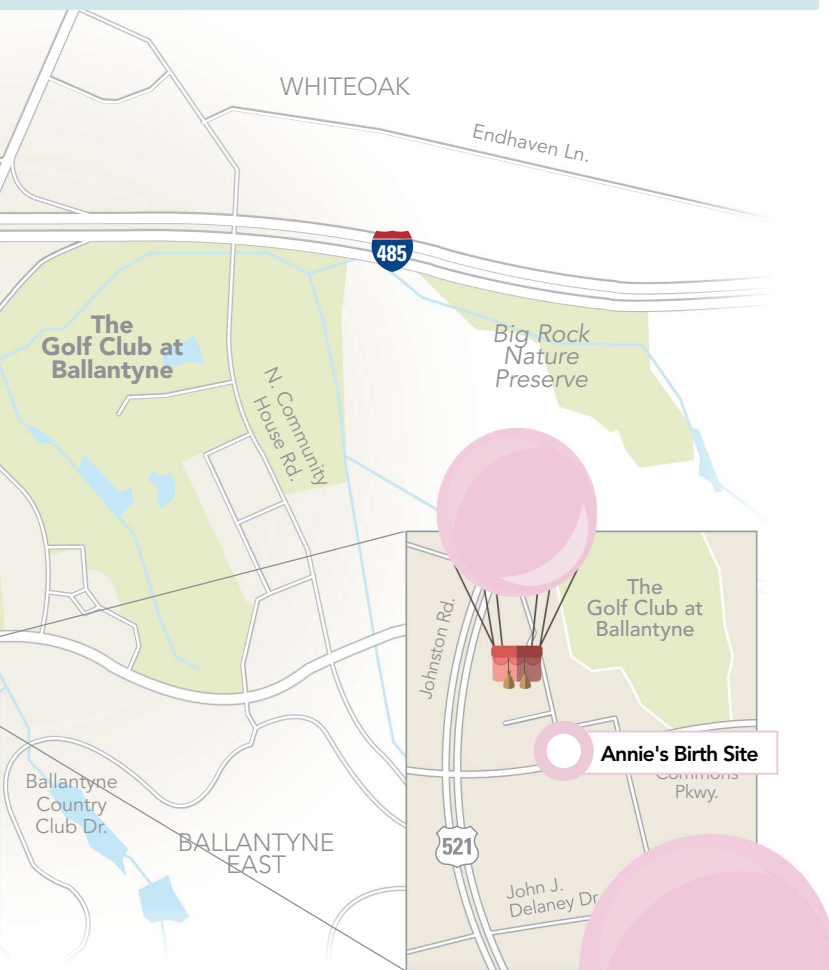
"It's just something fun we like to do — Annie, her dad and me," her mom says.

'Delivered through My Shorts'

The Brannons, however, aren't the only Ballantyne family that didn't make it to the hospital for a birth.

"He was delivered through my shorts," Lauren

BALLANTYNE BIRTH MARKS



Fermaglich says of giving birth to son Danny in the car in April 2011.

Fermaglich was planning on going to a birthing center in Fort Mill. Her first child was born in a hospital, but she wanted a calmer setting for her second.

Things didn't go as planned for the New Jersey transplant and her husband.

Fermaglich was still a week away from her due date when she had some contractions. She didn't really think it was time, so she was doing chores around the house. "I remember a lot of pain and all of a sudden I said, 'We really have to get going,'" she

ANNIE BRANNON

Born: Nov. 7, 1996

Location: Alongside Ballantyne Commons Parkway not far from Johnston Road. There was nothing there at the time. Today, it's near the entrance to Gallery Restaurant at The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge.



Charlotte Catholic High School

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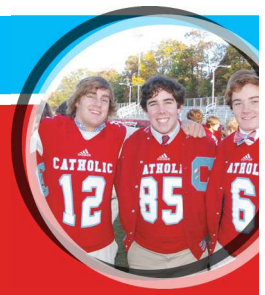
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remembers. "I ran downstairs and my water broke."

She and husband Mike got as far as Ballantyne Commons Parkway and Tom Short Road when Lauren realized there was no way they'd make it to the birthing center. She wasn't even sure they'd make it to a nearby hospital.

Stopping at Red Lights?!

"My husband is a rule follower, and he kept stopping at all the red lights and I was yelling at him for stopping!" she recounts. "I knew it was close and then all of a sudden we were on (Interstate) 485 and I could feel the head. I thought there was no way, that's not possible."

One push and Danny was out.


And her husband had just missed the exit for the hospital.

"I said to Mike, 'I just had the baby,' and he's like, 'No way.'"

She pulled Danny onto her chest and could feel he was breathing. He wasn't crying, though, for a good 30 seconds and her husband was in a panic. "Mike was really freaking out because he didn't hear the baby cry," she says.

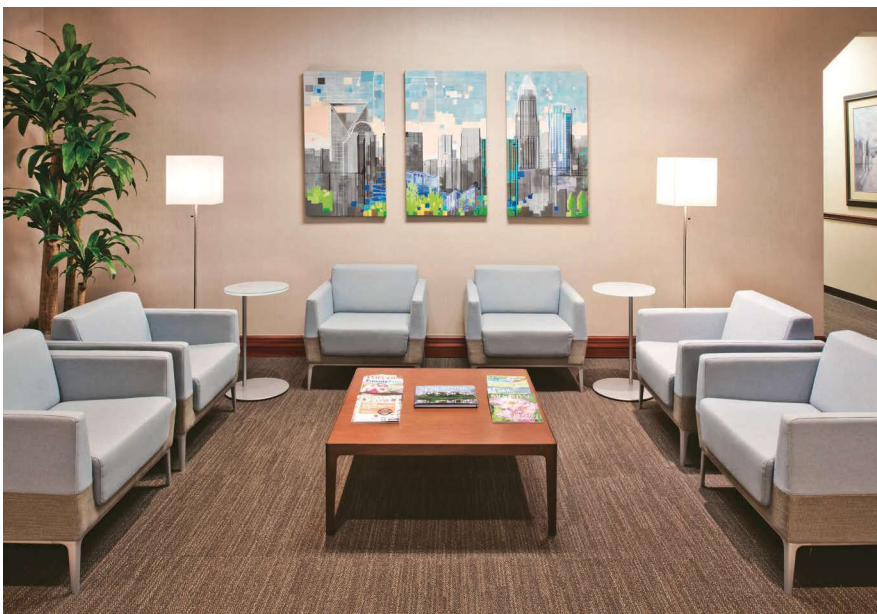
They finally got to the hospital and realized Danny was just fine.

They love telling the story of how their son came into the world — so much so they refuse to get rid of the 2007 Toyota mini-van he was born in.

"Whenever we go to the dealership, they always ask if we want to trade it in — we say no!" Lauren says. "We keep it for sentimental reasons." 



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Eggplant Parmesan is a main course that's tasty and easy to prepare.

Photo by Liz Ren

Simple & Delish

Delight Guests this Winter with Good, Fresh Food

By Liz Ren

"You don't have to cook fancy or complicated masterpieces — just good food from fresh ingredients."

— Julia Child

I HEARTILY BELIEVE THAT ADVICE FROM THE LATE GREAT CHEF. Using easy do's and don'ts below, you can create a simple, delicious meal and a warm gathering for your guests.

Do pick simple recipes that use a few great ingredients.

When I entertain, I start with the best ingredients. Take the time to buy fresh products that taste amazing on their own. That's just as important as how you cook it.

I'm always looking for ways to save time when I am entertaining a large group. Investing in a few quality ingredients will simplify your preparation and make each dish extra special.

Good ingredients mean the freshest produce and meat that you can buy or prepared foods like bread, pickles and cheese from a source that you trust and only using ingredients you recognize.

Don't overcomplicate your menu.

Focus on one delicious dish for each course. Spend your time making each course impactful. Don't worry about not having enough variety. Look at your menu and create a balanced meal across the courses (see the sample menu with this story).

Also, you don't have to make everything. If you don't like making appetizers, buy one. For example, pair your favorite cheeses with fresh fruit. Pick up par-baked bread from the freezer section of your

Mulling a Menu?

If you're looking for a menu for a fresh, flavorful meal, here is a sample from Liz Ren.

All of the recipes are at www.ballantynemagazine.com.

Grilled Romaine with Lemon Parmesan Dressing



Roasted Eggplant Parmesan



Zucchini Noodles



Toasted Quinoa



Prosecco Floats



grocery store (my favorite is made by La Brea Bakery, and I pick it up at Harris Teeter), bake right before your guests arrive and welcome them with warm, fragrant bread (yum!). Serve with local pickles or an artisanal jam that your cheese guy recommends (I love the organic Adriatic fig spread at Whole Foods) and you have a great first course and conversation starter.


Do take time to prepare before your guests arrive.

Test the recipes on your menu beforehand. Make what you know tastes delicious. This is not the time to experiment.

Also, make as much as you can before the guests arrive. Pick dishes that you know will taste better made in advance. For example, braised dishes are perfect for winter entertaining. They are simple to prepare and well suited for produce that is seasonal in winter (potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, onions and winter squashes like butternut, acorn and pumpkin). You can prepare the dish the day before and warm it up during your party in time for the main course.

Put together a plan with a timeline (see next page) so that you can easily serve your guests without missing a beat at your party. Essential to that is gathering all your ingredients and preparing them before you start cooking. As my chefs at culinary school used to say to me, "mise en place" (French culinary phrase for "everything in its place") is the key to success.

Don't forget to enjoy yourself.

Your friends and family have come to spend time with you. Create an environment in which you can be relaxed. Make sure your house is clean. Set your table ahead of time with your best plates, flatware, glassware and linens. Decorate with big bowls of fresh fruit or bunches of fresh flowers. Put on your favorite party music. Your guests will follow your lead and have a great time. 



Liz Ren is a recovering food services entrepreneur. She recently closed POP UP Supper Shop, a chef-quality meal service. She is currently searching

for her next adventure and planning to start a food blog in Charlotte.

Tiffany Ashmore, Kriston Photography

Create a Prep Timeline

A preparation timeline will help you easily move through steps required to host a dinner party that you and everyone can enjoy. This example is based on the menu featured in this story.



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RALLY AIDS WOMEN AND RESEARCH

The 13th annual BCC Rally featured six breast cancer fundraising events at Ballantyne Country Club in September. Each gathering had a summer beach vibe: The Night in the Caribbean Gala, the Set Sail into Rally Ladies' Golf and Luncheon, the Men's Pink Ball Tournament and the Racquet for Rally Beach Bash.

Since the first BCC Rally in 2004, the all-volunteer nonprofit has raised more than \$1.6 million to support local women and Susan G. Komen's national research programs.

Photos courtesy of BCC Rally



1. Al and Beth Wojcik, Cindy and Curt Grantham
2. Iris Levkovitz, Jennifer Carpenter, Pinku Mukherjee, Jennifer Meads, Maura McCarthy Sanborn
3. Janet LeClair, Maureen Andreassi, Janice Ward, Heidi Carney
4. Men's Pink Ball Tournament participants
5. Tracey Augins, Ellen McKane, Kristin Schuler, Allison Parker
6. Set Sail into Rally Ladies' Golf and Luncheon participants
7. Natalie Corrigan, Sue Dockstader, Carol Aaron, Marcia Myers Gainer, Maura McCarthy Sanborn, Melanie Trotter, Robin Saddler, Karen Rutledge, Jacque Farrell Mulholland
8. Missy O'Daniel, Vonda Huss, Carrie Baker, Beth Kerwood
9. Vivian Segnini, Caitlin Cridland, Yasmine Alkema, Megan Kauffman
10. Racquet for Rally Beach Bash participants
11. Mark and Tami Simmons





GOLF TOURNEY BENEFITS MISSION

The Charlotte Rescue Mission held its first annual golf tournament at The Golf Club at Ballantyne in September. Eighty golfers participated and raised more than \$40,000 to support the mission's residential recovery programs, Rebound (men) and Dove's Nest (women).

The event's title sponsor was the John Hancock company, presenting sponsor was Rodgers Builders and lunch was donated by Dilworth Neighborhood Grille.

Photos courtesy of
Charlotte Rescue Mission



1. Eric Speckman, Chris Warren, David Dwyer, Matt Kuhn, Sharon Bremer
2. Pam Aiken, Barbara Haggert, Conrad Hill
3. Butch, Will, Hunter and Dane Robinson
4. John Taylor, Keith Garbrick, Matt Agner, Brian Klauka
5. Tucker Windle, Mitchell Davis, Walt Fisher, David Craft
6. Mike Metcalf, Sharon Bremer
7. Tony Marciano, Brian Esarey, Jeff Knight, Kendall Curtis
8. Steve Cummings, John Parker, Ken Gillard, David Napier

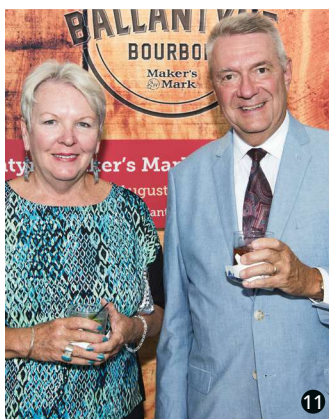
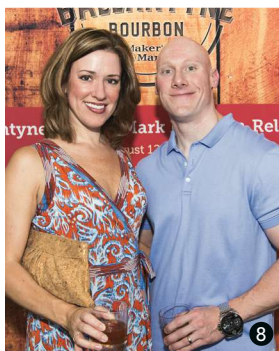
THE BALLANTYNE UNVEILS SELECT BOURBON

The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge hosted a dinner Aug. 12 to celebrate the release of its Maker's Mark Private Select Bourbon.

A flavorful menu was paired with bourbon samples of Maker's Mark, Maker's 46, The Ballantyne's Private Select Bourbon and Maker's Mark Barrel Strength. Participants enjoyed live music and learned more about the bourbon-creation process.

Photos by Ray Sepesy

1. Tim and Cheryl Alessi, Holly and Patrick Twiest
2. Holly and Kyle Loveless
3. Jim and Linda Murkin, Stacy and Eric Grogg
4. Ed and Darlene Putz
5. Angela Lauten, Tatum Fishel
6. Ian Raeburn, Emma Yezek
7. Stephen Rosenburgh, Stephen Custer, Bobby Gor, David Manton, Jeff Adams, Bill Meeker
8. Amanda and Kevin Clark
9. Rosemary and Lee Boguski
10. Mandy and Doug Lowe, Keri Epps-Rashad, Kerry Rashad, Paula Kastanek
11. Kay and Clay Swenson
12. Ellen and Vito Santoro
13. Carla and Richard Smith



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BLACKFINN CELEBRATES OPENING

Blackfinn Ameripub celebrated the grand opening of its Ballantyne Village location with a weekend of festivities in early September. Events included a ribbon cutting and a fundraising event to benefit Greg Olsen's "The Heartest Yard" initiative.

This is the second Charlotte location for Blackfinn. Its first is in the EpiCentre in uptown Charlotte.

Photos courtesy of Blackfinn Ameripub

1. Blackfinn Ameripub staff and Charlotte Chamber members
2. Sarah Spitler, Amy Witt, Kim Charles, Stephanie Calderon, Courtney Maddox, Brett Keenan
3. Todd Paris, Sarah Spitler, Kim Charles, Jeremy Ashe, Brett Keenan



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TRAINING ON TAP AIDS CHILDREN

Sara's YMCA and The Bissell Companies co-hosted Training on Tap this fall in Ballantyne Corporate Park. Nearly 400 people attended the fitness social hour that included a cardio dance party, yoga in the park, a run/walk and a scavenger hunt.

Guests enjoyed Olde Mecklenburg Brewery beer, wine and great food from local restaurants and food trucks. Proceeds from the event will provide financial assistance for children to participate in YMCA youth programs.

Photos by Ray Sepesy and courtesy of Sara's YMCA



1. Cash Canada, Kendall Stewart, David Barksdale, Shaw Moore, Alan Stapleton, Karen Hodge, Hunter Widener, Cindy Chan, Will Upchurch, Lauren Ashley, Craig Beasley, Therese Freeman, Dane Robinson
2. Deb Young, Judy Godwin, Veronica Lowe, Trena Clyburn, Phyllis Thompson, Brandon Fennell
3. Anthony Frantilla, Stephanie Hall, Tenley Hinson, Renee Knapp, David Huss
4. Kate Skojec, Laura Simmons, Janae Turpin
5. Mariah Bales, Caitlin Neiduski, Kira Kridler
6. Marquise Evans, David Moakler, Chuck Johnson
7. Dorian Voorhees, Sara Kidd, Karen Dewey, Lisa Johnson
8. Participants enjoy yoga in the park.
9. Lisa Weller, Michele Schmidt, Brett Ager, Melanie Marmer
10. Whitney Meacham, Ingrid L'Hommedieu, Donna Maida, Tania Spizzo, Colleen Hornburger
11. Shelia Hemingway, Rachel Brooks, Sarai Cruz, Christina Lattimore, Jessica Forbes
12. Crystal Trawick and Jake, Cathy Poutier, Rick Holcomb, Katie Culbreth, Michelle Miller, Lynne Holcomb, Marla Sessoms
13. Harvey Ogden, Sam Herr, Cam Thomas, Stewart Honeycutt, Michael Roberts



Champagne Powder

Skiing, Sundance
and Snow-Grinch
Fun Abound in
Park City

By Nan Bauroth

COME WINTER, FAMILY MEMBERS SPLIT INTO TWO VACATION CAMPS: those who love the white stuff and those who don't. The perfect solution is a trip to Park City, Utah. Home of the 2002 Winter Olympics and Sundance Film Festival, this former Wild West mining town turned mega ski resort offers so much to see and do that even snow Grinches have a blast.

Pinecone Ridge on Park City Mountain lures snowboarders from all over.

Photo courtesy of Park City Mountain Resort



Photo courtesy of Visit Park City

A skier enjoys powdery pleasure at Park City Mountain, part of the Wasatch mountains that run near the resort town of Park City, at right.

Park City
brands
itself “The
Greatest
Snow
on Earth.”

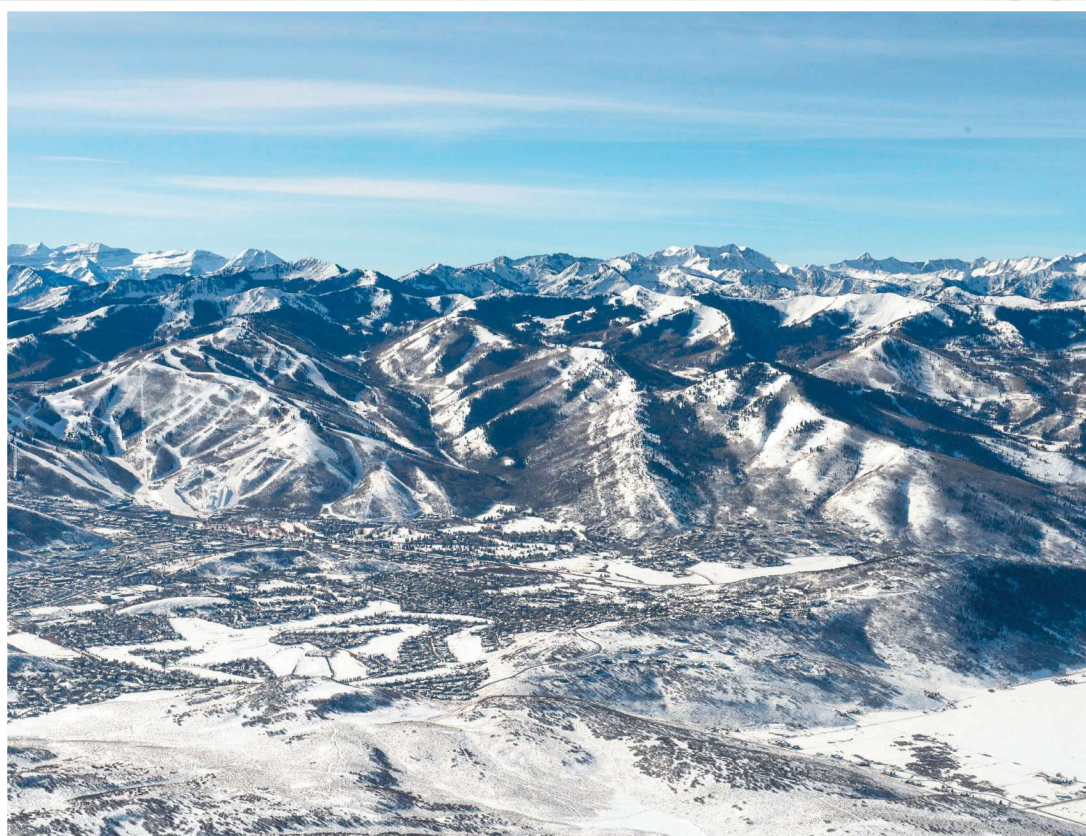


Photo courtesy of Park City Mountain Resort

Now the largest ski resort in North America based on lifts and runs, Park City is three alpine ski destinations in one: Park City Mountain Resort and neighboring Canyons Resort, which were recently linked via the Quicksilver Gondola, plus prestigious Deer Valley Resort, renowned for its white-glove service, which includes ski valets who tote your gear from the parking lot to the slope. Each destination sports its own mountains, runs, amenities and accommodations, but only Park City Mountain and Canyons allow snowboarders.

"Park City has such a great expanse of slopes that it can't be beat for the sheer number of runs," says Russell Talley, an avid snowboarder who is a sales representative for Ambry Genetics and works part-time at Sun & Ski Sports in Promenade on Providence.

Last February he visited Park City for the first time and was astounded to discover that Park City, the Canyons and Deer Valley have a total of 59 lifts with 401 runs on 9,326 skiable acres. "I spent more time on the Canyons side because I prefer the challenging terrain," Talley says. "But what is so great is that if there is a huge crowd on Park City Mountain, you can just zip over to the Canyons."

Feathery Snow

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Sleigh rides, snowmobiling and fat tire biking are off-slope options in Park City.

Photo courtesy of Deer Valley Resort



Photo courtesy of Visit Park City



Photo courtesy of Salix Cycles

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Greatest Snow on Earth," and experienced skiers agree.

"We call it Utah Champagne for its feathery composition," says Basil Marcus, store manager of Alpine Ski Center in Dilworth, who lived in Park City for five years.

"The snow there is epic." Talley concurs. "The quality of snow is the lightest I've ever experienced."

Activities also abound for the anything-but-ski set, starting with a guided tour of the 2002 Olympic Games venues and virtual ski-jump experience at Alf Engen Ski Museum. For an extra rush, take a chiller-diller ride on the Comet Bobsled accompanied by a professional pilot at the Olympic park.

Other off-the-slopes fun includes dogsledding, snowmobiling, snowshoeing

and the latest winter fad — fat tire biking down packed trails on bikes similar to the Mukluk by Salsa Cycles, available for rent at local cycle shops. Eric Pollard, ambassador for Salsa Cycles, recommends the Round Valley trail system but adds that most paths hiked or with snowshoe traffic are also good bets. For non-snow fun, you can indulge at topnotch spas or take a midnight dip in a heated pool beside moonlit snow.

Dining in a Snow Globe

With more than 100 restaurants, Park City offers foodie haunts of every kind. Casual favorites include El Chubasco for its salsa bar; Sammy's Bistro, perfect for a quick lunch; Squatters Roadhouse Grill, a brew pub with outstanding food; and Red Banjo Pizza Parlour, Park City's oldest restaurant.

Notable fine dining spots include the new Tupelo Park City; Riverhorse on Main, a Forbes Travel Guide four-star award winner for 16 years; and The Mariposa, rated No. 1 in Utah by Zagat for food and service.

The most memorable meal to be had, though, is at Fireside Dining in Empire Canyon Lodge at Deer Valley. You enjoy four courses prepared at blazing hearths, all while gazing out the lodge's immense windows that create the sensation of sitting inside a snow globe with fluffy white flakes swirling about you. For an added treat, take a short sleigh ride before the dessert course. This restaurant is so popular, though, that you should make reservations well in advance.



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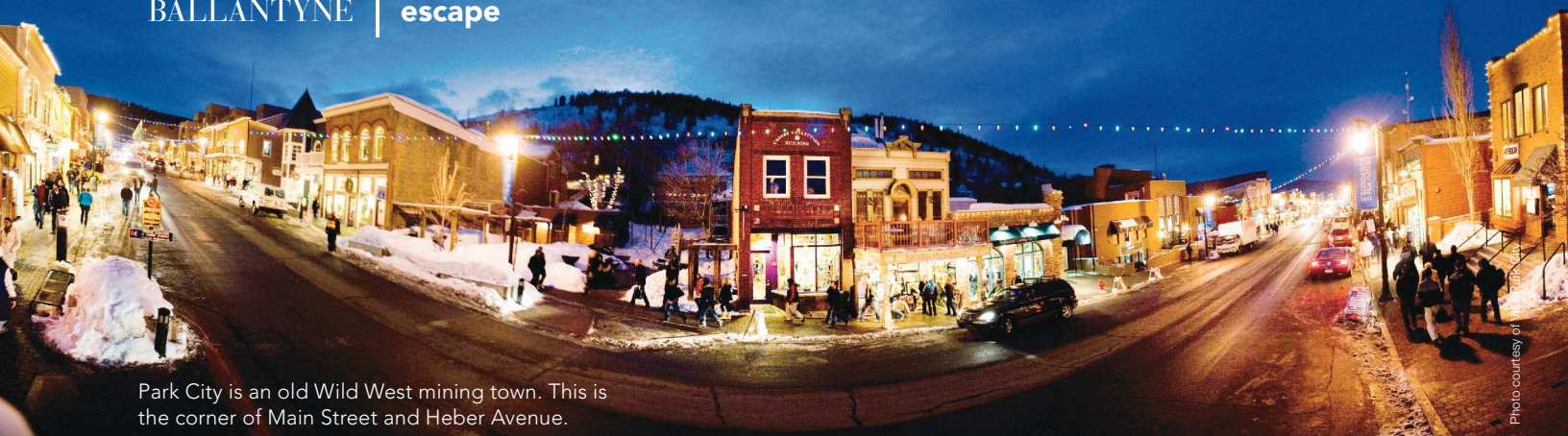
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Getting There, Club Trip

Traveling to Park City is a snap compared to most U.S. ski destinations. Just fly direct to Salt Lake and then hop a shuttle bus that zips you to town in 35 minutes. There's no need to rent a car because Park City's free local transport system takes you everywhere.

Once there, Park City and Deer Valley boast 100 lodging options, including all the name-brand hotels. At the top end are Montage Deer Valley, Stein Eriksen Lodge or in-town favorites Main & SKY and the Waldorf Astoria Park City. Valley Resorts offers upscale condo or home rentals. During



A four-course meal is one of many delightful aspects of the Fireside Dining restaurant.



The Sundance Film Festival's festive atmosphere extends to street life.



Photo courtesy of Sundance Institute

INDIE HEAVEN: Sundance's 200 Films, Celebrities

Founded in 1985, the Sundance Film Festival takes center stage Jan. 19-29 at 12 theaters in Park City. A project of the nonprofit Sundance Institute started by actor Robert Redford, the festival selects approximately 200 feature-length and short films for screenings in Park City and three other Utah locales. Last year 46,000 movie buffs attended the event that also includes live streaming, a main-stage tent with music and an exhibition of new media work, along with glowing fire pits, food and drinks. Big stars dominate the first week, but the second week is more accessible. Info: www.sundance.org.

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Photo courtesy of Sundance Institute

Last year more than 46,000 people attended the Sundance Film Festival.

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the Sundance Film Festival (see page 90), many hotels have pre-booked blocks of rooms, so reserve early.

The Charlotte Ski and Snowboard Club has a trip planned to Park City Feb. 4-11. According to Denver Board, who arranges club trips and is a Realtor® with Keller Williams, more than 120



Denver Board

participants are going.

"We have lots of social activities, including a sit-down dinner, Margarita Night and Super Bowl party," he says. "I've been to Park City five times, but everyone loves to go back because Utah has the best snow and it's always blue sky and sunshine." ☺



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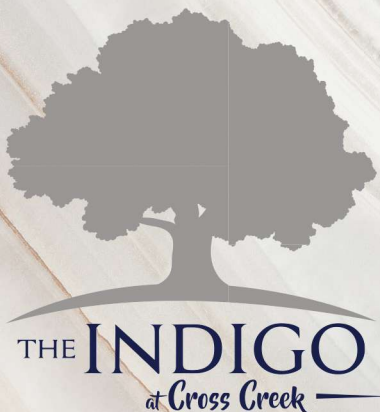
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Just 4 Miles South of Ballantyne



The valance over the McColgins' kitchen sink evokes the idea of a kimono, one of the many Asian touches in their home.

Heart of the Home

Guild's Kitchen Tour Features Ballantyne Homes for First Time

By Jodi Werner Greenwald | Tour Photos by Genesis Photography

SIX YEARS AGO, the battery charger in Libby and Jim McColgin's robotic vacuum failed to shut off automatically, overheated and caused a fire in their Ballantyne Country Club home.

"We lost down to the studs," Libby says of the lower level. There was also soot and smoke damage throughout the house.

Their home underwent a nine-month renovation and was featured this fall as part of the Symphony Guild of Charlotte's third annual "Heart of the Home Kitchen Tour." The tour featured Ballantyne homes for the first time.

As is typical of many renovations, the one for the McColgins had "scope creep," says Jeanine DeVaney of Charlotte In-Vironments, who designed the project. In addition to renovating the damaged

the cabinetry is mahogany, indigenous to Asia. The McColgins worked with Custom Interiors by Rebecca on the decorating.

At the heart of the renovation was accessibility, says DeVaney. Midway through construction, the McColgins decided to add an elevator to help elderly family members navigate the floors of the home.

Meanwhile, Cheryl and Mark Jensen's Ballantyne home featured a lighter color palette than the McColgins' home. It also showcased an open floor plan that provides what DeVaney refers to as the "lifestyle triangle"—space for cooking, dining and living.

After all, "the best parties are in the kitchen!" says DeVaney, who designed the Jensens' renovation as well. Andrew Roby provided the general contracting.

"The Jensen family trusted us enough by the end of the project to take a two-week vacation," says Roby project manager Drew Devine. "All the planning was done at the front end. They decided they didn't like the kitchen anymore. It had an old-world flair. The economy had turned for the better, and they wanted a brighter, fresher, more open plan. Cheryl is quite a cook, too."

Tastings

Since cooking — and eating — are central to kitchen living, tour-goers were treated to tastings at each location. At the McColgins' home, True Crafted Pizza, OGGI and Ballantyne Country Club provided the catering. At the Jensens' home, Nothing Bundt Cakes, Publix and Southminster offered samples.

Barbara Kopald and Mary Staton, co-chairs of the tour, say they were excited to feature Ballantyne homes because it helps them increase Symphony Guild awareness in the area. "It was also fun to include the local merchants," Kopald says.



The McColgins' lower-level kitchen includes, at left, a built-in coffee machine, an appliance also seen in other tour kitchens.

basement, the McColgins refurbished their main-level kitchen and surrounding areas. The basement also included a kitchen.

Libby says a must-have feature of the basement renovation was a Miele built-in coffee machine for her husband — a trend seen in many of the eight kitchens on the tour.

Asian Flair

What set the McColgins' apart was how the couple incorporated art they collected from living and traveling in Southeast Asia for Jim's work in the energy industry.

The main-level kitchen has a valance over the sink that conjures a kimono. In both kitchens, vertical glass backsplashes evoke bamboo, and




Following an extensive fire six years ago, Libby and Jim McColgin renovated their basement as part of a nine-month project.



The light color palette of the Jensens' kitchen is enhanced by the cabinet paint color, "White Duck" by Benjamin Moore.

The Symphony Guild expects the tour to raise \$50,000, primarily to cover the cost of youth camps. Members of the Charlotte Symphony Youth Orchestras who attend these camps played music at each home during the tour. Ballantyne resident Rishi Patel was one of them. "I love participating," he says.

According to Chris Rydel, manager of the Youth Orchestras, 49 kids participate from the 28277 ZIP code. "These kids have dedicated themselves to a passion," she says.

Parrish Patel, Rishi's father, adds: "The guild supports all these young musicians and provides a great benefit for them, especially the camps. The guild provides enriching experiences that they'll have for the rest of their lives." 

For more information about the Youth Orchestras and the Symphony Guild of Charlotte, go to www.symphonysguildcharlotte.org.

MORE RENOVATIONS COMING?



Drew Devine

Drew Devine of Andrew Roby believes many of the homes in the 20-year-old Ballantyne community are prime for renovations. "The kitchens and baths — what was wonderful then isn't anymore," he says.

"Homeowners are now putting in custom features. A big wave of renovations is coming," he predicts.

Show Us Your Creative Spark!

What inventive thinking and expression is taking place in Ballantyne? Let us know!

With help from Matt Olin and the CreativeMornings/CLT team — committed to showcasing Charlotte's creative thinkers, makers and doers on a global level — we're developing a new magazine feature on Ballantyne creativity, which is coming soon.

From fine arts to education and creative business practices, we'd like to consider it all. Send a brief description (50 words or fewer) about your project or idea and any accompanying photos or imagery to Jodi at jgreenwald@ballantynemagazine.com.

Matt Olin

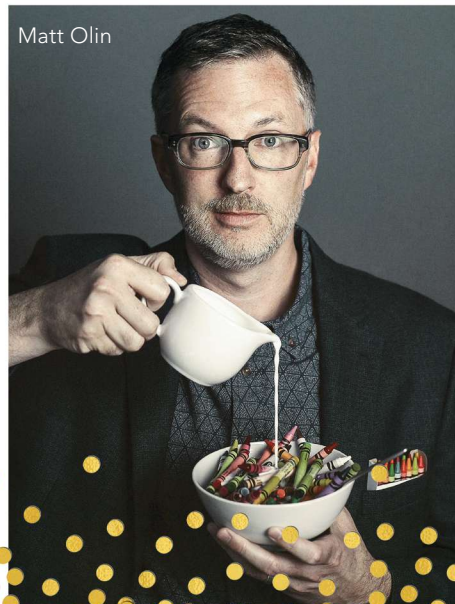


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SEVEN TIMES *the* MAGIC



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