

# Ave Maria Sun

AUGUST 2024

www.AveMariaSun.com

Vol. V, No. 4

## A NEW CHAPTER

Ave Maria's First Public Elementary School Opening in 2026



Erick Carter and Stephanie Lucarelli, Collier County Public Schools board members, are advancing educational opportunities in Ave Maria.

"With more than 4,300 family home closings in the Ave Maria community as of January 2024 and a projection of more than 4,700 new construction family homes in Ave Maria, the district believes this warrants an elementary school with the capacity to support 900 students."

— Marc Rouleau, CCPS Chief Facilities Officer



A student painting a hand-drawn heart.

BY CHELLE KOSTER WALTON

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

In the heart of a community that values education, the grand opening of Ave Maria's first elementary school will signal a pivotal expansion in learning opportunities, especially for its youngest residents. The new public school will accommodate grades K-5 students in Ave Maria and the surrounding areas.

Previously, families had to choose between private schools in the vicinity or the Estates Elementary School in Collier County for public education.

"This is a great example of the school district responding to current and future educational needs of our community," said CCPS board member Erick Carter.

SEE ELEMENTARY, A10 ►

COURTESY IMAGES

MAIN: The building site for the future school.

## Celebrating Island Culture at The Ave Caribbean Fest

BY SANDRA YEYATI

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

On Saturday, June 29, the Ave Maria Town Center was swinging and swaying for the inaugural Ave Caribbean Fest, a full-day celebration of island cultures featuring live music, dance performances, a fashion show, poetry readings, a children's pageant, authentic cuisine and a panoply of vendors and activities.

Resident organizers Simone Edwards and Stassie Cadogan, with the help of the Ave Maria Master Association (AMMA), executed their vision with tireless enthusiasm, putting together a joyful event that perfectly commemorated National Caribbean American Heritage Month.

"Our vision and motto were to bring every creed and race together, and I believe that was all done and showcased at Ave Caribbean Fest," Cadogan said.

Cadogan and Edwards relocated to Ave around three years ago after residing in the Miami/Fort Lauderdale region, where they were involved in activities focused on the Caribbean community.

SEE CARIBBEAN, A20 ►



SANDRA YEYATI/ AVE MARIA SUN

Moko Jumbies, traditional stilt dancers, tower over crowds in colorful costumes.

### Meet Jared

The Friendship Ambassador of Ave Maria  
A4 ►



### Fred Thomas

Leaving a Lasting Legacy  
A12 ►



### Barron Collier Companies

Honored with Inaugural Corporate Legacy Award  
A19 ►



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## Oil Well Road Makeover

BY AVE MARIA SUN STAFF

Oil Well Road is currently undergoing an exciting transformation through two distinct projects designed to enhance safety, improve the area's appearance, and elevate the overall quality of life for residents. The first of these projects is dedicated to installing modern street lighting, aiming to brighten up the area for both pedestrians and drivers. Simultaneously, the second project focuses on beautifying the surroundings near the Arthrex Commerce Park through landscaping efforts. These initiatives are progressing on individual schedules.

A total of 24 new lights will be installed along Oil Well Road, with 14 placed to the west of Ave Maria Boulevard and the remaining 10 to the east. The new lighting is expected to decrease nighttime crashes and improve navigation, significantly enhancing safety for everyone. The lights will be mounted on sturdy 35-foot-tall aluminum poles, each featuring 8-foot arms with LED fixtures to provide bright and energy-efficient illumination.

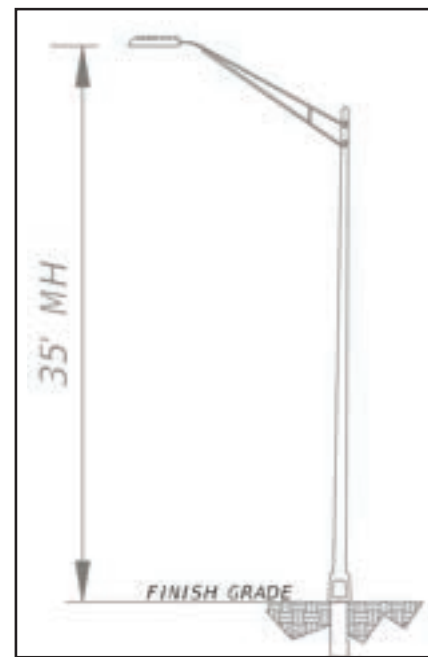
The project, initially slated for completion by November this year, is ahead of schedule. Ted Tryka, the district engineer who manages the contract, stated, "The project is ahead of schedule with a projected completion date before the end of summer."

Two new destination signs were also installed as part of the lighting project to improve the visibility of Ave Maria's entrance.

In addition to the new lighting and signage, a robust landscaping project is planned to create a unified and aesthetically pleasing environment along Oil Well Road. The Town of Ave Maria Development standards mandate a 30-foot wide buffer along the road



RIGHT: One of the new destination signs. LEFT: The design of the new lights.



COURTESY IMAGES

adjacent to Arthrex Commerce Park. This buffer will feature clusters of existing palm trees and a continuous hedgerow of shrubs.

The new landscape plan aims to enhance the existing palm tree arrangement by incorporating Buttonwoods and Bottlebrushes for a more diverse mid-sized tree composition. Bismarck Palms will serve as focal points, complemented by a uniform hedge line for a cohesive look. The proposal also introduces curved shrub beds featuring Firebush, Variegated Schefflera, Jasmine, and Muhly Grass to enrich the garden's texture and color palette.

Steve Sammons, senior landscape architect of town developer Barron Collier Com-

panies' Peninsula Engineering, said, "Those plants were chosen for hardiness, ability to fill in together to create a healthy buffer and allow for a variety of textures and colors that will be repeated along the length of the buffer for consistency."

These landscape enhancements are scheduled for installation on the north side of the canal berm on both sides of Ave Maria Boulevard, from Arthrex Commerce Drive to the sod farm entry drive.

"The project's duration is expected to take 16 weeks once the contractor is given the notice to proceed, so that would put the project being completed by the end of November at the latest," Sammons said. 🌟

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# Meet Jared: The Friendship Ambassador of Ave Maria

BY ERICA FISH

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

In Ave Maria's Lennar The National Golf & Country Club neighborhood resides a remarkable individual who embodies the essence of friendship and connection.

Meet Jared, a beloved resident affectionately known as the community's Friendship Ambassador, whose vibrant spirit and warm demeanor have left an indelible mark on the town and its people.

Jared is always on the move, his phone and tablet on hand, capturing moments while making new friends with an infectious energy that lights up every encounter. Despite his silence, his presence speaks volumes. His parents, Robin and Kim, fondly recount numerous instances where Jared's innate ability to foster friendships has touched the lives of those around him.

"In the Town Center, a couple approached us, introducing themselves," shared Robin, Jared's father. "They said, 'Jared told us we should meet you.' His silent recommendation brought us together, igniting a friendship that continues to grow."

Jared's method of communication may be unconventional, but his impact is undeniable. Armed with a tablet, he types out his thoughts. Those fortunate enough to engage with him quickly realize that Jared's insights and observations are treasures to be cherished, offering valuable perspectives.

Kim, Jared's mom, said smiling, "Jared's gestures speak louder than words. When he shares his thoughts, it's as if the



**The Hagerstrom family knows how to throw a proper cook-out party with their neighbors and friends. Nearing three years as a resident of Lennar The National in Ave Maria, Jared offers undeniable connection opportunities when inviting others to hang out.**

ERICA FISH / AVE MARIA SUN

world pauses to listen."

For Jared, friendship knows no boundaries. Whether introducing himself at community events, rolling through the neighborhood, attending grand openings, photographing his picturesque surroundings and sharing the latest town news, he exudes an aura of inclusivity and acceptance that draws people to him like a magnet.

"Jared has a gift for making everyone feel welcome," shared neighbor Jonas

Kane. "It's not about the words we speak but the connections we make. He has a way of bringing out the best in people... He's never met a stranger."

As Ave Maria continues to thrive as a vibrant community, Jared remains at the forefront, weaving threads of friendship that bind its residents together. His legacy as the Friendship Ambassador will endure, inspiring countless others to embrace genuine connection and the beauty of unconditional acceptance. 🌟



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# Allyson Holland Joins Ave Maria as New District Manager

BY JULIANNA PEREZ

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

The Ave Maria Stewardship Community District (AMSCD) has appointed a new District Manager to manage day-to-day operations including infrastructure improvements, utility management and will be the first point of contact for residents. Stepping into the role is Allyson Holland, who has over 20 years of experience working in the field of Engineering and Utility Project Management.

Holland has been involved with Ave Maria's growth and development since before the community was officially established. In 2004, she began her career by working for an engineering firm on the design and permitting for Ave Maria.

"The first project that I worked on in 2004 was Ave Maria. I started working on Ave Maria when it was all farmlands; I got to see the first trees and shrubs planted when the development started," Holland said.

As District Manager, Holland will serve as the first point of contact for residents. She hopes to hold Board Workshop Meetings for education and communication purposes with the Board of Supervisors and residents about upcoming projects and budget discussions.

"Moving forward, what I hope to do is educate the public by having budget workshops. I want to explain, line item by line item, what these operation and maintenance expenditures are, what we do with them, and how we come up with



COURTESY PHOTOS

Allyson Holland has been involved with Ave Maria's growth and development since 2004.

those numbers," Holland said. Holland brings a wealth of expertise in operational management across both public and private domains. In addition to this, those who have worked with Holland attribute her success to her quick thinking, persistence, and problem-solving skills.

"I am really excited to have Allyson join our team and become the first fully dedicated on-site district manager for AMSCD. She has so many great at-

tributes that she will bring in serving the Ave Maria community," said Todd Wodraska, president of Special District Services, Inc.

Holland's care for the community is at the forefront of her work. Through her endeavors to increase awareness about maintenance costs and open lines of communication with the community, her passion for improving the area shines a bright light on Ave Maria's future development.

"I care about this community. I care about its residents," she said. "I care and I want to make things better. I have a lot of passion for what I do. I want to be able to answer people's questions, educate them, and make the community better. I am very honored and enthusiastic to be a part of the special district services team and use my experience to continue to improve the Ave Maria community. I feel like this opportunity truly brings my career full circle," said Holland. 🌟

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# Expanding Mosquito Control in Collier County

BY GLENN MILLER

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

Mosquito control is crucial for life in Florida, and the Collier County Mosquito Control District has been dedicated to this since 1950. Back then, Collier County's population was just 6,488. Today, the county, including Ave Maria, is home to over 410,000 residents.


As the county continues to grow, so does the district. In mid-May this year, Governor Ron DeSantis signed Florida House Bill 509 into law, which will take effect on Tuesday, Oct. 1.

This law will expand the district's coverage area from 401 square miles to 730 square miles, marking the first expansion since 2004. The new coverage area will include Ave Maria, Port of the Islands, and regions north and east of Golden Gate Estates. Previously, Ave Maria received mosquito control services through an inter-local agreement.


The scope of mosquito control in Collier County has expanded significantly along with the county itself. At its founding, the district provided mosquito control for just six square miles of downtown Naples, which at the time had a population of 1,458; today, it is approximately 20,000.

Collier County covers 2,305 square miles, nearly twice Rhode Island's size, spanning 1,214 square miles. 🌞




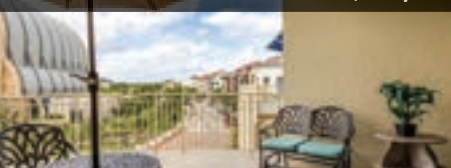





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# BIG KINDS OF SMALL TOWN FUN

## Del Webb Naples Model Home Park Grand Opening



Charles and Susan Marshall



Mark Yant with Chris and Tracey Ryan



Steve and Gladys Jablomowski



▲ Nathan and Chloe Rodrigues playing in the backyard.

◀ The sales team proudly displaying the golf cart that some new Pulte Homes families receive as a gift. From left to right: Chelsea McPherran, Dolly Majumdar, Scott Fiske, Cristina Carlson, Celestine Gates, Mark Yant, Bill Olex and Michael Egan.



There's always something to do at Del Webb.



Angel and Milan Rodrigues



Pulte Homes shoppers











Comparing floor plans



Nathan Rodrigues

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<p><b>ACTIVE</b></p>  <p>Del Webb - Naples 6437 Liberty St. \$494,900 MLS# 223095357</p>	<p><b>ACTIVE</b></p>  <p>Del Webb - Naples 5751 Declaration Ct. \$419,900 MLS# 224021025</p>	<p><b>ACTIVE</b></p>  <p>Residence at La Piazza 5068 Annunciation Cir #4202 \$359,000 MLS# 223066141</p>





COURTESY IMAGES

A rendering of the site.

# ELEMENTARY

From page 1

“The exponential growth in Golden Gate Estates, specifically in Ave Maria, warrants an immediate plan to support the families by providing a comprehensive public school in the community. This shows vision, strategic planning and fiscal responsibility, as it reduces transportation costs and also relieves overcrowding in Estates Elementary School,” Carter shared.

The educational landscape around Ave Maria is rich and diverse, characterized by exceptional public institutions like Corkscrew Middle School and Palmetto Ridge High School, both renowned for their academic rigor and nurturing environments.

Moreover, the private sector presents a plethora of valuable educational options, meeting a wide variety of needs and preferences. The Palm Preschool, located in Ave Maria’s Town Center, offers a welcoming environment focused on early education. For students from kindergarten through 12th grade, the Rhodora J. Donahue Academy provides a comprehensive education that emphasizes holistic development. Meanwhile, the Fellowship Church & Academy combines faith-based education with academic excellence, catering to those who value spiritual growth alongside intellectual development. Notably, Ave Maria University (AMU) emerges as a standout institution, distinguished by its rigorous academic programs and commitment to a

faith-based educational approach.

Ave Maria has grown significantly over the years as families started to move into the area. This increase in population highlighted the need for an elementary school to cater to the community’s educational requirements.

“For several years, we have heard requests from residents for Collier County Public Schools to build a school in Ave Maria,” said board member Stephanie Lucarelli, who has been involved in conversations about the school for all those years. “I’m so excited to finally be able to bring this new school to the community.”

Jerry Rutherford, CCPS board member, having attended the recent Bear Creek Elementary groundbreaking, shared great enthusiasm about the future opportunities for students at this institution and the upcoming addition of Elementary School Q to follow.



RUTHERFORD

Originally planned for 500 students, the school district already grew the school in the past year when it realized the need for more capacity. So, instead of a new school for 500 by the 2025-2026 school year, “Elementary School Q” (its placeholder name for now) has stretched to 900 students, with plans to open by the 2026-2027 school year in the western section of the 46-acre lot on Anthem Parkway.

“Families can expect to see innovations in education and design throughout the school,” said Lucarelli.



CCPS students on a science experience.

Anticipating further growth, the school district has strategically planned a two-story elementary school that allows for future expansion. This adaptable design could either incorporate a middle school or provide more space for elementary students. Elementary School Q marks a departure from the traditional prototype used in the district’s other thirty-some grade schools, introducing a new design set to be unveiled this fall.

“The district’s current prototype for elementary schools does not offer this growth flexibility,” said Marc Rouleau, CCPS chief facilities officer. “With more than 4,300 family home closings in the Ave Maria community as of January 2024 and a projection of more than 4,700 new construction family homes in Ave Maria, the district believes this warrants an elementary school with the capacity to support 900 students.”

Elementary School Q will have a new name decided based on input from the community. Although the district has not yet drawn boundaries for the school, it will likely comprise Ave Maria plus offer availability for out-of-zone school choice students, those whose parents apply for enrollment because of their work situation or other reasons.

Although it will not follow the standard design prototype, the first-of-its-kind district elementary school will conform to the curriculum and facility blueprints across the board. It will be administered to students of all special needs and talents. The district’s trademark-covered physical education pavilion will counteract the conditions of the Florida sun. The school will

also address other Florida weather-related needs, such as a storm shelter with reinforced walls, generator backup and other protective measures.

Once the school’s name is set, a mascot and other details will be decided, and the community will have input on that, too. A new dedicated website will allow parents, students, homeowners and other interested parties to learn the latest news about the school and interact with feedback.

“We want the community to be a part of this process,” CCPS chief communications officer Chad Oliver said.

“I am very interested to hear what the Ave Maria community wants to see in this new school, and I encourage them to reach out to me at [stephanie.lucarelli@collierschools.com](mailto:stephanie.lucarelli@collierschools.com) with their ideas,” said Lucarelli.

Once the school’s name is set, a mascot and other details will be decided, and the community will have input on that, too. A new dedicated website will allow parents, students, homeowners and other interested parties to learn the latest news about the school and interact with feedback. “We want the community to be a part of this process,” Chad Oliver, CCPS chief communications officer, said.

CCPS paused building elementary schools in 2008, but next school year (2025-2026), it will open Bear Creek Elementary at Immokalee Road and Moulder Drive in Golden Gate Estates, followed by the Ave Maria school the following year. Officials say the final decision to build the Ave Maria school was made during the 2023-2024 school year. 🌞



Student experiments at CCPS STEAM Expo 2023.

# Unwind at The Hammock Bar & Grill

BY AVE MARIA SUN STAFF

The recently opened Hammock Bar & Grill is just one of the many highlights for new residents at The National Golf & Country Club. New homeowners will not only enjoy this trendy dining spot but will also have immediate access to a bundled social membership.

For a limited time, select condos are being offered with waived HOA fees for the first year, making this a great opportunity to become part of this vibrant Lennar community.

“There’s never been a better time to buy a new condo within the National Golf & Country Club in Ave Maria,” said Area Sales Manager Gus Spatharos. “With low-maintenance new condos starting in the high \$200s, these exclusive summer savings won’t last long.” This membership unlocks a range of amenities, including a state-of-the-art fitness center, various courts for sporting activities, inviting pools and much more.

From new resident mixers to live music by the pool, there’s always something happening at The Hammock. This new spot provides the perfect setting for residents to relax, socialize and enjoy great food and company. The menu consists of tacos, pizza, burgers, salads, sandwiches and an assortment of delicious appetizers.

The main clubhouse pool, with its resort-style design, serves as a refreshing focal point for leisure and recreation, providing an escape from the Florida heat. Additionally, the newly opened satellite pools offer residents increased options for swimming, lounging and sun enjoyment.

The new amenities significantly en-



hance the value of the social membership package offered to residents. This package, which already includes access to the fitness center, tennis and pickleball courts, and the resort and lap pools, now includes The Hammock Bar & Grill as a key highlight. These facilities provide ample opportunities for socializing, staying active, and enjoying the community’s offerings.

Prospective residents can schedule a tour with a New Home Consultant to experience these amenities firsthand at Lennar by calling 888-214-1476. 🌟

**New condos at The National Golf & Country Club come with a year of waived HOA fees and access to luxury amenities like The Hammock Bar & Grill.**



COURTESY PHOTOS

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# Fred Thomas: Leaving a Lasting Legacy

BY JULIANNA PEREZ

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

Since 1986, native New Yorker Fred Thomas has been one of the most influential forces pushing to serve the underprivileged community in Immokalee, Fla.

Fred passed on Wednesday, May 22, at the age of 84. However, his legacy as the Unofficial Mayor of Immokalee lives on through the lasting effects of his work, which aimed to improve the quality and accessibility of public housing in Collier County.

In 1967, Fred graduated from Norfolk State University with a bachelor's degree in psychology. This marked the beginning of Fred's work in the field of Public Housing, where he started the journey as an intern.

Originally from Harlem, NY, Fred spent a portion of his early career relocating to different cities nationwide to improve each area's public housing sector. After assuming his role as the Executive Director for the Collier County Housing Authority (CCHA) in 1986, Fred found himself enamored with the complex landscape of Immokalee and decided to dedicate the rest of his career to bettering the community.

"There was something about it that just held him here. He thought he could make a difference," said Cherryle Thomas, Fred's wife.

Danny Gonzalez, owner of Lozano's Mexican Restaurant and President of the Immokalee Chamber of Commerce, believes that Fred's fierce dedication and relentless drive to serve Immokalee helped him genuinely connect with the community.

"He wasn't even from here, but he treasured Immokalee like it was his hometown," Gonzalez said. "He blended in with the people here. It didn't matter if you were Haitian, Mexican, Guatemalan, or anything else in this town. He helped everyone."

During the first two years of his work at the CCHA, Fred devoted his summers to becoming proficient in Spanish by taking college courses. Cherryle, Fred's wife and former Director of the Immokalee Chamber of Commerce, recalls how Fred immersed himself in the language to communicate with Immokalee's primarily Hispanic demographic effectively.

"He wanted to learn properly," Cherryle said. "Until the day my husband left, he would speak Spanish with anybody. He even did his applications, contracts, everything in the language."

Those who have seen Fred in action often note his commanding presence. Equipped with the makings of a natural-born leader, Fred knew how to wrangle any rowdy committee meeting just by using two words.

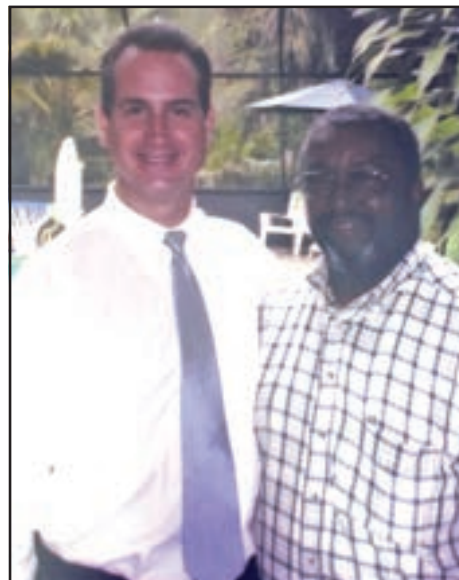
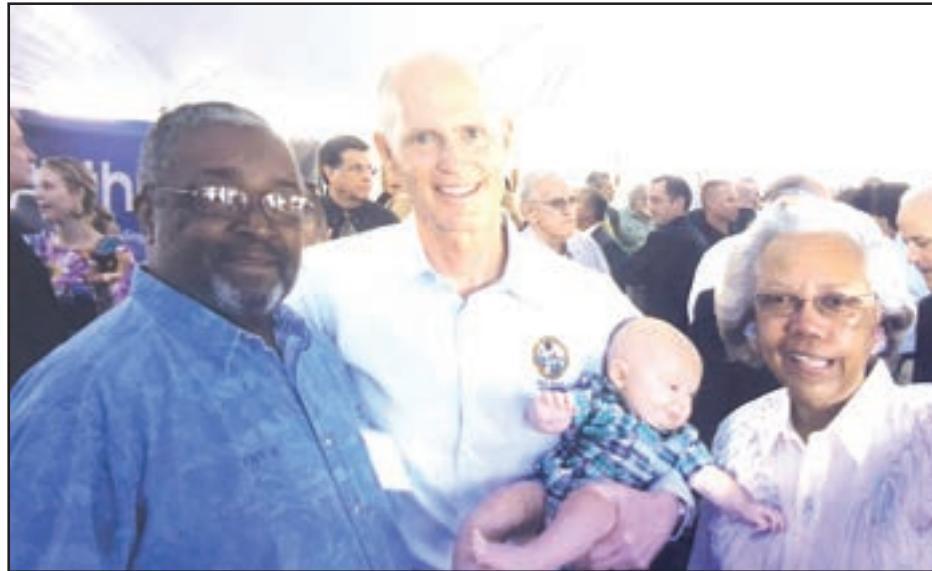
"If he wanted everybody's attention, he used these words: 'Excuse me, excuse me, excuse me,'" Cherryle said.

Though his famous catchphrase helped garner the attention of an entire room, Fred's innovative ideas and undeniable results kept it.

Blake Gable, CEO of Barron Collier Companies and developer of Ave Maria, observed how Fred's unrelentingly dedicated character distinguished him from other community leaders.

"He really embraced the youth. He took it upon himself to let you know that your word means something, that you stand for something."

— Bernardo Barnhart, Vice President of First Bank and Director of the Immokalee Chamber of Commerce



**Fred's unwavering commitment to bettering lives transformed the community, embodying the essence of true leadership and compassion.**

"He was the first guy to call and he was always willing to be a part of any organization, any citizen group, any discussion, any public meeting," Gable said. "It didn't matter what it was, where it was, or what time of day it was. Fred was going to be there."

One of the most notable projects that cemented Fred's legacy as a voice for the underserved was his work to improve the Farm Workers Village housing development in Immokalee. The development offers reduced-rent housing to farm workers, most of whom are migrants.

While working with the CCHA and attending meetings for any of the 56 boards that he was on, Fred also made sure to foster mentor-type relationships with the community's emerging youth.

Vice President of First Bank and Di-

rector of the Immokalee Chamber of Commerce Bernardo Barnhart fondly regarded Fred as his mentor. Barnhart believed that Fred's eagerness to pass on his knowledge and career advice would effectively empower the rising generation of community leaders.

"He really embraced the youth," Barnhart said. "He took it upon himself to let you know that your word means something, that you stand for something."

A strong advocate for education, Fred often preached the value of academics to the neighborhood youth. He even tutored a group of high schoolers in preparation for their SAT exam and assisted in setting up a scholarship for students in public housing.

Though Fred was often encouraged to run for Immokalee's County Commissioner, he believed that he could achieve more for the residents of Immokalee if he was not in public office.

"He wasn't beholden to any constituency other than he was going to do what he



COURTESY PHOTOS

thought was best for Immokalee," Gable said. Although the acclaim that comes with a seat in public office can be alluring, Fred stood by what he felt would be most beneficial for the community, as a role in politics could have limited the scope and impact of his work.

Fred's focus on solving issues plaguing the community of Immokalee created a profound impact on thousands of lives. Through it all, he carried with him the same values as he once shared in a 1997 article highlighting his advocacy:

"It's important for me to do the right thing, not the popular thing," Fred said. "You've got to do what's necessary and right." 🌟

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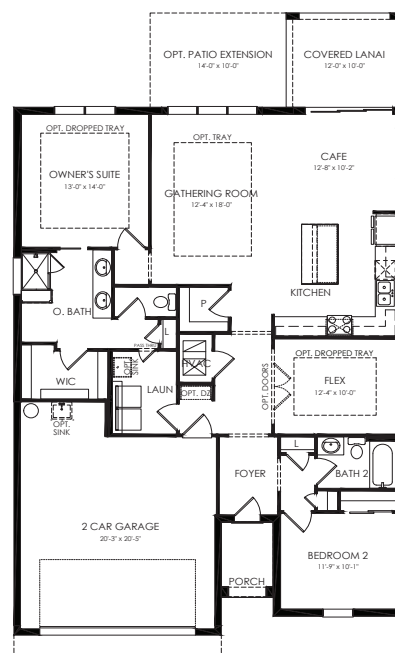
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**MAPLE RIDGE**  
AT AVE MARIA

## About the community

Maple Ridge at Ave Maria is a thoughtfully designed community with a myriad of home designs, all of which combine beautiful curb appeal with impressive interior layouts built for modern lifestyles. CC Homes is the builder behind this community and they are among the many reasons Ave Maria has become such a rapidly growing neighborhood attracting new residents from the Gulf Coast, Southeast Florida and beyond. With more than 75 years of combined experience in South Florida real estate, Mr. Armando Codina and Mr. Jim Carr along with Mr. Andres Miyares have set a new standard for quality new construction homes in desirable communities, with a wide range of pricing from entry-level to prestigious exclusivity.

CC Homes communities throughout Florida have been recognized for their incredible market appeal, outstanding quality, and resident satisfaction time and time again, having built thousands of homes and residences. Homes built by CC Homes are designed to improve people's lives. Modern features, smart floor plans, and upscale amenities combine for the ultimate Florida lifestyle. Homeowners at Maple Ridge are pampered with high-end designer features included in the base price. Maple Ridge neighborhoods include a brand-new clubhouse for residents with resort-style pool and cabanas, fitness center, billiard room, exercise park, concierge, coffee bar, exhibition kitchen, and kids' room.

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CC Homes is ranked as one of the top five new home builders in South Florida and Southwest Florida, offering affordable single-family luxury in Ave Maria's Maple Ridge neighborhoods. Homeowners are pampered with high-end designer features included in

the base price. Maple Ridge neighborhoods include a brand-new clubhouse for residents with resort-style pool and cabanas, fitness center, billiard room, exercise park, concierge, coffee bar, exhibition kitchen and kids' room.



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## About the community

As part of the highly sought after new home community, Maple Ridge at Ave Maria-Silverwood offers exciting residential choices to buyers. Silverwood provides homeowners the perfect home at a great value. All of these single-family homes are beautifully designed with Mediterranean, Coastal or Contemporary architecture and an inviting array of designer features included as well as some custom options available. Both Silverwood and Maple Ridge have a superb location within Ave Maria, so residents benefit from a great school district and sense of community.

Floor plan spotlight: The Huntington is a new construction, one-story home with three bedrooms, two baths, great room, eat-in kitchen, storage, master suite with walk-in closet and attached garage. Premium features included that are standard include designer brand faucets and fixtures, and tile flooring. Gourmet kitchens have stainless steel appliances, European-style wood cabinetry and quartz countertops. A spa-like primary bedroom features double sinks with quartz vanity tops and a spacious shower.



### Now Selling - Silverwood Vista!

CC Homes is ranked as one of the top five new home builders in South Florida and Southwest Florida, offering affordable single-family luxury in Ave Maria's Maple Ridge neighborhoods. Homeowners are pampered with high-end designer features

included in the base price. Maple Ridge neighborhoods include a brand-new clubhouse for residents with resort-style pool and cabanas, fitness center, billiard room, exercise park, concierge, coffee bar, exhibition kitchen and kids' room.



First Floor Plan

Second Floor Plan



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**About the community**

Lennar is excited to bring its popular Everything's Included® homes and resort lifestyle amenities to the charm, convenience, and values of Ave Maria. The National Golf & Country Club will offer a fresh coastal aesthetic throughout the home designs and on-site amenities including an 18-hole Gordon Lewis-designed golf course, complimented by world-class amenities for the entire family to enjoy. A variety of floorplans will be offered in Terrace and Veranda condominiums, coach homes, and executive and estate single-family homes. The National Golf & Country Club will

feature its own clubhouse with a pro shop, formal and casual dining, a resort-style pool and spa, fitness center with yoga/aerobics room, spa treatment rooms and beauty salon. Active residents can take advantage of Har-Tru tennis courts, pickle and bocce ball, a putting green, chipping area, and a driving range. This all-encompassing amenity campus is designed to bring the community together, with spaces for friends new and old to gather. Whether you are a seasonal resident or looking to lay down roots, The National Golf & Country Club has the ideal home for you.

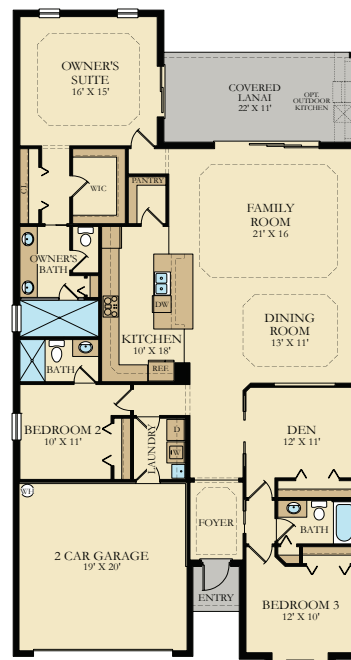


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A group playing pool volleyball.



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Many lined up for the limbo contest.



# Barron Collier Companies Honored with Inaugural Corporate Legacy Award

BY GLENN MILLER

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

Residents of Ave Maria already know that they live in a special community. Further confirmation of this came in the spring when the Urban Land Institute (ULI) recognized Barron Collier Companies (BCC) for responsible land development and stewardship. The company was honored with the first Corporate Legacy Award for its efforts in creating and maintaining Ave Maria.

“We’re honored and humbled to be receiving this award,” said Brian Goguen, BCC Chief Investment Officer. “Southwest Florida is our home. It has been for more than a hundred years. We take so much pride in being part of it, and to be recognized like this is a really great honor.”

Goguen expressed pride in the companies’ contributions to Collier County’s growth from the beginning, highlighting recent initiatives like the Mercato mixed-use project in North Naples and Ave Maria, the master-planned community in Eastern Collier County.

The Urban Land Institute is recognized as the oldest and largest network of cross-disciplinary real estate and land use experts worldwide. Established in 1936, it is an international organization with chapters worldwide, including one in Southwest Florida. Goguen said, “Our organization has been actively involved with ULI Southwest Florida and ULI Nationally for the past 20 years.”

Cee Cee Marinelli, the vice president



COURTESY PHOTO

Grace Conover, Priscylla Oliva, Michelle Mambuca, Cee Cee Marinelli, Brian Goguen, JJ Wong, Jeff Sonalia and Nick Casalanguida

of development for BCC, is well-versed in the history of her community and company. She understands that the company was established by Barron Gift Collier, who passed away in 1939 at the age of 65.

“He saw the future that Naples had,” said Marinelli, who has been with the company since 2006.

Now, that future includes Ave Maria.

The corporate legacy award was announced on April 15, with a May 15 event at Miromar Lakes Beach & Golf Club in Lee County made it official with a celebratory event. “I believe much of our success comes

from our company mission of building community, creating value and commitment to excellence. I think it’s important as a community that we continue to become important members of the communities that we’re building,” Marinelli said.

Matt Price, a Seagate Development Group partner, paid tribute to this award’s impact and explained why BCC earned the honor. “A developer like Barron Collier should be awarded for their ability in putting a family town together,” Price said. “Keeping intact the environment and starting from scratch the landscape of a com-

munity which people remain in awe of... It’s not easy to do what their company has done in Ave Maria, especially in the time in which they’ve done it.”

ULI Southwest Florida posted a nearly eight-minute video with comments from Goguen, Price and other real estate professionals.

Price talked about the company’s deep roots in the community and their knowledge of the market. “They understand intricacies, whether it’s civil, architecture or other developers,” Price said.

Price is particularly impressed with how the company planned and built Ave Maria from scratch, which was done in an environmentally friendly way and quick order.

Kristine Smale, a vice president with Christopher Alan Homes, has worked with BCC officials for about a decade in various roles, including as a real-estate consultant. Smale said she has gotten to know the Barron Collier team quite well.

“Barron Collier’s secret to their success is, I would say, their legacy and their name,” Smale said.

That’s been the case for a century.

Christopher Alan Homes CEO Ian Schmoyer knows that legacy and the value associated with it brings. Schmoyer recalled how he was looking for a strategic partner to help grow his company quicker than he could do it by himself. “From day one, they’ve just added so much value into our company from a strategic standpoint and from a value standpoint,” Schmoyer said. “The company is always there when you need them.” 🌟



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Miss Ave Maria USA Marshana Spavento with 2024 Miss Junior Ave Caribbean Fest Pageant contestants.

SANDRA YEYATI / AVE MARIA SUN



ABOVE: Members of the Romeo Tassa Kidz. RIGHT: Lifestyle Director Carol DiFlorio performing a Jamaican pantomime.



# CARIBBEAN

From page 1

Edwards, a biomedical information technology consultant of Jamaican heritage and single mother of two teenagers, said, “There are lots of Caribbean folks here, and we felt a need to showcase our culture and create a festival not just for folks of our background but for everyone in Ave Maria and the surrounding communities to enjoy.”

Cadogan added, “We didn’t want it to just be a party because our culture offers so much more.” She noted that the event featured artistic and intellectual elements from the Caribbean, including the Bahamas, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Cadogan, whose heritage is from Trinidad and Tobago, is the director of the Palm Preschool in Ave Maria Town Center. She has three grade-school children with her husband, Ronnie, who served as the master of ceremonies for the entire festival. He was born in Trinidad and Tobago and is an executive at American Express.

“One of the highlights for me was the ending with the vibrant parade of carnival costumes, the thrilling sounds of tassa drums and steel pan, and our mini jump up to Rupee’s song ‘Jump’ that brought ev-

eryone together, waving Caribbean flags in the air, celebrating unity and one love,” Cadagan reflected.

Music and dance featured prominently throughout the day. Steeped in the rich reggae tradition, Nostaljah played two enthralling sets, imparting powerful messages of unity, love, hope and resilience. Grammy-Award-winning music producer Winston Thomas, also known as DJ Blackout, provided vibrant daily tunes. The audience brought chairs and gathered on the lawn to listen, watch and dance with friends and neighbors.

The Ave Maria Dance Academy and StassieFit Dance Team performed several styles of music, including Afrobeats from West Africa, calypso from Trinidad and Tobago, reggae from Jamaica and merengue from the Dominican Republic. To the audience’s amazement, two moko jumbie stilt walkers towered 15 feet above the crowd, grooving and prancing along the Town Center’s circle with eye-popping, gravity-defying precision. Wielding drums and cymbals, the Romeo Tassa Kidz ignited the scene with their powerful folk drumming that originated in India and made its way to Trinidad and Tobago.

The community gathered for additional programming involving area merchants, Ave Maria entrepreneurs and even local children. During the fashion show, residents modeled Caribbean-inspired clothes and accessories from retailers The Secret Ingredient and Hoja de

Menta and original designs by Gail Santi under her Eevinn label.

Miss Ave Maria USA Marshana Spavento—who is of Jamaican descent—and Junior Miss Miami Broward Carnival Queen Alahnis Hosein hosted the 2024 Miss Junior Ave Caribbean Fest Pageant, which featured five young contestants who modeled formal wear and engaged in a question-and-answer exchange. The audience selected Nylah Charles as the title holder, who received a gorgeous crown and sash to commemorate her reign.

Dressed in a traditional outfit, Lifestyle Director Carol DiFlorio and local Ave Maria resident Vanessa Farquharson performed a Jamaican pantomime, which involved reading a poem by celebrated writer Louise Bennett accompanied by expressive movements that embodied the meaning and emotion of the moment.

An area dedicated to children called Junkanoo Junction included the Rhythm and Reads tent, where authors read from their Caribbean-themed children’s books. Pint-sized percussive instruments were on hand, allowing youngsters to play tambourines, beat toy drums and shake colorful noisemakers. Little ones were also spotted playing with balloons in the 2 Bounce N Bubble bounce house, painting pottery and animal figurines at the Paint & Bake tent and engaging in educational activities at the Teach Me booth.

Word-of-mouth traveled quickly, as a long line formed at the Tropical Smoothie Café booth, which sold authentic Jamai-

can cuisine prepared by local guest chef Colleen Baychu. Local establishments, including OASIS The Kitchen Lounge, Blue Agave Mexican Restaurant, Vicky Bakery and The Pub & Grill, were busy serving festivalgoers throughout the event. MELTZ, Pop Love and Fat Boy Coconut Water offered delicious, fruity treats to ease the summer heat. Oil Well Craft Beer and Everglades Distillers served adult beverages, and Superior Standard Cigars sold quality smokes.

“We’re grateful to the many vendors and sponsors that made this all possible,” said Edwards. Among the participating vendors were Little Creations by J (beaded jewelry), Plu Beauty (permanent jewelry), Kase of Me (fashion accessories), Craft Addicts (customized tumblers), eVibes Digital Marketing & Prints, Pure Beauty Hair and Supply Store, Reggae N Things (Caribbean fashion), Stella Rose Way (gifts and home goods), Way Out Toys & Games and Vikka’s Art (resin art).

Capping off a fantastic day, the finale delighted onlookers with a carnival showcase. Performers in colorful costumes paraded and danced around Annunciation Circle while Romeo Tessa Kidz and steelpan drummers Osiris Martin and Nikita Graves provided exhilarating island beats.

“I’m incredibly thankful and grateful to have shared this experience with no one other than Simone. Together, we made history by capturing the essence of Caribbean culture right here in Ave Maria,” Cadogan exclaimed. 🌟



StassieFit dancers performing.



Ebony Wilson of Craft Addicts displaying her customized tumblers.



Aria Burton, 12, owner of Handmade 4 Him, makes wax candles.



Fatimah Payne and Jessie Little, owner of Little Creations by J.



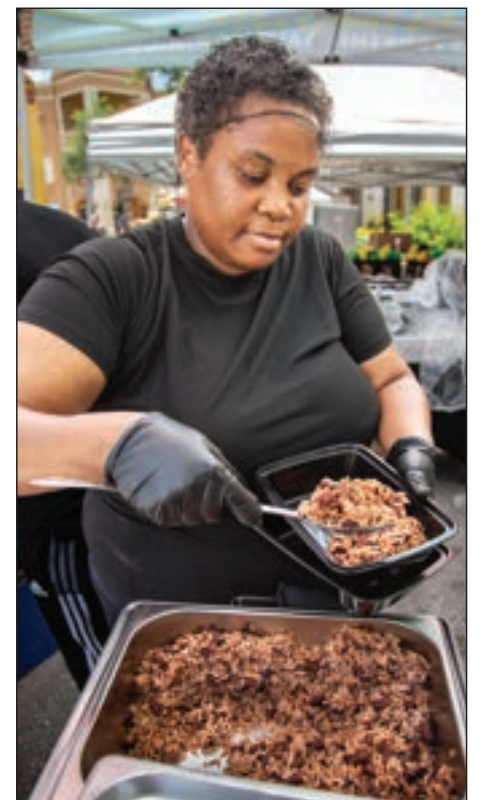
Vanessa Ramirez and child Zac Andrew at the Rhythm and Reads booth.



Frank and Jennifer Rodriguez, co-owners of eVibes Digital Marketing & Prints.



Drummer of Nostaljah.



Jamaican cuisine by local guest chef Colleen Baychu was a hit.


# ENTERTAINMENT AND DINING AT SEMINOLE CASINO HOTEL



**THE MOODY BLUES'  
JOHN LODGE**  
AUGUST 2



**HUNTER HAYES**  
AUGUST 3



**PAUL RODRIGUEZ**  
OCTOBER 25



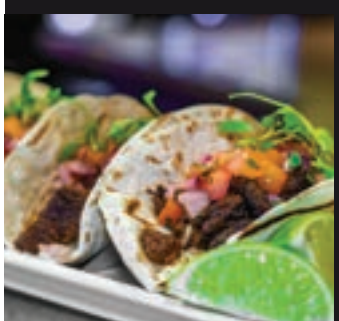
**ELLE KING**  
WITH SPECIAL GUEST THE BAND LOULA  
OCTOBER 26



**AUSTRALIA'S  
THUNDER FROM  
DOWN UNDER**  
NOVEMBER 2



**THE TENORS**  
NOVEMBER 10



**WE BET  
YOU WILL LIKE  
EATING HERE**



**TICKETS ON SALE NOW AT MOREINPARADISE.COM**



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**MINUTES AWAY FROM MORE**



# ALL AROUND AVE MARIA

Dates and details are subject to change. Call the Ave Maria Welcome Center at 239-352-3903 for more information. Follow Town Center businesses on social media for updates and special promotions.

## OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

### Ave Maria Stewardship Community District Meetings

The upcoming meetings will be held on Tuesday, August 6 at 9:00 a.m. and Tuesday, September 10 at 9:00 a.m. For meeting locations, additional information, monthly meeting books and schedule updates, please visit [avemariastewardshipcd.org](http://avemariastewardshipcd.org).

### Back to School Bash

To kick off the new school year, visit the Ave Maria Town Center for one last summer hoorah! From 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 17, there will be DJ entertainment, kids' activities, a school supply drive, bike helmet giveaways, dining specials and shopping incentives by Ave Maria's businesses for teachers, faculty and staff. Students are encouraged to present their student IDs for purchase discounts; exclusions may apply.

### Trunk or Treat

After the success of last year's event, Trunk or Treat has become an annual tradition in the Town Center! Scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 26, from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., this family-friendly gathering promises an abundance of treats. Participants can expect DJ entertainment, face painting, pumpkin carving, costume contests, and the opportunity to showcase their creativity in the best-decorated trunk competition.

## MERCHANT EVENTS

### The Bean at Ave Maria

Check out **The Bean's drive-thru coffee cart** in front of The Pub at Ave Maria every day from 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. to quickly purchase muffins, bagels, hot and iced coffee and more!

Discover the latest weekly special drink announcements, expertly crafted by their talented baristas, at [facebook.com/thebeanatave](https://facebook.com/thebeanatave).

Join the **Coffee Club**, and after buying 10 hot or iced drip coffees, get the eleventh one for free.

**Taco Tuesday** happens weekly from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Bean Courtyard and features \$3 beef tacos, beer, \$4 chicken fajitas, chips and salsa, margaritas and \$5 pork tacos. Indoor seating is available in case of bad weather.

### MELTZ

A family-owned ice cream shop founded by residents who have lived in Ave Maria since 2021, MELTZ offers a variety of delicious ice cream, toppings, specialty sundaes, and themed creations inspired by the youngest family members. Now, they have 100% organic customizable Açaí bowls, boba teas and smoothies. Bring your furry friend for a complimentary pup cup!

### Mercato at Ave

Mercato at Ave offers more than just shopping; it's an experience with free Wi-Fi, artisan coffee, a wine and beer bar, cozy lounge areas, live music and an Instagram-worthy mural.

Discover Ave Maria Pies for handcrafted Colombian goods, Perfumes Andrea for exquisite scents, Pure Beauty Hair

Store for beauty products, and Sonia Tello for alterations and embroidery services, among other vendors. Additionally, you can bring your little ones to Stay & Play for educational fun.

### OASIS The Kitchen Lounge

Customers can now expect a new addition to the OASIS culinary experience - a smaller portions menu with more fun small bites, perfect for those looking to explore a variety of flavors. Experience the chef's monthly specials, indulge in American and Latin brunch on weekends, and anticipate the return of beloved comedy nights, Wine and Jazz evenings, live bands and monthly Latin Socials. Their Happy Hour is from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., with deals on drinks and appetizers.

### Oil Well Craft Beer

Indulge in delicious sub sandwiches available daily from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**Every Monday to Saturday** from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., at least one food truck at the Park of Commerce serves delicious food and crafted libations.

**To-Go Tuesdays:** \$1 off crowlers and \$2 off growlers.

**Wine Wednesdays:** \$1 off wine.

**Ladies Drink Specials on Thursdays:** \$1 off drafts and wine for ladies.

Get \$1 off IPAs all day on **National IPA Day, Thursday, Aug. 1!**

**Celebrate International Beer Day** on Friday, Aug. 2, by enjoying \$1 off drafts between 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Please join Sara Callahan, Ave Maria Realtor, on Saturday, Aug. 3 and Sept. 7, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. for **Family-Friendly Bingo!**

On Monday, Aug. 5, **National Coast Guard Day**, all active and retired Coasties will receive a free beer upon showing their military ID.

**Trivia events** are scheduled for Monday, Aug. 5, and Tuesday, Oct. 1, at 7:00 p.m. sharp, so be sure to arrive early to secure your seat.

They're hosting a **Back-to-School Pottery Painting Party** with Paint & Bake on Saturday, Aug. 10, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.; for a \$15.00 registration fee and pottery starting at \$10.00, attendees can enjoy painting and drinks. R.S.V.P. to [info@paintandbakestudio.com](mailto:info@paintandbakestudio.com).

Join Glorified Vision Art for the **Brew and Paint Party** on Tuesday, Aug. 13 and Sept. 10. Secure your seat for \$35 and R.S.V.P. to [glorifiedvisionart@gmail.com](mailto:glorifiedvisionart@gmail.com).

Cruise Planners Jackie and Dan Rategan will host **Adult Bingo** with free prizes on Wednesday, Aug. 14 and Sept. 11 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 15, is **National Hazy IPA Day**, so all hazy IPAs on draft will be \$1 off all day!

Experience the first **Ugly Shoe Dance Party** on Saturday, Aug. 17, from 8:00 to 11:00 p.m., where you can dance to DJ DiFlo in your ugliest shoes for a chance to win a prize at 9:00 p.m.

**Music Bingo** with Tom & Carol is

on Monday, Aug. 19 at 7:00 p.m.

**Paint Your Pet with Glorified Vision Art** on Tuesday, Aug. 27. Participants can submit a pet photo by Tuesday, Aug. 20 and receive a detailed sketch to paint on canvas during a guided session for \$55, including all supplies. R.S.V.P. to [glorifiedvisionart@gmail.com](mailto:glorifiedvisionart@gmail.com).

**The Suds, Science and Shoes-themed First Friday Celebration** is on Sept. 6 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

**National Beer Lovers Day** is Saturday, Sept. 7. From 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., all draft beer is \$1 off.

All sub sandwiches will be \$1 off for **National Eat a Hoagie Day** on Saturday, Sept. 14.

**National Singles Day** is on Saturday, Sept. 21, from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m., offering all single people \$1 off drafts and \$4 Sangria.

\$1 off drafts from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 28 for **National Drink Beer Day**.

### The Pub & Grill at Ave Maria

The Pub's new happy hour, running Monday through Friday from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., features \$5 well drinks, \$4 house wines, \$3 domestic drafts, \$2 pretzel bites and \$1 chips and salsa.

Make sure to keep an eye out for live music events this fall!

### The Secret Ingredient

**Celebrate your birthday and enjoy a 20% discount** on your favorite regularly priced item with a valid ID.

**Active duty and retired members receive 20% off** one regular-priced item with military ID.

**Every Monday is 55+ and Fabulous Day!** Shoppers aged 55 and up save 10% off one regularly priced item.

Every **Tuesday, "Twosday" shopping allows you and a friend to each receive 20% off** one regularly priced item when shopping together.

Discover the excitement of their **Weekly Wednesday Sale**, where a special item is offered at a discounted price. Stop in or stay tuned on their social media channels to see the featured item each week!

Donate supplies for local schools in need between Thursday, Aug. 1, and 10 and receive a 20% off coupon.

On **National Girlfriend Day**, Thursday, Aug. 1, bring a friend to enjoy a 25% discount on a regular-priced item for both of you.

On Sunday, Aug. 4, **National Sisters Day**, shop with your sister, and both of you will receive 25% off a regular-priced item.

On Thursday, Aug. 8, **National Pickleball Day**, customers can win a pair of pickleball earrings! Limit one entry per person.

Receive a complimentary glass of red wine while shopping on Wednesday, Aug. 28, in honor of **National Red Wine Day**.

Shoppers 55 and older can enjoy a 30% discount on one regular-priced item on Wednesday, Aug. 21, **National Senior Citizens Day**.

Celebrate **National Grandparents Day** on Sunday, Sept. 8, by sharing a photo of your grandkids and receive 20% off one item.

**The End of Summer Sidewalk Sale** will take place on Saturday, Sept. 14, featuring discounts of up to 75% off.

On Sunday, Sept. 15, **National Wife Appreciation Day**, husbands purchasing a gift for their wives will receive one item at a 20% discount.

Friday, Sept. 27 is **National Scarf Day**. All scarves will be 25% off.

**National Hair Day** is on Tuesday, Oct. 1 with 20% off on all hair accessories, including hair clips, ties, scrunchies, headbands and more.

### Stella Rose Way

A locally owned boutique featuring a curated mix of gifts, artisanal items, children's products and home decor. They host monthly events to explore Ave Maria souvenirs and aim to be a delightful source for unique finds and home beautification.

Receive 10% off any regular-price item on Mondays. Some exclusions apply.

On Tuesdays, buy two surprise items and get one free. Each week is different!

Draw a card and win up to 20% off one item on Wednesdays. Some exclusions apply.

On Tuesday, Oct. 1, celebrate their two-year anniversary with doorbusters, a raffle and a chance to draw to win exciting prizes!

### Tropical Smoothie Café

With fresh, made-to-order smoothies,



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Come to MELTZ and indulge in delightful ice cream, organic Açaí bowls, boba teas and more.



# ALL AROUND AVE MARIA

wraps, sandwiches, and flatbreads that instantly boost your mood, treat yourself to an experience that makes eating better and easy breezy. Beyond just food, Tropical Smoothie Cafe is committed to making a splash in communities by donating smoothies and food, supporting charitable organizations and sponsoring local sports programs. Be sure to try their fan-favorite Tropic Bowls!

## Vicky Bakery

**vickybakery.com**  
Led by Phong Ho, Ave Maria's foremost restaurateur, Vicky Bakery promises a delectable assortment of light, flavorful pastries bound to delight the senses. From crispy croissants to decadent cakes, each treat is meticulously crafted to perfection, ensuring an exhilarating culinary experience for every customer. Additionally, Vicky Bakery introduces new party, wedding, and special occasion cakes and custom cakes, expanding their delightful offerings. Moreover, Vicky Bakery has a comprehensive catering service, delivering freshly baked goods to schools, businesses, and events throughout the community.

## Way Out Toys & Games

**wayouttoys.com**  
On Tuesday nights, a **Pokémon Pack Wars** event costs \$20. The event runs from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. and provides each player with 3 packs of cards to use for the event. During the 3 rounds played, one pack is opened at a time as a group. The winner of each round will receive a prize, and there will be a final grand prize round where all 3 packs provided will be used.

On Thursday nights, there is an **open play event for Lorcana** at Disney Loracana from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. It's an opportunity to learn and play the game, and it's open to all ages. Even if you don't have cards, starter decks are available for purchase in-store.

## AVE MARIA UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS

For the latest updates and more information on away games, visit [avemariaygrenes.com/calendar](http://avemariaygrenes.com/calendar).

**Monday, Aug. 12**  
M. Soccer vs. Millenia Atlantic, 1:30 p.m.

**Thursday, Aug. 15**  
M. Soccer vs. University of the Bahamas, 7:00 p.m.

**Saturday, Aug. 24**  
W. Soccer vs. Polk State, 7:00 p.m.

**Tuesday, Sept. 3**  
M. Soccer vs. Life (Ga.), 6:00 p.m.

**Thursday, Sept. 5**  
Volleyball vs. Florida College, 6:00 p.m.

**Tuesday, Sept. 10**  
M. Soccer vs. Fort Lauderdale, 7:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, Sept. 11**  
Volleyball vs. Florida Memorial, 7:00 p.m.

**Saturday, Sept. 14**  
■ W. Soccer vs. Southeastern, 1:00 p.m.  
■ Volleyball vs. Southeastern, 2:00 p.m.  
■ Football vs. Fort Lauderdale, 7:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, Sept. 18**  
M. Soccer vs. Warner, 7:00 p.m.

**Saturday, Sept. 21**  
W. Soccer vs. New College, 7:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, Sept. 25**  
M. Soccer vs. St. Thomas, 7:00 p.m.

**Thursday, Sept. 26**  
Volleyball vs. Florida National, 6:00 p.m.

**Saturday, Sept. 28**  
M. Soccer vs. Florida National, 7:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, Oct. 2**  
Volleyball vs. St. Thomas, 7:00 p.m.

## ■ AVE MARIA RESIDENTS ONLY

Organizers request preregistration for these resident-only events via the Ave Maria Master Association (AMMA) calendar at [avemariamasterassociation.com](http://avemariamasterassociation.com). For more information, call 239-867-4322.

### Adult Games Group

Adults are invited to join our friendly group for card games and Rummikub on Mondays and Thursdays from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the AMMA card room.

### Coffee With a Twiss

Join AMMA Executive Director Kim Twiss for a casual gathering every second Thursday of the month. This is an opportunity for homeowners to ask questions and get updates regarding the Master Association and community news. The upcoming dates are Aug. 8 at 10:00 a.m. and Sept. 19 at 6:00 p.m.

### Adult Art & Craft Classes

Every second Thursday of the month, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Betsy Banes is starting her monthly art and crafts classes for adults. This summer, classes will be held on Aug. 8, Sept. 12th and Oct. 10. Please visit the Ave Maria Master Association website for monthly class details and to register and pay.

### Onspot Dermatology

OnSpot offers dermatological services in their high-tech mobile office in the parking lot off of Roma Street and Avila Avenue. They are available from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. You can walk in, but booking an appointment online is better. Upcoming dates are Friday, Aug. 9; Thursday, Aug. 29; Saturday, Sept. 7; Tuesday, Sept. 17; and Saturday, Sept. 28.

### Forest Bathing Presentation

Join certified Forest Therapy Guide Robin DeMattia for an alternative therapy session that includes guided meditation, mindfulness, and a proven sequence of invitations and activities designed to help you reconnect with nature and yourself. Ave Maria residents are invited to attend this free presentation at the AMMA office on Tuesday, Aug. 13, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Please visit the AMMA website to learn about Forest Bathing or register.

### Empty Bowls Naples

The Ave Maria Master Association is teaming up with Empty Bowls Naples for a fundraising event to fight hunger. The event will be on Wednesday, Aug. 14, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the AMMA office. A \$10 donation allows community members to join in, with a minimum of 20 participants needed. During the event, there will be painting sessions to create bowls for the Empty Bowls annual fundraiser in January. Attendees can bring snacks and beverages. More details and registration are available on the Ave Maria Master Association website.

### Dim Swim at Ave Maria Water Park

Enjoy water park fun exclusively for residents and their guests on Saturday, Aug. 24, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, Sept. 28, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Entry is free with a Water Park pass or \$5 without. A photo ID is required for resident verification. Special treats are available at CJ's Café. Glass and alcohol are prohibit-

ed; coolers will be inspected.

### New Homeowners Social and Orientation

New Ave Maria homeowners and homeowners who have not attended one before are invited to a welcome meet-and-greet, followed by an informational presentation by the master association in the AMMA meeting room. Residents will learn about living in this community and the various organizations in Ave Maria. Check the AMMA website calendar for dates and times. The next Orientation is scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 29, at 5:30 p.m.

### Labor Day Luau at Ave Maria Water Park

On Monday, September 2, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., don your most vibrant luau gear for a fun-filled afternoon. The event will feature family-friendly games, live DJ music and themed treats from CJ's Café. All residents must show a photo ID confirming their name and Ave Maria address for entry. Coolers will be checked at the door to ensure no alcoholic beverages or glass bottles are brought in.

### SPORTS AND FITNESS (RESIDENTS ONLY)

#### INDOOR AT THE AVE MARIA MASTER ASSOCIATION COMMUNITY ROOM

#### Quest Martial Arts Academy Classes

Join veteran instructor Kenny Quintero for martial arts classes for kids and adults. Classes start at 5 p.m. on Mondays and 9:30 a.m. on Saturdays in the AMMA event room. Students will learn discipline and self-defense techniques while improving their focus, getting fit, and having fun. For more information, please contact Crystal at 239-371-6037 or visit [questmartialartsacademy.com](http://questmartialartsacademy.com).

#### Tai Chi Fitness

Participants can experience a meditative workout that boosts strength, mobility and more. To find out more and show interest in an upcoming pop-up summer class or to sign up for the Fall season, please contact the teacher, Mylyn Vedel, at [myvedel@gmail.com](mailto:myvedel@gmail.com) or 239-220-4181.

#### Yoga Fitness

These specialized, smaller-sized classes with Yoga instructor Alexandra Salazar are designed for senior adults and adults. If you want to learn more about how these classes can benefit you or to register, please send an email to [salex2009@gmail.com](mailto:salex2009@gmail.com). Please note that walk-ins are not allowed for this type of class.

#### Sound Bathing

Experience relaxation and tranquility by attending Andrea's Sound Bath class featuring crystal bowls hosted at the Ave Maria Master Association. Unwind your body and ease your mind. For registration and additional information about this unique and beneficial experience, please contact Andrea at 845-742-1525. Each class is \$10.

#### Yoga & Sound Bathing

Residents Alexandra and Andrea invite you to a session dedicated to deep relaxation and stress relief through yoga stretches. Accompanied by a live soundscape of crystal singing bowls and chimes, this experience facilitates a deeper relaxation of mind and body. Please contact

Andrea at (845) 742-1525 to book summer dates, reservations, and payments. The cost is \$20 per person.

### OUTDOOR AT THE AVE MARIA MASTER ASSOCIATION PARKS

The following are the current fitness classes and sports activities approved by the Master Association in our amenities as of the date this is written.

#### Zumba Classes

Join instructor Genesis North for an energetic and enjoyable cardio exercise on Saturday mornings at 9:30 a.m. at the South Park Amphitheater. For more information, including cost and updates, please contact Genesis North via her website at [genesiszumba.as.me](http://genesiszumba.as.me).

#### Tennis Classes

There are currently no Instructors that the Association has approved to conduct Tennis Lessons in any of their Parks. If you are a tennis instructor and wish to provide lessons to the residents using any of our amenities, please contact the Ave Maria Master Association to make arrangements.

### SPORTS LEAGUES & ORGANIZATIONS

#### Ave Maria Little League

Ave Maria's first official, home-based little league recently completed another successful Spring season. The league offers baseball, tee ball and softball for kids aged 4 to 14. For detailed information about the current season's program and registration instructions, please visit [avemariablittleleague.com](http://avemariablittleleague.com) or contact [avemariabaseball@gmail.com](mailto:avemariabaseball@gmail.com).

#### Soccer

The Olfos Sports Academy is relaunching their soccer program this fall. These programs cater to various age groups, from first steps to elementary and middle school, aiming to help children enhance their soccer skills. Practices is on Tuesdays and Thursdays from September 24 to May 30 at Ave Maria North Park. For enrollment and further information, please visit [olfosportsacademy.com](http://olfosportsacademy.com).

#### Flag Football, Cheer & Dance

Ave Maria Youth Sports is in the midst of its summer season, which runs through August and is preparing for an exciting Fall season. The program welcomes players of all skill levels, with coaches available to evaluate each player's abilities and help create balanced teams for the league. Those looking to enroll and learn more about the schedules are encouraged to visit [avemariayouthsports.org](http://avemariayouthsports.org).

Additionally, there are resident-organized pick-up games, including Co-ed softball at South Park and Men's Pick-Up Soccer at North Park. It's important to note that these gatherings are not officially affiliated with the Master Association or under contract with the Association, providing an informal but enjoyable sporting option.

#### Women's Self-Defense Class

On Thursday, August 15, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., the seminar, led by Sgt. Fletch Fuller from the County Sheriff's Office will cover important aspects of self-defense, including Awareness Strategies and Developing Valuable Defensive Skills. This seminar is exclusively for women aged 16 and above and is a great opportunity to enhance self-defense skills. For more details and to register, visit [avemariamasterassociation.com](http://avemariamasterassociation.com). 🌟

# Business Influx Boosts Ave Maria

BY JULIANNA PEREZ

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

With the residential development of Ave Maria skyrocketing, an exciting new wave of businesses is rushing in to meet the growing population's demand. This business boom means that residents can look forward to enjoying more accessibility to the products and services they love, with projected openings ranging through the months of August 2024 to January 2025.

Among the businesses making their way to Midtown Plaza is Ledo Pizza, a casual dining establishment that offers a new spin on a classic. Ledo Pizza is renowned for their Maryland-style pizza, which is characterized by its thin crust, sweet sauce, and distinctive square shape. Instead of the traditional choice of mozzarella cheese, this style of pizza opts for smoked provolone.

Business owner Scott Taggart said that what separates Ledo Pizza from similar establishments isn't just the flavor profile of their iconic dish, it is also the work that goes into ensuring the quality of the product.

"What makes it stand out is that everything is made from scratch. We make fresh dough every two hours," he said.

Ledo Pizza offers a variety of menu items beyond their namesake dish, such as chicken wings, salads, and sub sandwiches. This multifaceted selection allows the business to cater to the varying needs and preferences of the community.

Another eatery bringing a taste of something new to Ave Maria is Umami Ave, a Southeast Asian bistro. Jason Cao owns the restaurant and is eager to diversify the dining options offered in the area.

"I want to introduce this area to Southeast Asian cuisine, mainly Vietnamese because that's my background," Cao said.

"The bistro will mainly have sandwiches and stir-fry dishes."

Umami will offer a more laid-back dining experience, where customers can enjoy staple dishes from Vietnamese cuisine, such as Bahn Mi and Pho.

Cao's decision of bringing this new business endeavor can be partially attributed to his family ties in the community. Cao's brother, Danny Dang, is the owner of Ave Nails and was the one to introduce Cao to the area.

Ave Nails, located at the Publix Retail Shops, will be opening their second location at Midtown Plaza. The salon offers nail care services, lash services and waxing. In addition to this, the business also offers spa treatments like facials and massages.

Whether you're grabbing breakfast on-the-go or looking for a mid-day caffeinated pick-me-up, the upcoming Dunkin' location has you covered.

Owner Mike Koroghlian believes that Dunkin's presence will add a new level of convenience for community members, especially for those who are fanatics of the franchise. The location will be equipped with a drive-thru, adding to the convenience of the experience.

"We're just going to be serving all of Dunkin's delicious products that people love all across the country, except now they don't need to drive so far for it," said Koroghlian.

Another highly anticipated franchise looking to satisfy your sweet tooth is Cold Stone Creamery. Famous for its ice cream creations prepared on a frozen slab of granite, the store will offer its expansive menu of ice cream flavors and toppings at its new location in Midtown Plaza.

Residents of Ave Maria can also look forward to the upcoming arrival of a new NCH Immediate Care location. The



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center aims to give the community more convenient access to standard medical care. In addition to several medical services, NCH Immediate Care will also offer a 'Wait at Home' feature to maximize patient comfort.

"The 'Wait at Home' feature allows patients to sign up on a queue and then receive a text message when it's close to the time they will be seen," said Erin Raney, Chief Administrative Officer for the NCH Medical Group. "When you're sick and not feeling well, you don't want to come in and sit in a waiting room for a long time. So, this is a great way for patients to be comfortable at home while they hold their place in line for a visit."

Sunshine Ace Hardware also plans to open a new location locally, bringing a wide range of hardware, home improvement, and garden supplies to residents and businesses in the area. However, the President of Sunshine Ace Hardware, Michael Wynn, said the store's reach goes beyond their physical location.

"We don't limit our services to just within the four walls," Wynn said. "We have services and handymen that people can hire to do repairs in the home."

As these businesses prepare to open their doors, Ave Maria residents can look forward to a diverse list of services and offerings that will continue to cater to the needs of the growing community. 🌟



# BIG KINDS OF SMALL TOWN FUN

## Christmas in July



Kelsey, Dustin and Brielle Roberts of Kelsey Crane's Desserts.



Shoppers at The Secret Ingredient



Luz Ospina beside the Blue Goodwill Store Christmas display.



Bianka, Sophia and Lily with Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus.



Alyssa Caggiano of The Secret Ingredient



Volunteer Mila Frith collects clothing donations for The Shelter for Abused Women & Children.



Michael Periu



Dr. Duane Olson of Family Chiropractic



Shoppers with their bingo cards.



Author Donna Wyland outside of Stella Rose Way.



Melody and Gloria Burton selling lemonade outside of Stella Rose Way.



Carol DiFlorio and kids enjoying the fake snow.



Wendy Renee singing Christmas songs in front of Blue Agave Mexican Restaurant.



Meeting Santa



Reveler enjoying the fake snow.



Christmas in July shoppers arriving by golf cart.



A PLACE WHERE  
**LOVE**  
WORKS!



Sundays at

8:30AM, 9:30AM

10:45AM & 12:00PM

**(239) 348-7400**

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