

RANDOLPH NEIGHBORS

Photo courtesy of Tom Neely Photography

HEALTH, WELLNESS AND RANDOLPH TOP THIS FAMILY'S LIST

INSIDE

- Read All About the Library | Page 8
- CCM and Stockton Sign Agreement | Page 11

May 2020



Best Version Media™

HOMES SOLD IN MARCH 2020

Address	Beds	Baths	Sale Price	Address	Beds	Baths	Sale Price
3 Arnold Dr	4	2.1	\$500,000	316 Rt 10	3	1.1	\$374,500
65 Arroowgate Dr	3	2.1	\$354,000	8 Southview Rd	4	2.1	\$555,000
119 High St	3	2	\$399,000	15 Sunset Dr	4	2.1	\$539,000
75 Lawrence Rd	4	2.1	\$535,000	1 Sycamore Ln	2	2.2	\$445,000
10 Memory Ln	5	3	\$610,000	904 Wendover Ct	2	2	\$295,000
9 Overbrook Rd	4	2.1	\$565,000	8 Woodlawn Ter	2	2	\$273,000

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January 20	March
February 20	April
March 20	May
April 20	June
May 20	July
June 20	August
July 20	September
August 20	October
September 20	November
October 20	December
November 20	January

Dear Residents,

It's May, and the weather is finally shaping up nicely. We hope you've been able to get outside as much as possible for some walks, or even just hanging out in your backyard--with your latest issue of Randolph Neighbors, of course.

But if you've been stuck inside with young children, you can also check out what one Randolph family did to keep their young children happy and occupied, even with the world being topsy-turvy.

You'll also want to meet Dawn Jacobus and Stephen Pearce, our featured family this month. They both love staying healthy, and of course, they love Randolph! Maybe it's time for a pet! If so, you'll want to meet Stitch, a lovable kitty from the Randolph Animal Shelter. He'd love to come home with you! Are you trying to buy a home right now? Check out Jill Southren's tips on buying in a tight real estate market.

Hang in there, everyone. Better times are coming!

Sue Toth
Content Coordinator
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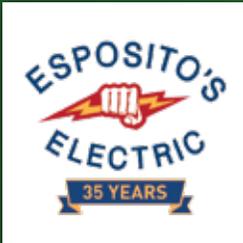
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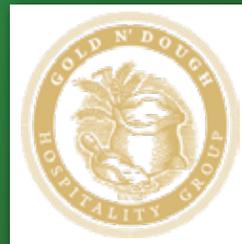
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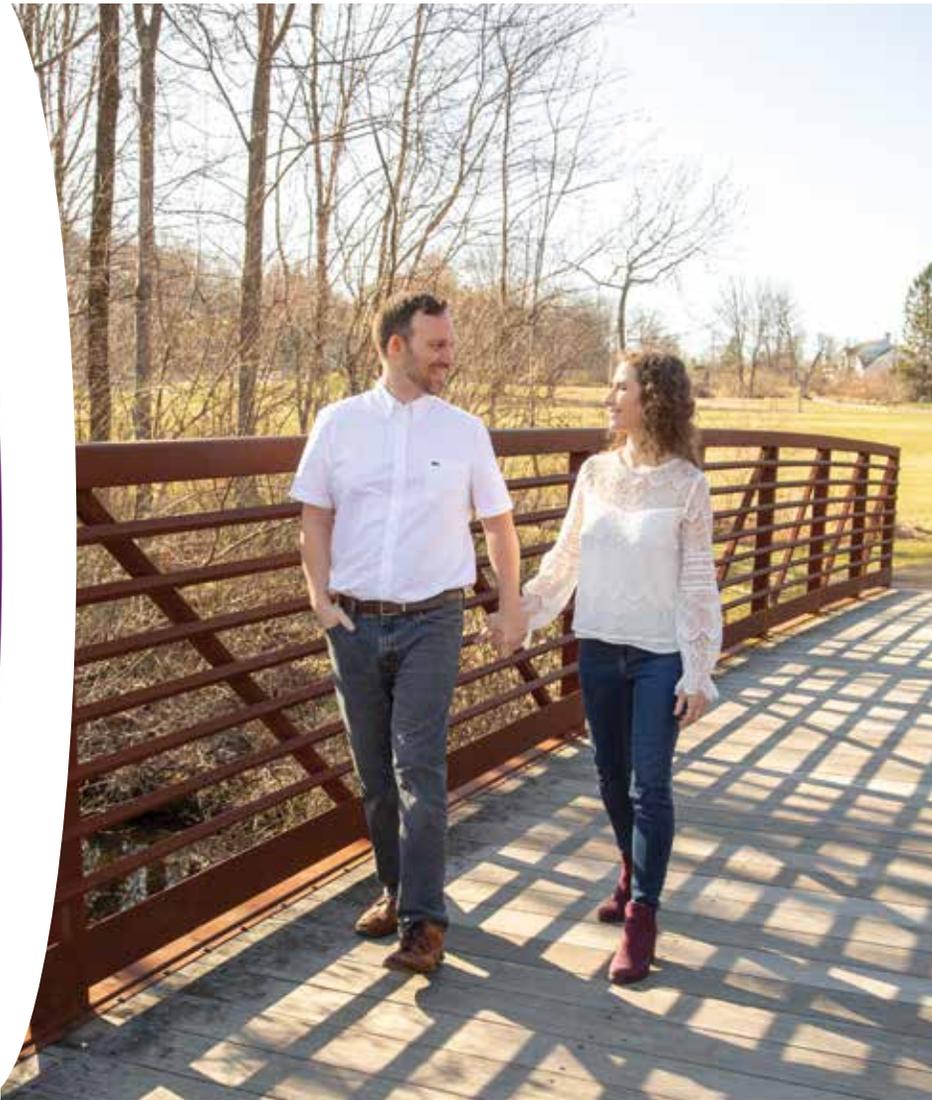
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HEALTH, WELLNESS AND RANDOLPH TOP THIS FAMILY'S LIST

By Sue Toth

Dawn Jacobus and her husband, Stephen Pearce, have a passion for health and wellness—and Randolph, of course!

Dawn worked independently for several years as a massage therapist, until partnering with Pete Befano and becoming the co-owner of Massage Works, LLC at Headquarters Plaza in Morristown from 2000-2007.

She studied event planning and business management at Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC) and was on the Dean's list. Dawn also worked in a dermatologist's office for five years, performing medical skin care treatments including acne treatments, chemical peels, rejuvenating and advanced anti-aging treatments, while also growing her own skin care practice, Anew Dawn Beauty and Balance.

Dawn attended the Morris Institute of Natural Therapeutics in Denville in 1996 for her massage and bodywork therapy training, as well as attending Christine Valmy International Esthetics School in Pine Brook in 2001, where she received her license as a Skin Care Specialist.

In the early 2000s, Dawn trained and competed as a bodybuilder, winning first place in two competitions, the first being the Naturalmania competition in NYC. Her hobbies include hiking, gardening, and creating events such as her Glowing Goddess™ Gatherings--a women's networking group with a vision is to educate, empower and celebrate the feminine energy of women with keynote speakers on wellness and beauty topics.

Dawn also enjoys hosting corporate wellness events, going to Pilates classes, traveling, participating in wellness retreats, walking in Randolph Parks and dancing.

Dawn has volunteered for the Special Olympics, which is a cause dear to her heart since she loves sports. Additionally, Dawn volunteered with complimentary chair massages and bodywork treatments to first responders after the attack on September 11.

Stephen Pearce, RN, HN-BC is a licensed Registered Nurse with the state and a graduate of the County College of Morris located in Randolph.

He continued further study with the Integrative Healing Arts Program at the American Holistic Nurses Institute, achieving Board Certification in Holistic Nursing. Additionally, he has studied advanced energetic and bodywork modalities and therapies with Maggie Hutchinson, JD, LMBT, CHTP-I at Healing Touch NJ and with Dr. Jane Garofano, PhD, LMT, NCTMB at the JSG School of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork.

Stephen has served in a variety of clinical environments, including the operating room, hospice/palliative care and private duty. He continues to share his talents with the community of Randolph at Anew Dawn Beauty and Balance.

He is a seeker of knowledge and innovation with a passion for using mind, body and spirit to create the greatest version of life, health and wellness. He enjoys meditative experiences within nature, hiking, playing music (singing, guitar, djembe), dancing, writing, reading, traveling, gardening, bird watching and yoga.

Dawn's grandparents lived on the corner of Dover Chester Road, and Park Avenue. Her

father, Paul Davey Jacobus, was raised there, along with his brother and two sisters. The house is still there, adjacent to what was once the old fire house. There is now a gas station across the street.

Dawn's mother, Elaine Wogisch, lived on Ironia Road and attended Dover High School. Upon graduating, she went on to study at Katherine Gibbs Secretarial School in Dover. Her parents met at the Methodist Church on Park Avenue, and later had their first date at Bill's Luncheonette. Bill's Luncheonette is a sentimental place for their family.

Dawn's aunt, Cindy Novak, still resides in Randolph, as well as three of her children and their families, who have all attended Randolph schools. Cindy Novak is a Pastoral Minister at Resurrection Parish on Millbrook Avenue in Randolph and heads the Bereavement Ministry there, along with coordinating the homebound ministry at Resurrection Parish. Dawn's grandmother, Mary Louise Jacobus, played the piano for the Methodist Church on Park Avenue for many years as well.

Dawn and Stephen live on Calais Road, near the Library and Recreation Center. They have resided here since 2013. They live in the Mount Freedom section, which in the 1900s, became a vacation haven for people from urban areas, particularly New York City and Brooklyn. The property once accommodated The Ackerman Hotel.

"What we enjoy about living in our neighborhood is the feeling of a tight knit community, beautiful and picturesque

Dawn Jacobus works on a patient at Anew Dawn



Dawn Jacobus and Stephen Pearce

and horseshoes in the yard, and my siblings and cousins would play in the life size doll house on the property. Both sets of grandparents lived a short distance from one another, and I have many cherished memories of my childhood in Randolph."

landscapes, and the wildlife that frequents our property including deer, fox, and many types of birds including our neighborhood woodpecker, blue jays and cardinals," Dawn said.

"We chose to reside and build a business in Randolph due to the special familial roots. We love to hike on Randolph trails, and had one of our first dates on Patriots Path on Sussex Turnpike," Dawn said. "We love the beauty that exists in Randolph, as well as the relationships we have built with neighbors and nearby businesses. We feel a sense of belonging here."

"I have fond memories of childhood, including family picnics at the house my father grew up in on the corner of Park Avenue," Dawn said. "My family would play badminton

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PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

At Brightview, we've been looking at everything that we do – visitor screening, dining, activities, health, and wellness – to make sure we are in compliance with the protocol recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and our state Department of Health. Here are some of the things we've implemented as of this writing on 3/24/2020:

VISITORS

- We have closed the community to all non-essential visitors, including families, and have encouraged residents to stay in the community.

SCREENING:

- Everyone who enters the community, including associates, must be screened for signs of the virus. This includes taking temperatures and completing a detailed questionnaire designed to understand whether they are at higher risk of exposure. If visitors or associates don't pass the criteria, they are turned away.

VOLUNTEERS:

- So many wonderful people have contacted us to ask how they can help our residents and teams during these challenging times. We are working on a volunteer program for people who want to provide assistance for our residents, such as shopping and running other offsite errands. Rest assured that all volunteers will drop their goodies outside the front door of our community to keep out any germs! More details about how you can participate in our volunteer program will be communicated through our website. (www.brightviewseniorliving.com)

These are unprecedented times for our community and for people around the world, but with determination, flexibility, and especially the wit and humor for which many of our residents are known, we will get past this challenge together. Thank you again for your many messages of support – they really do make a difference!

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How to Protect Your Home or Business Investment

Submitted by Richard Webber, CertaPro Painters of Morristown

During these challenging times, it's only natural to evaluate how you can best protect your financial investment you have in your home or business. The appearance of your property matters when it comes to maintaining economic value and one of the most cost-effective ways to do that is repainting.

As the owner of CertaPro Painters® of Morristown and a proud resident of Morris County, I'm here to answer your painting questions. One of the main questions that may be on your mind is how we are adapting our business and painting processes to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

The health and safety of our customers and employees is our highest priority. Here are the items we're offering to help contribute to your peace of mind during this uncertain time.

GIVING REMOTE ESTIMATES

For exterior projects, we can do a drive-by estimate and connect with you on your smartphone, laptop, or tablet to review the project plan and estimate. When I am at your home, I'll be looking for peeling or cracking paint, fading paint, and wood rot. If these areas aren't addressed, it could lead to mold, mildew, or dry rot.

If you would like rooms inside of your home painted, we will set up a time for you to show us these areas on your device using a popular

and user-friendly technology platform. We can consult with you on how we will approach the painting project and discuss any questions you have. We'll then prepare a proposal and reconnect with you online to present our painting estimate.

PRACTICING GOOD HYGIENE ETIQUETTE

We've implemented precautions recommended by public health officials to help everyone stay safe. We are following recommendations by the CDC and wearing masks; washing our hands with soap often for at least 20 seconds; using hand sanitizer; keeping a safe distance of at least 6 feet from others; and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.

We look forward to providing you with the best customer experience possible while ensuring the health and safety of our community. You can schedule your estimate by calling (973) 998-7577 or visiting certapro.com.



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BUDGET BASICS FROM RANDOLPH'S MAYOR

By Christine Carey

From The Mayors Desk

Randolph Township has adopted its 2020 municipal budget. I am very happy to report that for the fourth consecutive year, the municipal tax levy has not increased. This is great news for Randolph residents and is a result of many years of good financial planning and management, a stable assessment base and the Township's strict adherence to conservative fiscal policies and decision-making.

Residents often ask me how their tax money is used. I would like to provide a topline overview here, but for further information, the detailed budget is posted on the Randolph Township website at www.randolphnj.org.

One important point to remember is that even though residents pay their property taxes to Randolph Township, the majority of the total tax payment is collected by the Township on behalf of other government entities. About 70% of your tax bill is collected for the Randolph Board of Education and approximately 10% of your tax bill is collected for the Morris County government body.

The remaining portion of your tax bill is allocated as follows:

- Randolph Library Tax - 1.35%
- Randolph Open Space/Recreation Tax - 0.82%
- Randolph Township Municipal Taxes - 17.45%

Randolph Library Tax – This tax represents 1.35% of your total tax bill and is mandated by state law to provide a minimum level of funding to maintain our municipal library. These tax funds are used for the operation of the library, including staffing payroll and benefits, books, materials, furnishings, supplies and programming. The Randolph Library is governed by a Board of Trustees that provides oversight. The Library tax impact on the average assessed home in Randolph is approximately \$171 annually.

Randolph Open Space and Recreation Tax – This tax represents less than 1% of your total tax bill. It was approved by Randolph residents through referendum in 1992 in order to provide dedicated funds to acquire land that would remain undeveloped to benefit the community and to build and maintain parks and places for recreation to enhance residents' quality of life. For example Veterans' Community Park, currently under construction on Calais Road, is being funded through the Open Space and Recreation Tax. The impact of this tax on the average assessed home in Randolph is approximately \$102 annually.

Randolph Township Municipal Taxes – The remaining, approximately 17.45% of your tax bill is used to fund all operating costs and capital expenses

associated with the Randolph Township municipal organization and deliver all services to Randolph residents. The impact of the municipal tax levy on the average assessed home in Randolph is approximately \$2203 annually.

Approximately 30% of these funds are used to pay salaries and benefits to the staff who work for Randolph Township throughout all departments:

- Engineering, Planning and Zoning
- Finance, Tax Collector, Tax Assessor
- Fire Prevention
- Health and Code Enforcement, Animal Control
- Municipal Court Administration
- Police and Public Safety
- Public Works
- Parks, Recreation & Community Services
- Town Manager and Clerk Administration
- Water and Sewer

These dedicated professionals are responsible for delivering all of the high-quality services that we receive in Randolph. It's important to note that the 2020 budget does not include funding for any increase in staffing.

In addition to salaries and benefits, funds from the annual budget are used to pay utilities, such as electricity, heating and phone services, along with maintenance and improvements for Township-owned buildings. Of course, the budget provides funds for all of the equipment and supplies used throughout the Township, including items ranging from office supplies, furniture, and uniforms to asphalt, rock salt, generators, and even mannequins used by the Rescue Squad for training purposes. The budget also includes funds to support services from outside contractors such as weekly curbside pickup of garbage, biweekly curbside collection of recyclables, and to support local 911 county emergency dispatch services. The Township also owns many vehicles that need to be fueled, maintained and replaced when necessary. The 2020 budget includes funding for two new police cars, lawn mowers, utility vehicles, a street sweeper and an ambulance. In addition, the 2020 municipal budget includes almost \$1 million for road paving and improvements.

As you can see, your tax dollars are used to support all the services you receive as residents and the people who deliver them. I am very proud of the strong fiscal management and oversight of our tax dollars in Randolph. While none of us enjoy paying taxes, we can feel confident that our tax dollars are being well-managed and used prudently.

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Help Stitch Find a Forever Home



By Randolph Regional Animal Shelter

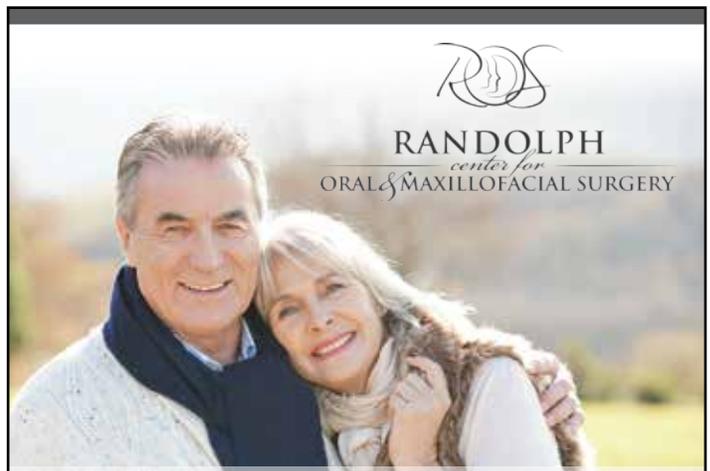
Stitch is an awesome, friendly, calm and affectionate cat at the Randolph Animal Shelter. Stitch would fit in to any home. He loves human companionship and attention. He loves to be pet!

Stitch is in move-in condition - he is neutered and vaccinated (as are all the pets at the Randolph Shelter).

Adoption fee for dogs and cats six months and over is \$50 - you can't beat that! Adoptions are by appointment during this time.

If you wish to adopt, please contact Claudine at

Claudine@RandolphRegionalAnimalShelter.org or call Randolph Animal Shelter and leave a message 973-543-9333.



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Taking a break from bike riding



Watching the ducks at Hedden Park



Science Experiments



Play Dough

HOW TO MAKE LEMONADE OUT OF LEMONS

By Sue Toth

With the required social distancing that's been keeping the little ones apart from their friends and normal activities, it's been difficult, to say the least, to keep young children occupied and happy. Many parents have had to become teachers and playmates to their kids, along with trying to keep up with their own jobs that have gone remote. There are a multitude of challenges, but it's not impossible if you get creative.

Here's how one family is making this "new normal" work. Check out scenes from a typical day of social distancing for Matthew and Kathleen Weiner and their children, Lucas, 5-1/2 and Madelyn, 3. (Full disclosure--these absolutely adorable kids are the grandchildren of *Randolph Neighbors* publisher, Jeff Weiner. Their dad Matt is Jeff's son.)



Reading RAZ kids app and tea



Neighborhood Stroll with Balloons

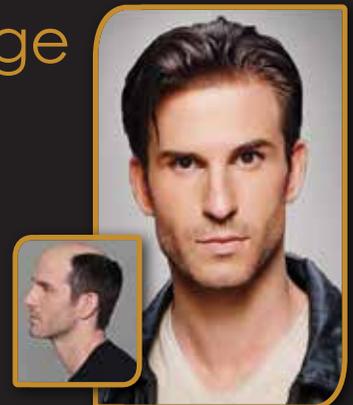


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County College of Morris and Stockton University Sign Dual Admission Transfer Agreement

By Kathleen Brunet

The presidents of County College (CCM) of Morris and Stockton University today signed a dual admission and transfer partnership agreement that will help students make a smooth transition from the two-year college to Stockton's bachelor's degree program.

The Transfer Pathways agreement strengthens the relationship between Stockton and CCM by offering multiple opportunities for students to affordably pursue associate and bachelor's degrees at the two institutions of higher education.

"We're pleased to be offering this first-of-a-kind transfer agreement for our students to continue their higher education at Stockton University," said Dr. Anthony J. Iacono, president of CCM. "Under this agreement, students from their first semester at CCM will be simultaneously enrolled at Stockton to provide a seamless pathway for earning their bachelor's degree. The agreement further includes a dedicated scholarship program for CCM graduates to continue their education at Stockton. We're proud to be further enhancing our relationship with such a great institution for the benefit of our students."

Stockton President Harvey Kesselman said he is excited to provide Morris County students a new opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree and take advantage of Stockton resources while at the community college.

"This agreement will help support students as they begin their degree at County College of Morris, and also provides the assurance that they can have a smooth pathway to a bachelor's degree at Stockton," Kesselman said. "We look forward to participating in their success."

THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT INCLUDE:

- Students who are denied direct admission to Stockton as a freshman applicant can receive conditional dual admission in partnership with CCM.
- Students will attend classes at CCM but will also have access to campus activities and student groups at Stockton using a special Stockton Identification Card from Stockton's Transfer Pathways program. Students are also eligible to apply for housing on Stockton's campus, space permitting.
- Students already enrolled at CCM can apply for conditional acceptance to Stockton while working towards their associate degree, and be assured of acceptance prior to the term in which they are ready to transfer.
- Students who successfully complete their associate degree at CCM can automatically transfer to Stockton with junior standing. Application fees to Stockton will be waived for eligible students.
- Students who complete at least 36 credits at CCM and a total of 64 credits between the county college and the four-year institution are eligible to receive a retroactive associate degree from CCM. Stockton and CCM will co-host "reverse transfer" information sessions for students.

- Stockton and CCM will develop specific program-to-program articulation agreements for high-demand majors to facilitate the quality and ease of transfer.
- Students will receive joint advising from Stockton and CCM and a Stockton advisor will have office space and a regular schedule at CCM.
- Students will be eligible for financial aid from whichever institution they are attending.
- Stockton will provide five one-year scholarships of \$2,000 per year to CCM graduates whose admission to Stockton is covered by the agreement.
- Stockton and CCM will establish an advisory committee to ensure best practices in recruitment, enrollment management, academic and student services, information technology, marketing and facilities use.

With this agreement, half of the 18 community colleges in the state are participating in the Transfer Pathways program. Other participating community colleges are Atlantic Cape Community College, Brookdale Community College, Camden County College, Rowan College of South Jersey, Mercer County Community College, Ocean County College, Rowan College at Burlington County and Salem Community College and is pursuing additional partnerships with other community colleges in the state.

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How Aging Life Care Managers® Can Help Families Prepare For Emergencies

By Gladys Harris, The Olive Group



The Olive Group LLC provides comprehensive concierge level care management to adults that are either aging, developmentally delayed, have incurred a traumatic brain or spinal cord injury. We are a member of the Aging Life Care Association® & have been serving clients throughout NJ, FL, Huntsville AL, and Boston since 2006.

The Aging Life Care Association® is a nationwide, 2000-member strong association of Aging Life Care Professionals® who help older adults and families plan and assist in long-term care and who are often on-call or involved during emergencies.

This is especially important during times of public health challenges, like the COVID-19 (corona) virus. Aging Life Care Managers® help clients and their families be prepared and have action plans through their holistic approach.

Aging Life Care Professionals are up-to-date on news and developments, and ready to assist their clients during the COVID-19 crisis in compassionate, competent, and controlled manners. They plan ahead to ensure that clients have what they will need at home including at least a month's supply of medications, fever-reducing over-the-counter medications, gloves, disinfecting wipes, and ensuring vaccinations are current.

While scientists are still gathering data, both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) have been providing daily updates on this novel virus. Aging Life Care Professionals are able to be nimble and efficient by conveying this information to their clients as they occur.

"As an Aging Life Care practice based in Seattle, Washington, we are proceeding with an abundance of care and caution. We closely monitor public health directives and recommendations and employ best practices, such as proper and frequent hand washing, especially for personal visits. We are also in regular communication with allied professionals, such as our contacts at housing communities where our clients are residents, as well as with our clients' families and other care partners. Our top concern is our clients' health and well-being, that their families are getting clear information, and that our staff is safe as well," said Lisa Mayfield, founder of Aging Wisdom and past president of the Aging Life Care Association."

Current recommendations from these established health organizations are to practice every day preventative measures. Individuals and families are informed to follow the everyday preventive measures including: voluntary home isolation; respiratory etiquette; hand hygiene (washing or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 60%-95% alcohol); avoid touching eyes, nose, mouth and ears; and routinely clean frequently touched surfaces and objects with disinfected wipes especially mobile phones and computers.

Routine use of these measures by everyone will increase community resilience and readiness for responding to an outbreak. According to the CDC, decisions about the implementation of community measures will be made by local and state officials, in consultation with federal officials as appropriate, and based on the scope of the outbreak and the severity of illness. Implementation will require extensive community engagement and ongoing and transparent public health communications.

ALCA's Aging Life Care Professionals are dedicated, smart, and responsive and can support clients as needs arise before and during illness outbreaks. This COVID-19 outbreak can be concerning, but knowledge is power. If you are worried about your aging loved one, connect with an Aging Life Care Professional – they are ready to assist and ensure your loved ones are taking necessary precautions, whether they live alone or in community setting.

ABOUT THE AGING LIFE CARE ASSOCIATION®

Aging Life Care Association® was formed in 1985 to advance dignified care for older adults and their families in the United States. Founded by and handful of women entrepreneurs in the social work and nursing fields, the Association has grown to over 2000 members nationwide, and have cared for about two million older adults over its 35-year history. Aging Life Care Professionals® have extensive training and experience working with older adults, people with disabilities, and families who need assistance with caregiving issues. Through a process of assessment, care planning and implementation, advocacy, education, decision support, and coaching, the Aging Life Care Professional guides families to specific decisions and actions that ensure quality care and optimal functioning for those they love. The practice of Aging Life Care™ and the role of care providers have captured a national spotlight, as generations of Baby Boomers age in the United States and abroad. For more information or to access a nationwide directory of Aging Life Care Professionals, please visit www.aginglifecare.org.

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SUPPORT OUR FOOD CHAIN, Plant a Pollinator Garden

Kristin Hoffman, Landscape Designer, Fullerton Grounds Maintenance



Pollinators are vital in creating and maintaining the habitats and ecosystems that humans and many animals rely on for food and shelter. They ensure adequate fruit and seed production for crops, trees, shrubs and flowers. I think it's safe to say, as a society, we all enjoy food. Be it fresh from our garden or prepared at one of our many local restaurants. Did you know that nature's pollinators bring us one out of every three bites we enjoy? There are many types of species that are considered pollinators but none more widely recognized than the bumble bee.

Sadly, species of North American bumble bees have significantly declined in population in recent decades. Research shows there are a few reasons behind the decline: transfer of parasites from honey bees, competition with other insects and loss of floral resources are just a few. Luckily you, the home gardener, can do your part to support our food chain and help save the bumblebees. Remember their survival is to our benefit.

You may be thinking isn't it good enough just to plant a bunch of flowers? Plant them and they will come. Well kind of. When scouting for food, bees seek

out two types of plants, flowers that provide nectar which acts as carbs and sugar for them, giving them an instant energy boost, and flowers that provide pollen which acts as a protein. Luckily there are many options within the nursery industry that can provide gardeners with various colors, heights, bloom time and deer tolerance. If enjoying the fruits of your labor goes beyond just flowers, there are several fruiting trees and vegetables that bumble bees particularly enjoy as well!

Annual Salvia, a bumble bee favorite, is one of my staple flowers. As you can see in the photo, it adds nice height and color to a simple patio planter. Surround it with red Petunias and brightly colored Potato Vine to add leafy texture and a cascading effect. All three of these annuals are proven easy keepers, multi-month bloomers and are readily available at most local garden centers. Applying a light application of deer spray to the petunias and potato vine may be needed depending on your area. Other annuals to be considered for larger, less formal beds are Cosmos, Zinnia, Snap Dragons and Sunflowers. These varieties make for great cutting gardens as well for those of you that enjoy fresh flowers around your home.

A great combination for summer-fall perennial blooms is Black Eyed Susan and Purple Coneflower. Two bumble bee favorites, as you can see in the photo. Incorporate some ornamental grasses for additional height and texture. Their wispy foliage also creates movement in the landscape and left uncut, can add

interest into the otherwise barren winter landscape. Other perennials to be considered for a pollinator garden are Aster, Bee Balm, Phlox, Salvia, Sedum and Peony.

Keep in mind, one doesn't need to have a huge property or vast garden to plant flowers that help our pollinator friends. A simple planter on an apartment balcony can contain a lovely mix of annuals, while those with more room and time, can consider incorporating permanent perennial varieties. Whatever your space allows, have fun with it and may the buzz be with you!



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5 FIVE TIPS FOR BUYERS IN A TIGHT HOUSING MARKET

By Jill Southren, Weichert Realtors



When inventory is low, home prices tend to go up. Attempting to purchase a house in this type of market can make the already complex process of buying a home even more overwhelming. To help buyers successfully get through the buying process in a tight inventory market with as little stress and difficulty as possible, here are five tips to consider.

- 1. Determine and stick to a budget.** Before beginning the house hunting process, prospective homebuyers should receive pre-approval from one or more lenders to verify the amount of money they are qualified to borrow. Then, after taking into account additional costs of ownership such as taxes, utilities and insurance, buyers should determine a final budget they can comfortably afford. When listings are scarce, bidding wars can drive up prices, so buyers must be prepared to walk away if the asking price surpasses their budget.
- 2. Identify desired neighborhoods and home wants versus needs.** When housing inventory is tight, buyers may need to compromise on what they believe they want from a home. Certain wants, such as stainless appliances or hardwood floors, can be added later. However, if a buyer wants to be in a specific school district or have a decent sized backyard, those cannot be addressed later and must be taken into account during the house hunting process.
- 3. Be ready to make a decision quickly.** In a seller's market, homes rarely stay on the market long, so when a house that is in their budget and checks off all of their needs come along, buyers should not hesitate. Buyers should be ready to submit an offer quickly, or they may risk missing out on the home altogether.
- 4. Bid competitively and limit contingencies.** It is tempting to submit a low offer as a starting bid, but in a seller's market buyers need to put forward their highest offer from the very beginning or they are likely to lose out on the home. It is also important to remember that in multiple bidding situations it is not always the highest offer that is most attractive to the seller but the one with the fewest contingencies. Removing restrictions related to the sale of a current home and being flexible with things like the move-in date can make a bid stand out to a seller.
- 5. Work with a Realtor®.** All real estate is local, so it is important to work with an agent who is a Realtor®, a member of the National Association of Realtors®, and who is familiar with the areas and neighborhoods the homebuyers are considering. Realtors® are the most trusted resource for real estate information and have unparalleled knowledge of their communities; they can give buyers the competitive advantage needed in a tight market.



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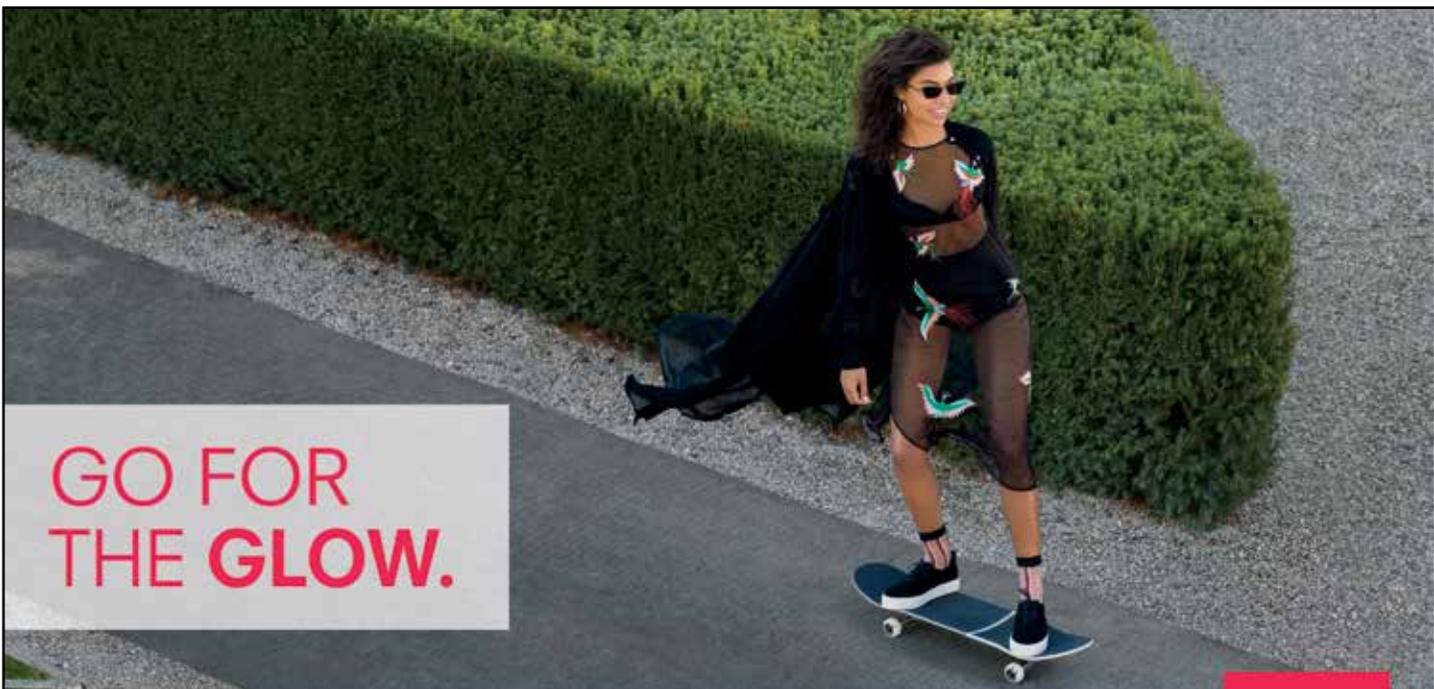
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