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# Orlando Family magazine

SEPTEMBER 2020

The unlikely leading man continues to expand his horizons



## Jason Segel

BRUSHING UP: 94 TOP DENTISTS

plus

Escape to St. Pete-Clearwater

page 38: The area's top varsity athletes

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SEPTEMBER 2020

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DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING
Eva Kelso

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Peter Proko

MANAGING EDITOR
Matt Cosentino

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Brittany Ann Morrisey

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Bill Donahue, Julie Shannon, Debra Wallace

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES
Donna Colona, Stacy Daniels, Catherine Randell, Ali Wilson

SALES ASSISTANT
Maria Foster

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Hank Alspach

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Brian Mikulski

DESIGNERS
Abby Lurty, Dori Shields, Lisa Zollinger

ACCOUNTANT
Max Haggerty

SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL CONTENT COORDINATOR
Maggie Reilly

PUBLISHER
Gerry Haggerty

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# Home Front

## by the Numbers

**$2.5 Billion**

The increase in sales Publix Super Markets saw due to the rush on goods that was spurred by the pandemic earlier this year.

**No. 1**

The position Orlando achieved in a recent list of small-town favorites for quickie getaways by travel site Hotwire.

**4,200**

The number of no-cost vaccines administered to children by the Florida Department of Health in Orange County over two weeks of the agency's Back-to-School Immunization event.

**94%**

The drop in revenue that Universal theme parks had from the company's first to second quarter attributable to the fact that attractions were closed for some time in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

**49%**

The increase of Central Floridians who will likely experience food insecurity this year, according to Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap 2020 report.

**Fourth**

Orlando's ranking in a list of the most pet-friendly cities by data analysis and personal finance website WalletHub.

## 3 THINGS YOU'LL LEARN

The St. Pete-Clearwater area offers several attractive reasons for a weekend getaway.
**Page 14**

Jason Segel once did an ad campaign for Disney Parks that was photographed by Annie Leibovitz.
**Page 24**

As the fall high school sports season approaches, we spotlight the varsity athletes who rise above the rest.
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## DID YOU HEAR?

*"We wanted to compete and show everyone our passion for soccer and our passion brought us to the final and made everyone dream about winning a trophy. Unlucky we didn't get that one, but everyone saw what we did and everyone saw our quality of football and everyone saw who was better on the field."*

—ORLANDO CITY CAPTAIN LUIS NANI
AFTER THE LIONS' LOSS IN THE MLS IS BACK TOURNAMENT

## Hit



**Doctors at AdventHealth Orlando performed the first transplant in Florida to be done with a "dead" donor heart.** Through a groundbreaking process called Donation After Circulatory Death, the doctors were able to save the life of a man who had been waiting for a transplant since 2018.

**A University of Central Florida clinic is offering a free therapy program for first responders.** UCF Restores, which specializes in treating people affected by trauma, is providing one-time, one-hour therapy sessions via video conference to health care workers in Florida.



**The city of Orlando is supporting children who are learning at home with a new program** at six neighborhood centers that gives a limited number of students access to a study space with computers and Wi-Fi.

**Two Universal Orlando hotels have shut down temporarily.** The Loews Sapphire Falls Resort and the Aventura Hotel were closed because of decreased demand.



**Orlando Magic forward and rising star Jonathan Isaac tore a ligament in his left knee** during a game inside the NBA's bubble at Walt Disney World.

**Restaurant workers at Orlando International Airport are facing a mass layoff.** More than 700 employees who have been furloughed since March were informed that if they are not called back to work in October, then their jobs will be eliminated.

## Miss







# GETTING PERSONAL




**Local artist Nelson Cardenas** on painting with fire, reading classic novels and his most recent art series honoring health care workers.

**1. I am a self-taught artist.** When I discovered the television shows of Bob Ross, I was hooked on art. As a child, I would watch his show and as soon as it ended, I would run to my bedroom and replicate, from memory, his paintings on paper using tempera paint.

**2. I have been living in Central Florida since 2005.** I was born in Medellin, Colombia, and moved to Central Falls, Rhode Island, at the age of 13. I then moved to Central Florida with my family to escape the harsh winters of the North.

**3. I recently completed a series of paintings—now on display at Orlando Health Dr. P. Phillips Hospital—depicting local health care workers.** I started this project after being approached by Bernzomatic, the makers of blowtorches. The company had seen some of my artwork on social media and wanted to pay tribute to health care workers through art. Since I am a health care worker, Bernzomatic gave me this opportunity and allowed me to expand on it by creating a series of six paintings of real people who are on the front lines of the pandemic. For this project, I used the Bernzomatic blowtorches as a paint brush. I used fire on plywood panels to start my underpainting process and then I used oil paint to bring out the details and light tones. I then went back and forth with fire and paint until I achieved the desired effect.

**4. I thoroughly enjoy painting with fire and I love to experiment with many materials and tools such as leather, glass, alabaster stone and metal sheets.** My most current art experiments involve using a welder as a drawing tool on metal. To create large scale paintings, I also combine wood.

**5. I am a prep cook at Orlando Health Dr. P. Phillips Hospital.** I think cooking is also a form of art. You have to be spontaneous and creative in the kitchen just like creating a painting.

**6. A perfect day in Central Florida for me is taking a walk at Kissimmee Lakefront Park** and then a night out at one of my favorite local restaurants like Menagerie Eatery & Bar in Orlando.

**7. Someone I admire is philosopher Noam Chomsky.** I really gravitate toward people who create philanthropic movements for the betterment of humanity.

**8. I love reading classic novels** and one of my favorite books is *The Catcher in the Rye*. Currently, I am reading *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

**9. I have two children,** a 20-year-old daughter who is studying journalism at the University of Central Florida and a 14-year-old son who is starting high school in the fall. Being a father was what I expected and so much more.

**10. I am currently in the process of creating a new art installation.** I was inspired by an artist who goes around the country raising awareness about homelessness and he sets up installations with signs that were made by homeless people. I am currently buying signs from homeless persons and would like to create my own installation in the near future to benefit a charity that supports the homeless.




There's something going around. Only this time it's not a cause for concern, but celebration. At Nemours Children's Health, an infection of courage, compassion and never giving up has been spreading unchecked since the day we opened our doors. Compelling us to do whatever is necessary for the health of children everywhere. Whether that means new and innovative medical breakthroughs or better, more convenient ways of bringing them to our patients. Because at Nemours Children's Health, we'll never stop spreading the best of what the human spirit has to offer. **Learn more at Nemours.org/WorthCatching**

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# JUST ONE QUESTION

**We all need someone to look up to, especially during difficult times in our lives.**
So, we wanted to know: **Who is someone you are inspired by?** We asked these Central Floridians and here's what they had to say.



**Lisa Hardt, narrator for Orlando Shakes ShakesBeer virtual events**
*"I hope this isn't too cliche of an answer, but I have to say my mother. She is the hardest-working person I know, but the most inspiring thing about her to me is that she believes that it is never too late to change and grow."*



**JP Lambiase, co-creator of the YouTube channel HellthyJunkFood**
*"Jim Carrey has always inspired me to find my own voice in comedy, while staying unique and true to myself."*



**Felicia Green, dispatcher at Advanced Air Conditioning**
*"Someone who inspires me is my co-worker Laura. She always has a positive attitude no matter what is happening in her own life and … she has a big heart and wants the best for everyone around her."*



**Scott Sidler, local author and blogger for The Craftsman**
*"I'm really inspired by Jocko Willink, the author and former Navy SEAL. Running two small businesses, I appreciate his perspective on leadership and how proper leadership can change the world for the better both at work and at home."*



**Jennifer Englert, partner at The Orlando Law Group**
*"I am inspired by my son who has autism but still always has a smile on his face while he works his way through challenges every day. No matter what is going on with him, he is still kind and helpful to others which is more than most people can say."*



**Deanna Gustafson, director of Children's Lighthouse daycare**
*"Someone who inspires me is my sister Debbie; she is one of my best friends. She is an inspiration to me because of her faith. She lives her faith boldly. … She shares what she can with those that she meets."*



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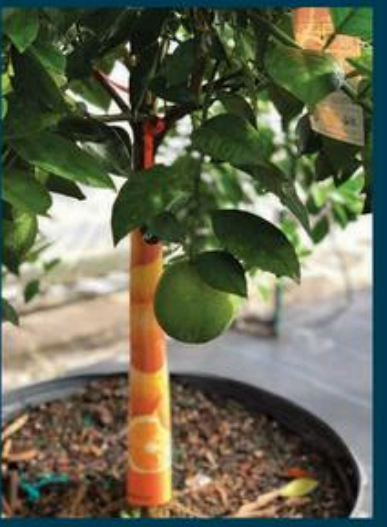
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# Event Planner

## A look at some of the fall's biggest arts and culture offerings.


Comedian Jo Koy

With the COVID-19 pandemic still weighing heavily on our daily lives, we could all use a little reprieve from the stress. And what better way to do that than to get out and experience a little arts and culture? This calendar spotlights some of the unique happenings taking place this fall across the Greater Orlando area. A mix of new exhibits, special events and plenty of virtual programming will keep local residents engaged, but things are very much subject to change and so it's best to check the latest before heading out the door. And keep in mind, those places that are still welcoming visitors are doing so at reduced capacities and in some cases requiring advanced reservations. Nevertheless, it's obvious that the arts are very much alive in Central Florida and that's wonderful news.

## PERFORMING ARTS & LIVE MUSIC

**Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts | Orlando**
**DrPhillipsCenter.org**
**(844) 513-2014**

**Oct. 9**
*JO KOY*
One of today's most in-demand comedians brings his polished brand of humor to town for one night only. **VENUE:** Walt Disney Theater **SHOWTIME:** 8 p.m. **ADMISSION:** Tickets start at $49.25

**Oct. 23-25**
*THE SLEEPING BEAUTY*
Orlando Ballet kicks off its 2020-21 season with this performance of the classic fairy tale featuring the wonderful music of Tchaikovsky. **VENUE:** Walt Disney Theater **SHOWTIMES:** Vary **ADMISSION:** Tickets start at $24

**Dec. 4-13**
*THE NUTCRACKER*
The holiday classic returns for an extended engagement that includes separate performances catered to families. **VENUE:** Walt Disney Theater **SHOWTIMES:** Vary **ADMISSION:** Tickets start at $24

**Garden Theatre | Winter Garden | GardenTheatre.org**
**(407) 877-4736**

**Through Sept. 27**
*HELLO DOLLY!*
Expect plenty of laughs and lots of singing along to the familiar hits from this hit Broadway musical. **SHOWTIMES:** Vary **ADMISSION:** Tickets start at $25

**Mad Cow Theatre | Downtown | MadCowTheatre.com**
**(407) 297-8788**

**Sept. 19**
*NOTHING RHYMES WITH JUNETEENTH*
This special performance based on a work by acclaimed playwright Idris Goodwin will be shown live on Facebook. Those who register will receive a special Zoom link and be able to participate in interactive discussions. **SHOWTIME:** 1 p.m. **ADMISSION:** Free, $10 donation suggested

**Opera Orlando | Orlando**
**OperaOrlando.org**
**(407) 512-1900**

**Sept. 6**
*OPERA ON PARK*
Tenor Carlos Enrique Santelli and mezzo-soprano Ashley Dixon, who happen to be husband and wife, close the series with a program from their home in Atlanta. They are joined by pianist Clinton Smith. **SHOWTIME:** 2 p.m.

**Sept. 13**
*GABRIEL PREISSER, BARITONE*
This Grammy winner who serves as the executive director for Opera Orlando will perform a special free livestream concert available on the organization's YouTube channel. **SHOWTIME:** 2 p.m.

**Sept. 20**
*A GRAND NIGHT FOR SINGING*
The setting for this fifth anniversary celebration will be your very own family room as Opera Orlando presents a private livestream performance broadcast from Casa Feliz Historic Home Museum. **SHOWTIME:** 2 p.m.

**Nov. 22**
*#REPRESENTATION MATTERS*
Opera Orlando board member and local Central Florida activist Chevalier Lovett hosts this talk-show style broadcast that focuses on Black artists and their experience in the opera world, both on and offstage. **SHOWTIME:** 2 p.m.

**Dec. 17, 19**
*DIE FLEDERMAUS: THE REVENGE OF THE BAT*
This rescheduled show is still planned for a live, in-person performance at the Walt Disney Theater located inside the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts. **SHOWTIMES:** 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 17) and 2 p.m. (Dec. 19) **ADMISSION:** Tickets start at $19

**Orlando Shakes | Orlando**
**OrlandoShakes.org**
**(407) 447-1700**

**Sept. 22-Nov. 1**
*CHARLOTTE'S WEB*
E.B. White's classic children's tale comes to life for a small run of shows that are fit for the entire family. **SHOWTIMES:** Vary **ADMISSION:** TBA

**Oct. 7-Nov. 8**
*POE: DEEP INTO THAT DARKNESS PEERING*
This play takes the audience to the night before Edgar Allan Poe's death and the measures he's willing to take to try and save his life. **SHOWTIMES:** Vary **ADMISSION:** TBA



**Nov. 18-Dec. 20**
*THE TRIAL OF EBENEEZER SCROOGE*
This show is set one year after *A Christmas Carol* and follows Scrooge as he returns to his miserable ways. **SHOWTIMES:** Vary **ADMISSION:** TBA

**Wayne Densch Performing Arts Center | Sanford**
**WDPAC.com | (407) 321-8111**

**Sept. 18-27**
*MONTY PYTHON'S SPAMALOT*
This multiple Tony Award-winning play adapted from the classic film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* comes to town for a special engagement. **SHOWTIMES:** Vary **ADMISSION:** $20-$27

**Orlando Philharmonic Orlando | OrlandoPhil.org**
**(407) 770-0071**

**Sept. 26-April 25, 2021**
*FAIRWINDS CLASSICS SERIES*
This year's concert series kicks off in late September and has been extended from five shows to six for the upcoming season. **SHOWTIME:** Saturdays, 7:30 p.m. **ADMISSION:** TBA

**Oct. 19**
*LARA ST. JOHN PLAYS BEETHOVEN*
This special performance, part of the Focus Series Live at The Plaza Live, showcases the violinist and is led by conductor Eric Jacobsen. **SHOWTIME:** 7 p.m. **ADMISSION:** TBA

**Nov. 16**
*AN EVENING OF FANFARE*
Conductor Michael Atkinson will lead a spirited program that will include favorites from Gabrieli, Gershwin and Sousa. **SHOWTIME:** 7 p.m. **ADMISSION:** TBA

**Nov. 28**
*HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS: A MIDNIGHT CLEAR*
Guest conductor Victor Vanacore and various special guests will perform traditional holiday songs and carols. **SHOWTIMES:** 1:30 and 7:30 p.m. **ADMISSION:** TBA

## MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

**Albin Polasek Museum and Sculpture Gardens**
**Winter Park | Polasek.org**
**(407) 647-6294**
**Through Oct. 25**

*KEEPERS OF HERITAGE PRESENT: EVOLVING IDENTITIES*
This celebration of Puerto Rican arts and culture features paintings, mixed media and sculptures created by Keepers of Heritage members as a way to pay homage to their cultural roots. **HOURS:** Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Sun. 1-4 p.m. **ADMISSION:** adults $10, seniors and students $8, children ages 5-12 $3, free for children under 5 years.

**The Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art**
**Winter Park**
**MorseMuseum.org**
**(407) 645-5311**

**Through Sept. 26, 2021**
*SELECTED PORTRAITS FROM THE MORSE COLLECTION*
This exhibit features painted and photographic portrayals of Americans spanning the course of three centuries. **HOURS:** Tues.-Sat., 10 a.m.-3 p.m. by appointment only, closed Sundays **ADMISSION:** general $6, seniors $5, students $1, free for children under 12 years.

**The Mennello Museum of American Art | Orlando**
**MennelloMuseum.org**
**(407) 246-4278**

**Through Sept. 13**
*MIRA LEHR: HIGH WATER MARK*
This exhibit shows why the celebrated artist has been an inspiration for the next generation of talented creatives. **HOURS:** Tues.-Sat. 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Sun. noon-4:30 p.m. **ADMISSION:** general $5, seniors $4, children and students $1, free for children under 6 years.

**Nov. 7**
*WHITE CANVAS PARTY*
This virtual ticketed event will include the works of 30 area artists and the museum will offer food and wine for pickup in the afternoon so viewers can soak up the atmosphere from the comforts of home. **SHOWTIME:** 7 p.m. **ADMISSION:** TBD

**Orange County Regional History Center**
**Downtown**
**TheHistoryCenter.org**
**(407) 836-8500**

**Oct. 3 through Feb. 14, 2021**
*YESTERDAY THIS WAS HOME: THE OCOEE MASSACRE OF 1920*
This special exhibition will mark the 100-year remembrance of the Ocoee Massacre, the largest incident of voting-day violence in U.S. history. **HOURS:** Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. noon-5 p.m. **ADMISSION:** adults $8, seniors, students and military $7, children ages 5-12 $6, free for children under 5 years.

**Orlando Museum of Art**
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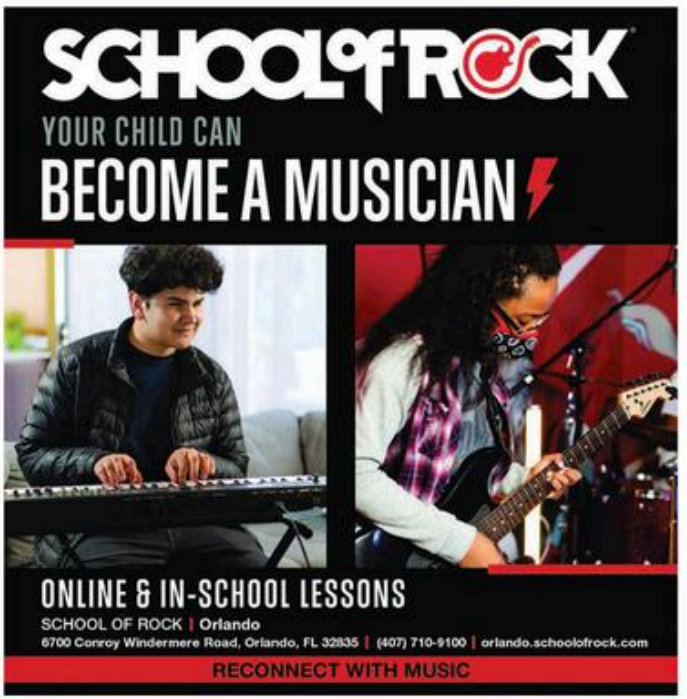
**Through Oct. 25**
*OLIVER JEFFERS: 15 YEARS OF PICTURING BOOKS*
A showcase of works from this award-winning artist, illustrator and writer that display the unique style that has helped him sell more than 10 million picture books. **VENUE:** Mr. and Mrs. Chelsey G. Magruder Gallery II **HOURS:** Tues.-Fri. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Sat.-Sun. noon-4 p.m. **ADMISSION:** adults $10, seniors and students $5, children ages 4-17 $5, free for children under 4 years.

**Sept. 24 through Jan. 3, 2021**
*JEFRÉ: POINTS OF CONNECTION*
This will be the artist's first solo museum exhibition featuring large-scale multimedia sculptures and installations synonymous with his work showcased in public spaces. **VENUE:** Multiple galleries **HOURS:** Tues.-Fri. 10 a.m.- 4 p.m., Sat.-Sun. noon- 4 p.m. **ADMISSION:** adults $10, seniors and students $5, children ages 4-17 $5, free for children under 4 years.

* For more information on other events taking place this fall, please check with each venue for the latest updates.



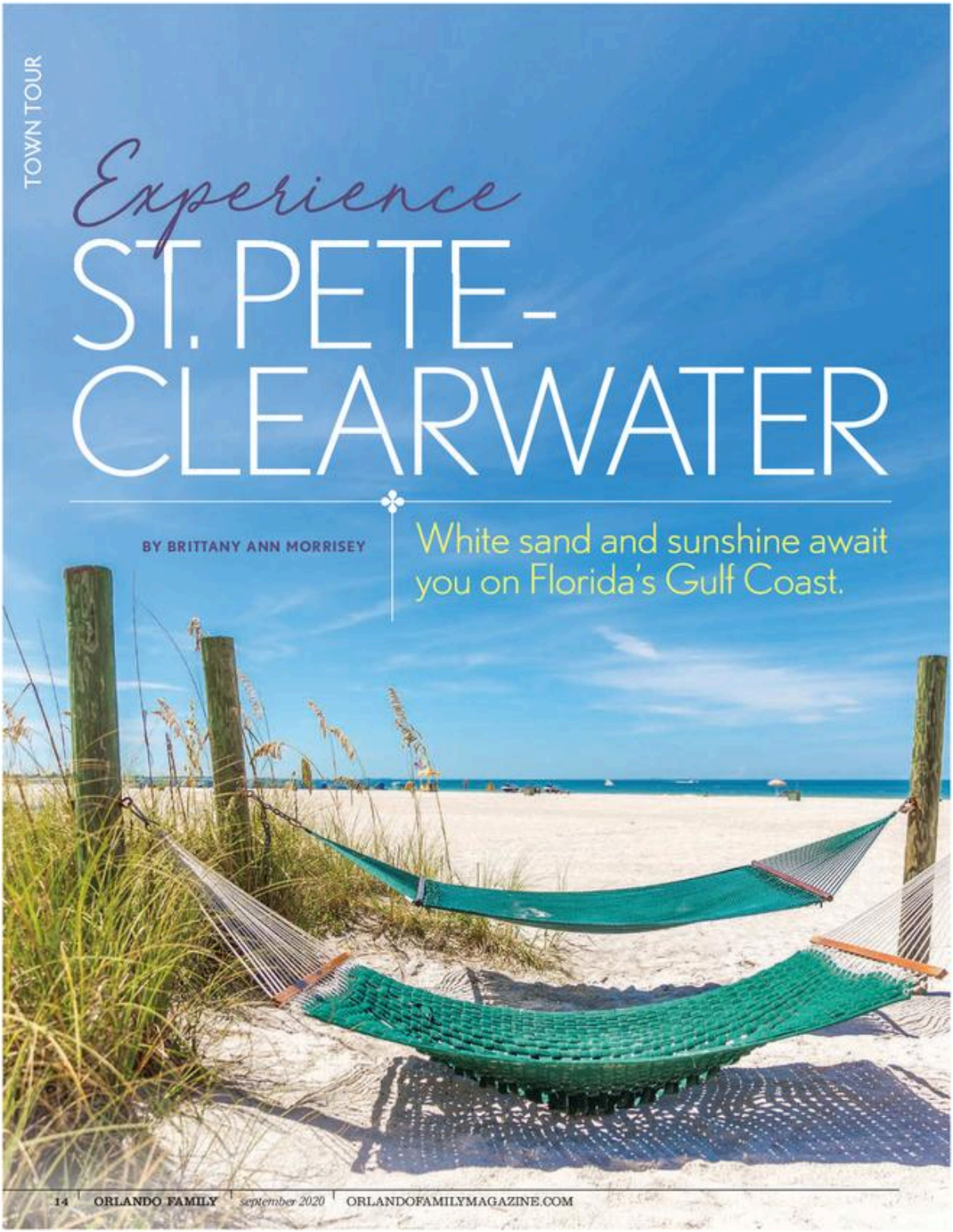




# *Experience* ST. PETE-CLEARWATER

BY BRITTANY ANN MORRISEY

White sand and sunshine await you on Florida's Gulf Coast.



NEIGHBOR TO THE BUSTLING CITY OF TAMPA, THE ST. PETERSBURG-CLEARWATER AREA presents a more relaxed atmosphere with sandy white beaches and glistening ocean views. But these lazy beach towns are much more than just sand and sun.

Known as Sunshine City, St. Pete has a bevy of family-friendly arts and culture institutions and a robust microbrewery scene. Meanwhile, Clearwater boasts one of Florida's most famous beaches and outdoor activities galore—a boon in a time where people are looking to social distance because of the coronavirus pandemic. With about a two-hour drive time from Orlando, these two cities are ideal for a weekend getaway. So, pack your bags because outdoor adventure, exquisite dining and hazy beach days are waiting for you on Florida's Gulf Coast.


The Don CeSar


The Don CeSar Lobby Bar

## Accommodations

No matter your preference, St. Pete-Clearwater has a place for you to stay for the duration of your vacation. Whether that be a hotel with ocean views, a quaint bed and breakfast in the city, or a cottage on the beach.

With its signature pink palace exterior, **THE DON CESAR** is one of the most iconic hotels in St. Pete. Marrying old-world glamour with







modern sophistication, this gorgeous property is steeped in history, having opened in 1928 and played host to stars of the silver screen, renowned authors and even U.S. presidents. Recently, The Don underwent a number of major renovations including a redesign of its lobby and updates to the Don Lobby Bar, Uncle Andy's, Maritana and The Don Boutique experience.

Beach-chic and nestled right on Clearwater Beach, the 230-room **OPAL SANDS RESORT** features panoramic views of the Gulf of Mexico. The contemporary designed hotel has upscale waterfront dining, a zero-entry outdoor pool and a full-service spa.

For a more boutique experience, **THE KENWOOD GABLES B&B** is an option. The Tudor Revival-inspired home is situated near downtown St. Pete and the beach. Built in the 1930s, the inn has meticulously appointed rooms, a continental breakfast and a heated pool.

With the coronavirus pandemic still a health threat, lodging facilities in St. Pete and Clearwater are taking extra precautions including adopting enhanced sanitation protocols and temperature checking associates when they arrive at work. But be sure to call before you book a room to see how your hotel or bed and breakfast is keeping you safe.



## Dining & Drinks

The craft beer scene in St. Pete and Clearwater has exploded in recent years so a brewery tour is a must. Start your beer crawl at **CLEARWATER BREWING COMPANY**, then head down to **BIG STORM BREWING** for award-winning lagers and finish the day at **GREEN BENCH BREWING CO.** with a pint of ale or cider.

There is no shortage of al fresco dining in the St. Pete-Clearwater area and **BON APPÉTIT RESTAURANT** offers just that along with stunning waterfront views. In fact, OpenTable diners voted it one of the most scenic restaurants in America. Casual but with a sophisticated setting, this restaurant serves up classical European and American cuisines made with fresh ingredients.

For lunch, head to **THE PALM PAVILION**, a Clearwater Beach landmark that's been around since 1926. Serving seafood, steak, handhelds and more, this laid-back beach spot is first come, first served.

For brunch, **CASSIS** in St. Pete delivers all the classics—omelets, French toast, pancakes—in a European brasserie setting. The restaurant also has a bakery headed up by pastry chef Katherine Williams so you'll want to stop in to grab a few cakes and breads to go.

And for after dinner, **ST. PETE'S BEANS & BARLOUR** will satisfy any dessert cravings you may have with its boozy ice creams and cakes. The parlor is also ideal for a digestif with a selection of signature coffee blends and clever cocktails.



## Select Attractions

Attractions in the St. Pete-Clearwater area are taking extra precautions to keep your family healthy. Local museums and activity centers expect patrons to mask up and social distancing is enforced. However, you should check with each attraction to learn their COVID-19-related measures before you visit.

Displaying the works of one of the most celebrated painters of all time, **THE DALÍ MUSEUM** in St. Pete has a collection of more than 2,400 art pieces by Salvador Dalí. While at the museum, step outside to take a stroll through the Avant-Garden for some quiet contemplation and then stop in at the Café Gala for a bite.

For some fun with the kids, the **CLEARWATER MARINE AQUARIUM** has plenty of educational exhibits where the family can learn all about the importance of conservation and view sea creatures such as sea turtles, dolphins, stingrays, sharks and more. For an extra fee, families can get up close to feed a stingray or Thelma, the resident nurse shark.

Thrill-seekers will want to book a seaplane discovery flight with **AIR ADVENTURES CLEARWATER**. Get a bird's-eye view of Clearwater and St. Pete's beaches and learn to maneuver in the sky with a Federal Aviation Administration-certified flight instructor by your side.


Air Adventures Clearwater


Air Adventures Clearwater

After reaching new heights, slip down below at the **SUNKEN GARDENS**, a botanical paradise and St. Pete's oldest living museum. Here you'll find cascading waterfalls and more than 50,000 tropical plants.

For some more outdoor activity, **PIER 60** at Clearwater Beach provides recreation for the whole family including a 1,080-foot fishing pier where you can cast off and a well-equipped playground for the kids. Stay until the evening to be front row for a spectacular sunset.


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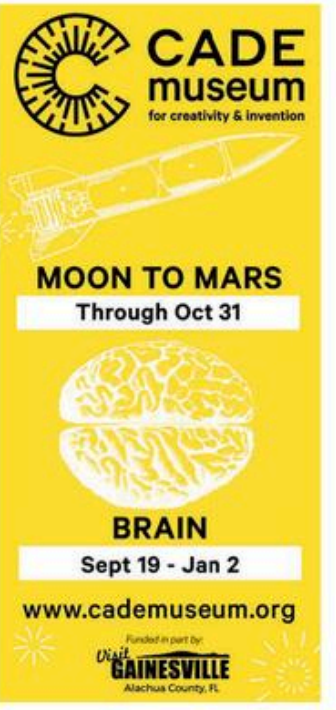
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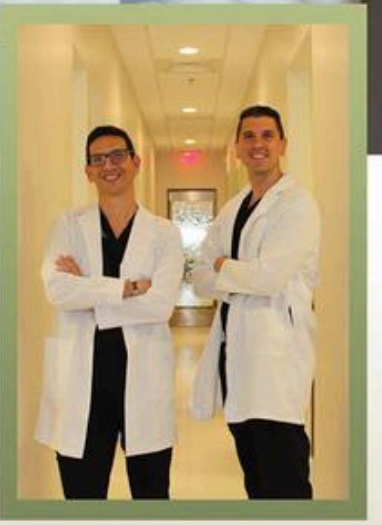



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Dr. Gurreonero accomplished his dream of opening a dental spa in Central Florida 10 years ago, providing general, cosmetic, and implant dentistry, all with a gentle touch. He is passionate about creating perfect smiles and will always do whatever it takes to make his patients comfortable and relaxed.

Dr. Gurreonero attended Dr Phillips H.S. first and then graduated from Cypress Creek H.S. he later attended Valencia College and finally graduated with a Bachelor of Science in molecular biology and microbiology from the University of Central Florida. He received his dental degree with honors from Boston University and then completed an optional General Practice residency at the Miami V.A. Medical Center/ Jackson Memorial Hospital. He also received extensive training in the prestigious Dawson Academy, one of the leading post-graduate continuing education centers in the world, and also is a fellow of the International College of Implantologists.



CG Dentist has been blessed to have Dr. Arcolin join the team. He happened to be Dr Gurreonero's patient many years ago and Dr G inspired him to become a dentist. He is now one of our doctors. His personality and professional demeanor are very similar to Dr G. He graduated with honors from the prestigious Detroit Mercy Dental School and shares the same philosophy and values as Dr Gurroonero.

At CG Dentist Orlando, numerous procedures are offered including preventive care, digital low radiation x-rays and 3D C.T.'s, cleanings, porcelain veneers, crowns, fillings, root canals, extractions, tooth whitening, Invisalign, and implant dentistry.

Dr. Gurreonero's and Dr. Arcolin's philosophy is "We will treat you as if you were our own family." With that in mind, they created a dental spa that is vastly different from traditional dental offices. From chair massages to the spa-like atmosphere, patients will be comfortable and receive top-notch quality care.

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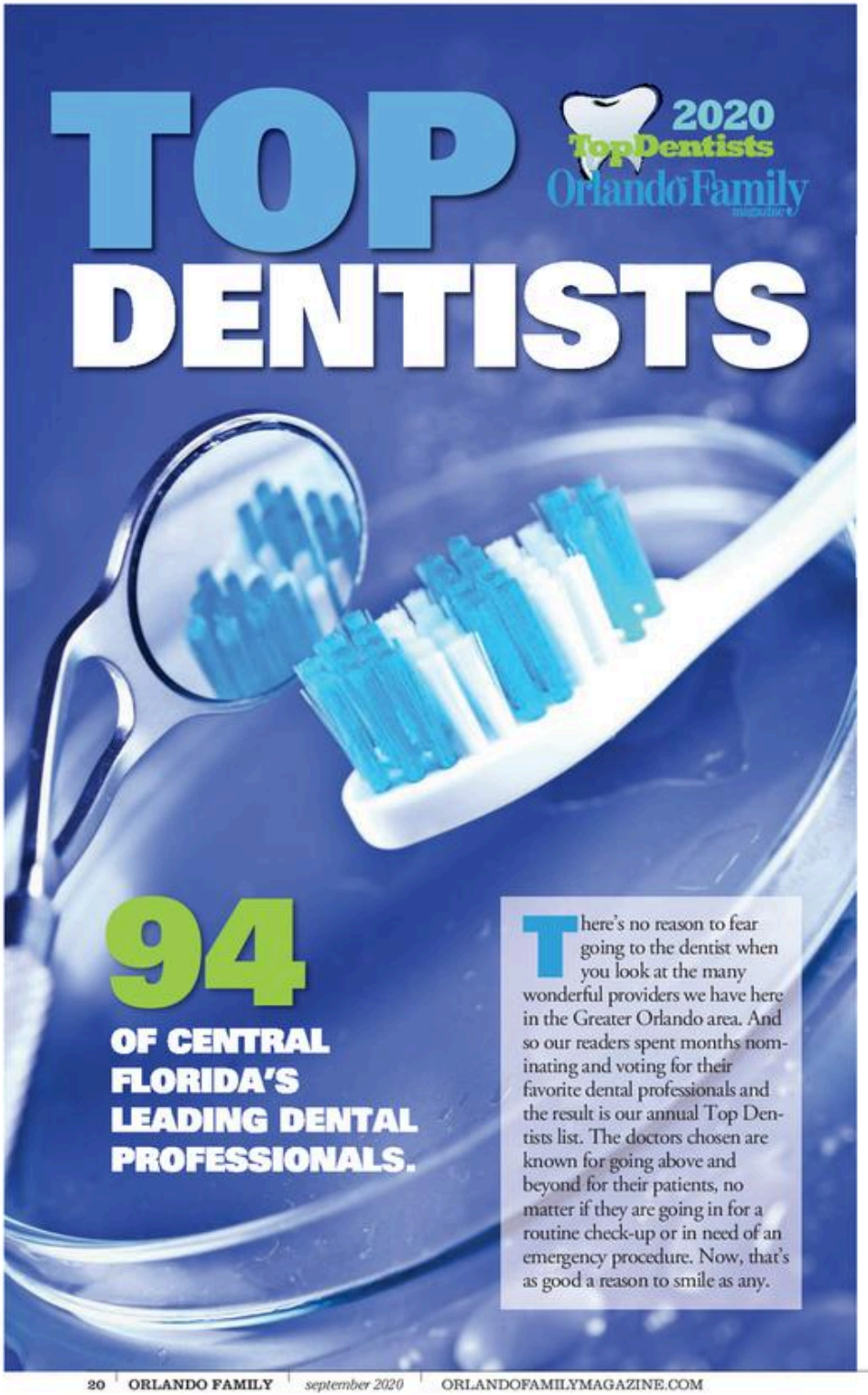
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# TOP DENTISTS

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## 94
## OF CENTRAL FLORIDA'S LEADING DENTAL PROFESSIONALS.

There's no reason to fear going to the dentist when you look at the many wonderful providers we have here in the Greater Orlando area. And so our readers spent months nominating and voting for their favorite dental professionals and the result is our annual Top Dentists list. The doctors chosen are known for going above and beyond for their patients, no matter if they are going in for a routine check-up or in need of an emergency procedure. Now, that's as good a reason to smile as any.

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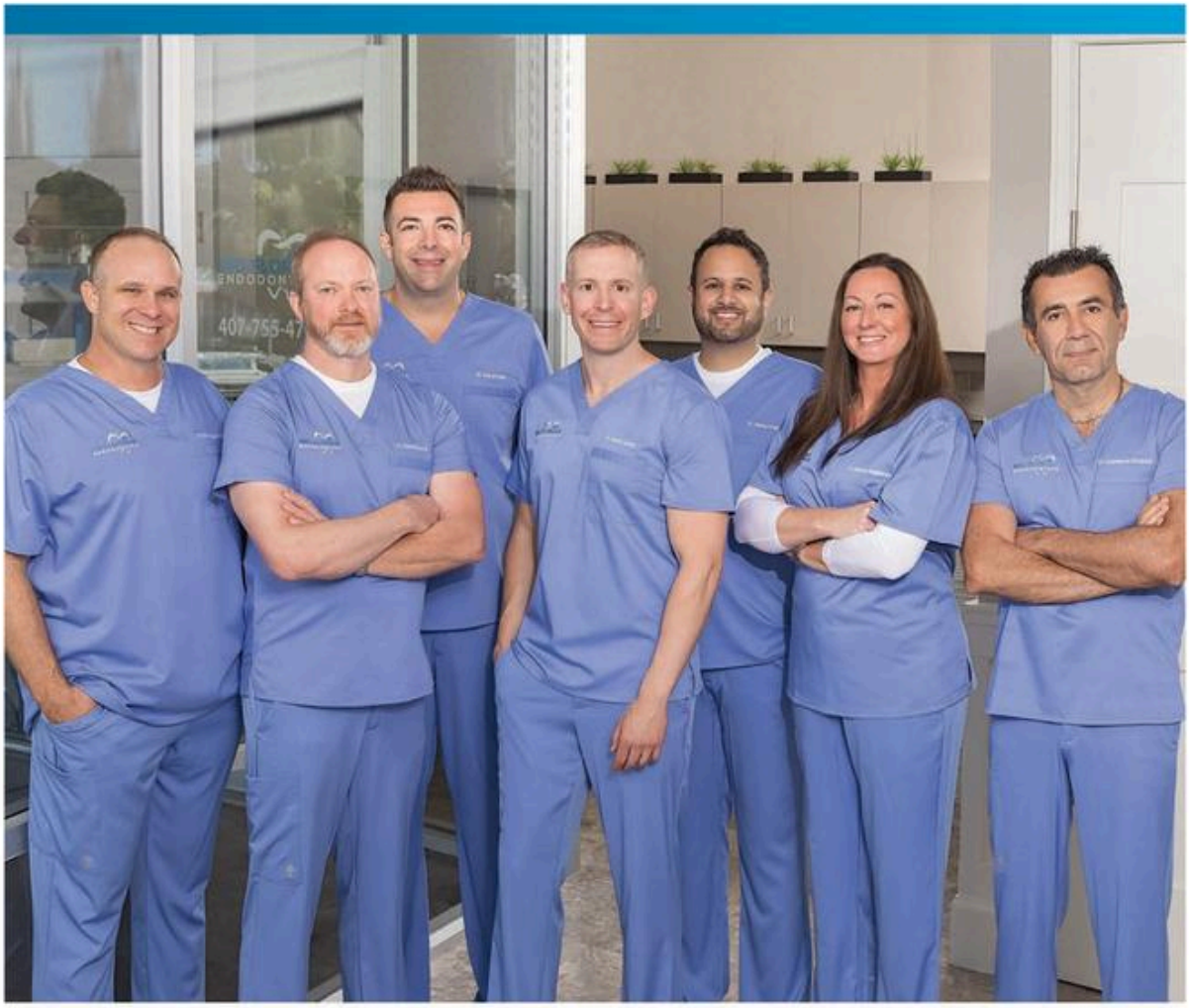
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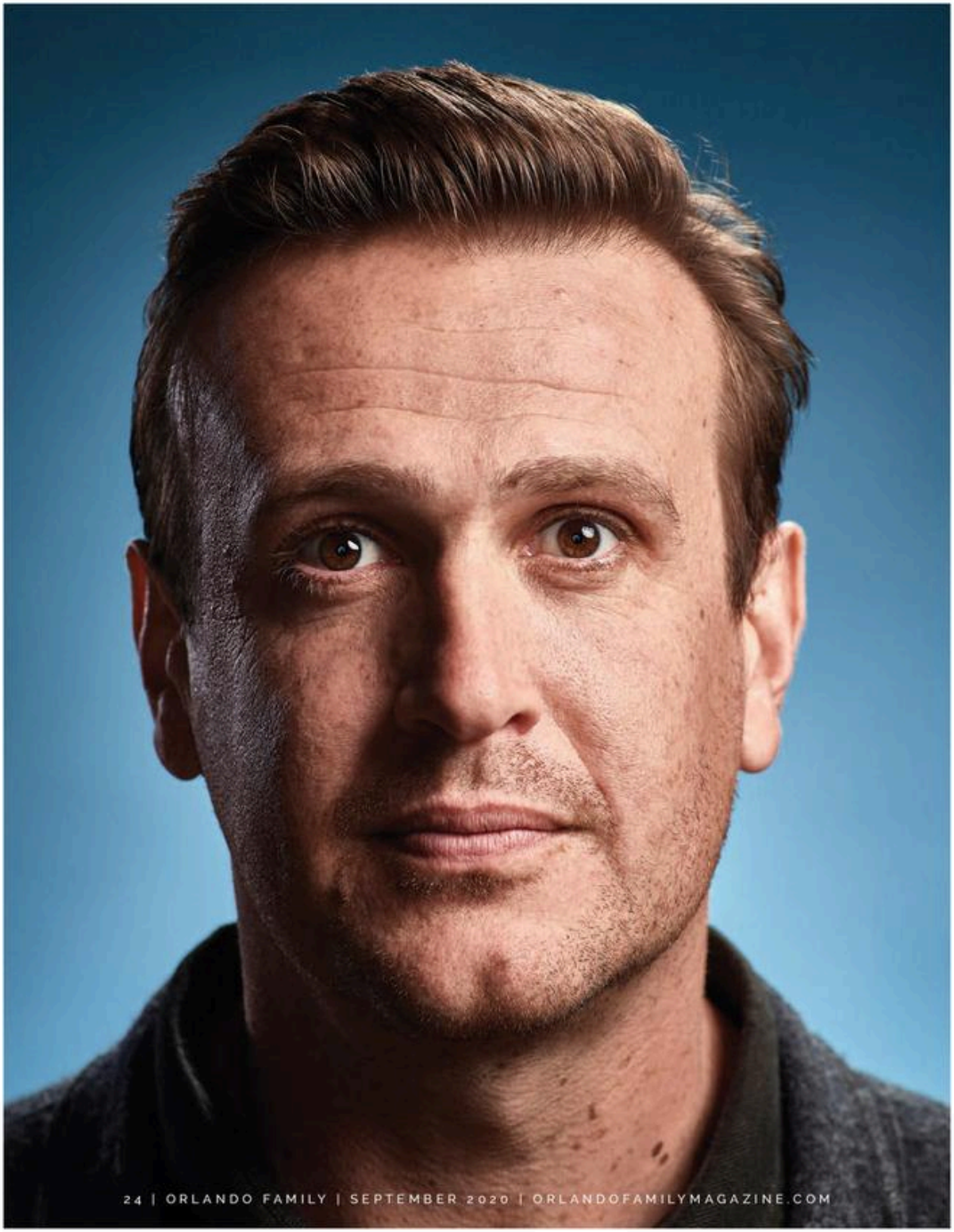
Left to Right: William Aippersbach, D.M.D., M.S.; David M. Burch, D.M.D.; Aaron E. Isler, D.D.S., M.S.; Brad A. Lipkin, D.D.S., MMSc.; Hamza Mir, D.M.D., M.S.; Gretchen Jungermann, D.M.D., M.S.; M. Cameron Kharazi, D.M.D.

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2020 Top Dentists Orlando Family



JASON SEGEL UNVEILS A VISUALLY STUNNING "LOVE LETTER" IN THE IMAGINATIVE SERIES DISPATCHES FROM ELSEWHERE.



# HIDDEN TREASURES

BY DEBRA WALLACE

**JASON SEGEL HAS HAD A LOT OF THRILLS** in his accomplished career, but one of the biggest came a handful of years ago when he was asked to be part of a marketing campaign for Disney. The Disney Dreamers Portrait series saw famed photographer Annie Leibovitz capturing images of celebrities dressed as popular characters. When it came time to find subjects to portray the hitchhiking ghosts from the Haunted Mansion attraction, Segel was tapped alongside fellow actors Jack Black and Will Ferrell—and he could barely hide his excitement.

"As soon as I got the email that this was even a possibility, I freaked out like a little kid in a candy store," he says in a behind-the-scenes video from the shoot. "This is maybe the best day ever."

When he's not wearing extensive makeup and posing for photos, Segel has enjoyed great success in Hollywood, navigating effectively between film and television. He's part of filmmaker Judd Apatow's inner circle, having first appeared in the short-lived *Freaks and Geeks* TV series before showing up in several of Apatow's hit films, including *Knocked Up* and *This is 40*. Many other folks will recognize him as Marshall Eriksen, the character he portrayed for nine seasons on the hit, *How I Met Your Mother*.

What's more, Segel has furthered his career by going behind the camera as well, working as a writer and producer. In 2008, he wrote and starred alongside Kristen Bell in *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*, a romantic comedy produced by Apatow. And in 2011, he starred in *The Muppets*, a film he not only wrote but helped pitch to Disney, calling it a "passion project" and a "dream come true."

More recently, Segel has ventured back into television, creating and starring in *Dispatches From Elsewhere*, a unique drama that just concluded its first season on AMC. The show is an inventive 10-episode series that follows a group of "ordinary people" who go on a modern-day quest to break from their daily routine in pursuit of magic and discovery. The show was shot in Philadelphia and co-stars Sally Field, André Benjamin and Eve Lindley.

The foursome came together as the show portrays an "alternate reality" game that was based on a real-life experiment. And it was Segel who assembled the all-star cast to help bring his idea to life.

Segel plays Peter, a sad sack who works for a music-streaming company; two-time Oscar winner Field plays Janice, a lonely grandmother who needs to reclaim her identity; actor-rapper Benjamin, also known as André 3000 of the group Outkast (*American Crime*), introduces viewers to a paranoid man named Fredwynn who seeks the truth; and Lindley (*Mr. Robot*) plays Simone, a trans woman struggling to escape feelings of isolation.

We spoke with three members of the *Dispatches From Elsewhere* cast—Segel, Field and Lindley—about the show, the similarities among people who at first glance seem dissimilar, and finding magic in unexpected places.



*Segel with Sally Field, Eve Lindley (hidden) and André Benjamin in* Dispatches from Elsewhere

# Q&A

**Jason, how did you get the idea to create this unique show?**

**Segel:** I had just read *Infinite Justice*, so I was feeling alive with these ideas, and then I stumbled into this crazy experience in real life that I took part in that we document and dramatize in our show.

The show is based on *The Institute*, a documentary about an elaborate game that was played in the San Francisco Bay Area between 2008 and 2011. I found it really moving, that a bunch of people in really different stages of life, from totally different walks of life—socioeconomically, politically, ethnically—were all taking part in this thing because something was missing from their lives.

And that was just so interesting to me, that maybe we are all much more alike and much more confused than we are being told to believe. We're supposed to see our differences, and I wanted to make a show about how we're much more similar than we realize.

**Please talk about finding Eve Lindley for the role of Simone.**

**Segel:** I learned over many years that it's all about the casting and finding people with whom you can explore these scenes together. And you then end up adapting it for the actual actor and actress that you cast. So, I was doing improv in this scene with Eve, and she was doing it so much more nuanced than I had even imagined it when I was writing it. We finished the moment, and I turned to Eve and I said, "Gosh, she's so much more complicated than I realized." And Eve looked up at me and said, "She always is, Jason."

**Where did the epiphany come from for your stylistic choices?**

**Segel:** We are inundated with so much television that it is very easy to zone out when you're watching something, especially by the end of the episode. So, I wanted as much as possible throughout the season to use unconventional storytelling to force you to pay attention. When you're thrust into a situation you haven't seen before, your brain activates a little bit and you might be receptive to the theme that we're trying to communicate. It's kind of a wake-up for all of us.

**Sally, what attracted you to this show?**

**Field:** Well, as Jason has said, hopefully in life, we are all sort of taking these journeys without knowing that we are. Not quite as fanciful as this is. The reason that I wanted to do this show is that it's this really involved treasure hunt that they get caught up in, it comes about to alter their whole lives, and they find out who they are within that.


Segel with Eve Lindley

The whole story was so unusual in a lot of ways. And the best part of doing television is that you're always kind of flying by the seat of your pants. This show was certainly an example of just figuring it out as we went along, in a lot of ways—especially when it came to the character stuff. And that makes it so much fun because it's completely alive up until the last second.

**This show is about self-discovery. What do you feel you discovered about yourself?**

**Field:** Last year was an incredibly busy year for me. Three weeks before I got to Philadelphia [to film the show], I had just come home from London where I had done a play for the first part of the year. I had been there for three and a half months. So, I was just twirling all of these very different work experiences, and then I went into this incredibly eclectic, fanciful group. So, I don't know what I learned last year from this show, and I hope I live long enough to figure it out.

**Eve, please share your fond memories of working with Sally Field.**

**Lindley:** There are so many. We both love doing puzzles, and I have been working on a few that she gave me when we were together.

**What's the takeaway from the show?**

**Lindley:** The real joy of this show, and any TV show, is getting to know a character or a person you thought you didn't have anything in common with, and then slowly realizing how similar you are to them. So, I think that this show really embodies that because all four of our characters seem so wacky and different, and not really the type of people that you may see on TV all the time. If you watch, you will grow to love all of them. I think it's really about human connections and trying to connect with people that you initially felt you were not connecting with.


## Innovative Endodontics
Frances Ballagas, DMD



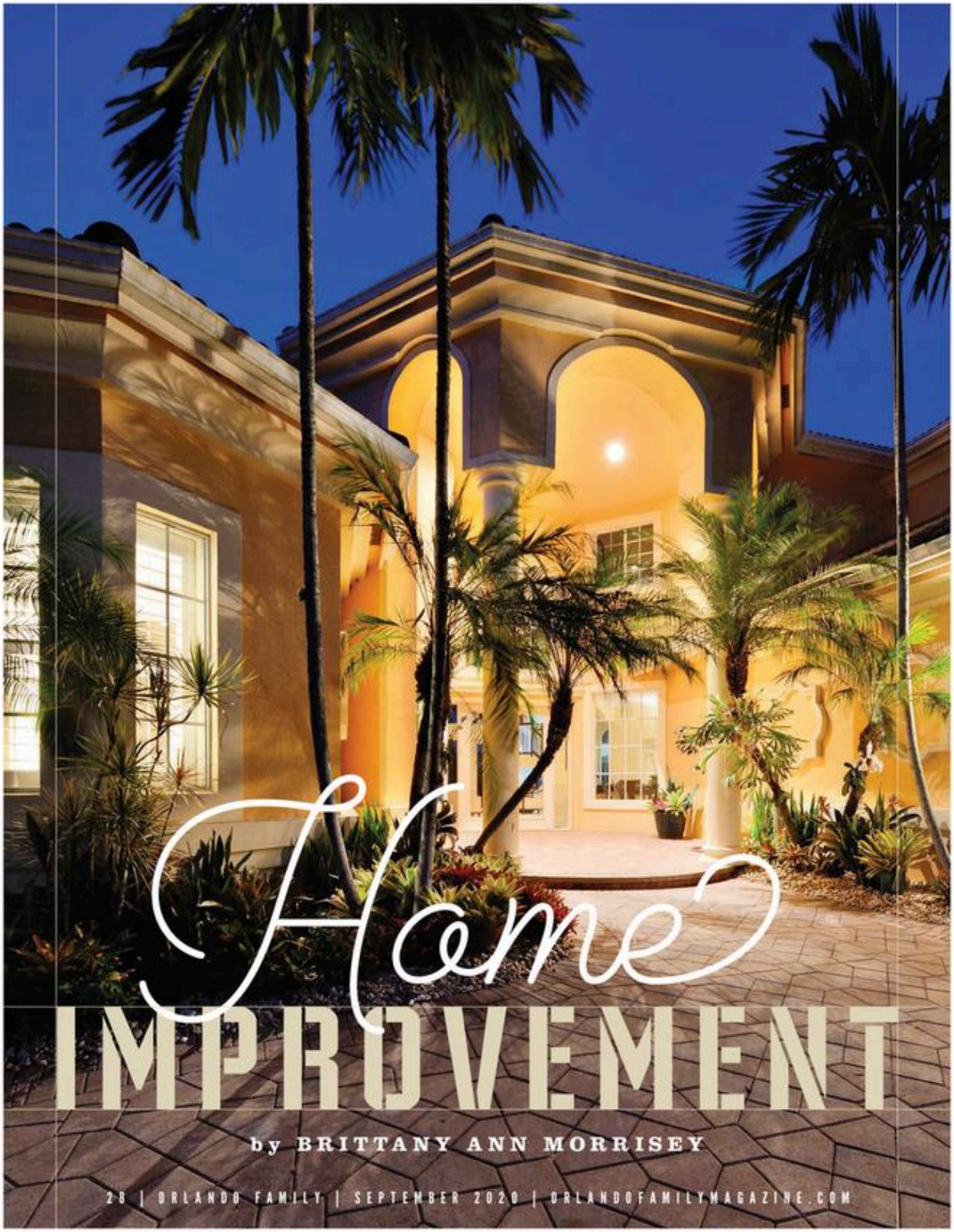

Innovative Endodontics' specialty is providing state-of-the-art endodontic therapy while catering to patients' comfort and needs to ensure a lifetime of care and satisfaction.

Dr. Frances Ballagas received her undergraduate degree and DMD from the University of Puerto Rico, both completed with highest honors. After practicing as a general dentist for six years, she obtained her Endodontic Fellowship from the University of Florida and completed her Endodontic Residency at the University of Alabama. She has completed training in Botox administration for the relief of TMJ as well as facial cosmetics. Dr. Ballagas is a member of the American Association of Endodontists, American Dental Association, Florida Dental Association & the Dental Society of Greater Orlando.

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# Home IMPROVEMENT

by BRITTANY ANN MORRISEY



## CENTRAL FLORIDIANS ARE LOOKING TO **UPGRADE THEIR LIVING SPACES** AS THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC HAS PEOPLE AT HOME.

**With employers adopting work-from-home models,** children not returning to learning at school and families canceling travel plans for the year, homeowners are looking to renovate and update their spaces to better fit a quarantine lifestyle.

According to the Joint Center for Housing Studies (JCHS) of Harvard University, in normal years, Americans spend more than $400 billion on home improvement and repair. And, although the United States is in an economic downturn, it doesn't look like that number will drop anytime soon.

In fact, earnings for the top home improvement stores in the United States are soaring. Home Depot reported second quarter sales of $38 billion, an increase of about 23% over last year. Meanwhile, Lowe's took in $27 billion, an increase of about $6 billion compared to its second quarter sales last year.

Chassity Vega, CEO of the Greater Orlando Builders Association (GOBA), says the current boost in the home remodeling market brought upon by the coronavirus pandemic is like nothing she's seen before.

"I don't think there's any comparison to be honest," she says.

### A Good Time to Remodel

Right now is the time to remodel if you have the time and resources. Vega says people are redoing their homes to fit their new pandemic-imposed lifestyles. Projects like reorganizing the home office and adding more space in the house for kids who are learning remotely are of interest right now.

"Now would be a perfect time to do that," Vega says. "Because I think this is going to change the way of the future."

There are incentives, too. The Federal Reserve has lowered interest rates, giving homeowners the opportunity to refinance their mortgages and save on their monthly payments. With those extra funds, people are inclined to invest in remodeling their homes rather than buying new.

Additionally, Orange County has waived permit fees for the next six months, making certain home projects less costly.

Remodeling is also a plus for people who will eventually resell their homes.

According to a 2019 survey of real estate agents performed by the National Association of Realtors, a kitchen renovation is the most appealing interior project for homebuyers. Meanwhile, new roofing was ranked as the top exterior project for attracting homebuyers.

### Outdoor Projects

Ken and Kristen Poole have taken advantage of time at home during the pandemic to enhance their outdoor space. They've extended their house's patio and installed artificial turf, the latter of which happens to also be the business they are in as owners of Artificial Artisans.

Ken Poole says artificial turf is something many homeowners consider after struggling to keep grass growing in their yards.

"You need sunlight and water for grass to grow really healthy," he says. "And if you throw in a few young kids or even a dog for that matter, it's an uphill battle to keep grass looking pristine."

Artificial turf has many advantages over sod including that it is low maintenance, needing only to have fallen leaves brushed off top of it. It's also

great for kids with allergies, Kristen Poole says. Both of her children suffer from an allergy to grass.

"My daughter's [allergy] is worse than my son's," she says. "And she never would go outside because it was just too miserable and now she can go outside; she can enjoy the backyard."

Artificial ivy has a similar appeal to artificial turf in that it has no upkeep. Ken Poole suggests using ivy to give an old fence a facelift or create an accent wall, inside or outside your home.

With many families taking staycations this year, having an outdoor space to enjoy at home is essential and one way to upgrade that area is to screen in your patio or lanai.

"Screen enclosures or screen rooms allow you to enjoy being outside without having to deal with pesky Florida insects," says Megan D'Avila, vice president of MD Construction. "It also provides a safe place that your kids can play outside, especially if you do not have a fenced yard."

D'Avila says it's important for homeowners to employ a licensed contractor when having a screen enclosure installed.

"A licensed company will get all of the proper permits for you, an unlicensed company will ask you as the homeowner to get the permit, which can cause many issues," she says. "Also, if the company is licensed and something goes wrong, you know you will have options for recourse."

## Landscape and Exterior

Since the pandemic began, Connie Emmerson, president of Royal Landscape Nursery, has seen an increase in customers looking to spruce up their outdoor living spaces. She says new landscaping is one of the best ways to fix up the exterior of a house.

"Any landscape improvements and/or brick pavers will add to the curb appeal and improve the property value of the home," Emmerson says.

For people wanting an inexpensive changeup to their outdoor space, she suggests putting down some fresh mulch and planting manageable greenery.

"A few new bushes or a cute new tree can make a big impact," she says.

To make sure your shrubbery thrives, you'll want to pay close attention to the sunlight and water requirements of each new tree and bush, information that is readily available at most nurseries.

If you're looking to splurge, there's plenty you can do to improve your outdoor living space.

"Adding retaining walls and firepits to the outdoor [living space] can add beautiful new entertaining areas for friends and family to enjoy," Emmerson says.

One exterior feature of the home that people cannot skimp on is the roof. Stephen Hood, owner of Stonehaven Roofing, says homeowners should not ignore even slight wearing.

"We see it all too often, when overlooking the minor damage leads to major damage and headaches financially down the line," he says.

New roofing gives a new aesthetic dimension to the exterior of a home. "Tile may be our favorite roofing system to see come together and work on," Hood says. "There are many options of colors, blends, styles and looks tile can provide and give"

Metal roofs are an alternative for Floridian homeowners to consider, too.

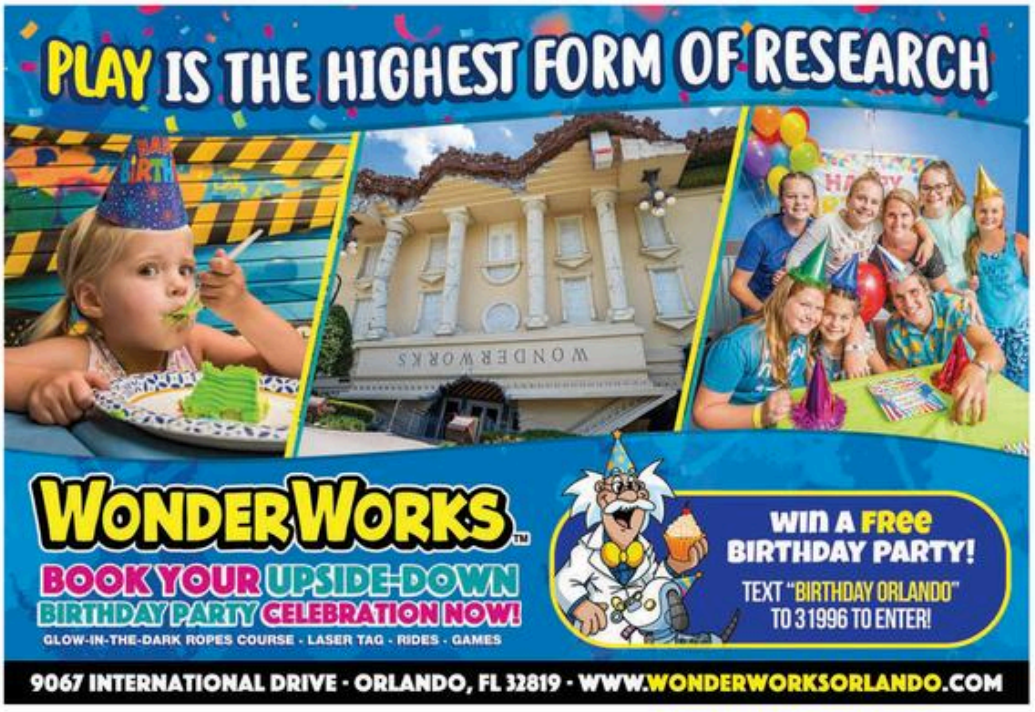
"Metal roofs have become much more popular because of the cost of the metal compared to tile, as well as the strength compared to weight benefit you get," Hood says. "The sleek modern or nice beachy look that metal roofs can provide as well as the durability [against] extreme Florida weather [puts] metal roofing at the top of the list."

## Organization

Juliana Daurio is a professional home organizer and the woman behind Orlando Home Organizer. She says when the pandemic began, organizing the home became a popular pastime for people. But for some homeowners, the undertaking quickly became more complicated than expected.

"Although some were able to finish their projects," Daurio says, "most just had no clue on what to do and it became a bigger mess than they had before."

It's then that Daurio started to get a lot of calls for help. The rooms of the house that most people





contact her for assistance with are closets and garages.

"These areas are the ones that will take more time and do truly need an organizing system to be able to function the right way," she says.

An organized kitchen is also a real gain for many families.

"It is important to be able to find everything you need in your kitchen," Daurio says. "Most clients have duplicated items all over the place because they just buy a new one when they can't find it."

If you're eyeing an organizing project soon, Daurio's advice is to start small with a compact area such as a closet.

Gary Mitchem, owner of Inspired Closets, says his business has also gotten a lot of calls during these past few months. Many of these calls come from customers who want to redo their closets because standard closets often leave much to be desired.

"There's a lot of wasted space in closets," Mitchem says.

Mitchem says his business has also been getting a lot of requests for customized home offices. With many people now working from home and children learning online instead of at school, there is more need for dedicated learning and work spaces.

"If you're organized, it really helps out your day," Mitchem says.

## Redesign

Interior design is another booming sector within the home improvement market.

Joseph Sipp, CEO and founder of Systematic Home Staging, says whether people have a small or large budget, there are many updates they can make to renew their space.

"For starters, the right lighting is crucial," he says. "You always want as much natural lighting in a room as possible, but sometimes it is limited. You can help balance out this problem by having the correct lighting, specifically daylight LED light bulbs."

Another simple but impactful change to make in a room is a new coat of paint or fresh wallpaper.

"It doesn't have to be every wall," Sipp says. "Accent walls are a great added touch to make a room feel complete all while drawing in the eye."

Sipp advises people to figure out their design style before they redo their home and to spend time researching ideas.

But if a project becomes too much, an interior designer can help.

"A designer's goal is to utilize the furniture and decor in a way that appeals to a client's specific style, all while creating design solutions for space and structure," he says. "I highly recommend hiring an interior designer to create beauty and efficiency throughout your home."

As the coronavirus pandemic continues on, home is one of the few places people still feel comfortable and safe. So, it stands to reason that the home improvement market will continue to flourish because, as they say, there's really no place like home.




ask the expert

questions and answers with **Dr. Wendi Wardlaw, DMD**



**How is Covid-19 associated with my mouth?**

Your mouth is the largest access to the inside of your body. In this season where many breathe through their mouths it is important to understand how important nasal breathing is to prevention of Covid-19. Nasal breathing warms the air, increases oxygen levels in your blood, cleans the air you are breathing, and simulates NO (Nitric Oxide) which is produced mainly in our sinuses. This is a potent antimicrobial against VIRUSES, bacteria, and fungi. Nitric Oxide is not produced during mouth breathing. Nasal breathing while wearing a mask and respirators is also known to reduce headaches, and dizziness.

Oral breathing is drying both for the respiratory system and the body. It increases dehydration, inflammation and makes the tonsils and adenoids the primary filters.

NO is important for our health and wellness and can be found in green vegetables. By the way, humming in known to increase the bodies NO. If you add humming to nasal breathing you have triggered your parasympathetic nervous system which in turn causes RELAXATION.

Assure you work hard to breath through your nose during this Covid-19 season.

**Any suggestions for staying safe and healthy during this season?**

Alkaline your system with fruits and veggies, understand that 80% of your immune system is in your digestive system. Therefore, our immune system is primarily based on what we eat and drink. Eat and drink healthy and stay away from artificial, acidic foods and drinks. Stay hydrated with WATER, it is 80% of your body. This virus is attracted to dry, sticky people so be moist, and lubricated.

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# A SPLIT DECISION

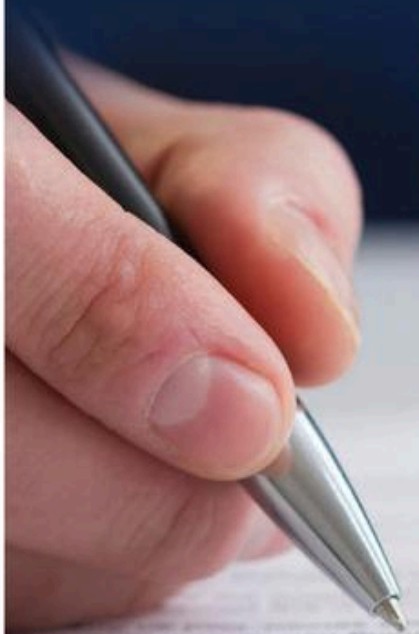
## FAMILY LAW EXPERTS Outline WHAT COUPLES NEED TO KNOW BEFORE UNTYING the knot

**HAPPILY EVER AFTER—that's what every couple thinks when they go to the altar to get married, but today, divorce is the end result for quite a few marriages. Many things factor into getting** a divorce and it's a decision that will not only affect you and your spouse, but your children and other family members as well.

Ending a marriage is a difficult process to begin with; add in a pandemic and even more issues have to be addressed. If there are children involved, determining which type of schooling they will participate in—remote or in-person—has become one of the biggest issues when it comes to the pandemic, says Lori A. Pieper, associate attorney, Miller Johnson Law, P.L.

"There have been quite a few arguments in relation to which one the parents prefer," she says. "They have to take into consideration illness with the child or in the family and try to find a common ground. … It's been a struggle."

Choosing which type of school isn't the only issue that has arisen during these past few months. "The pandemic has caused





By JULIE SHANNON

issues across the entire spectrum of family law," says Richard D. West, managing partner and owner, West Family Law Group. "It affects time sharing when one parent does not agree with the precautions the other parent is taking. Testing and prevention of transmission of the coronavirus to other family members has been made difficult."

"Early on, there was so much uncertainty, there were a lot of parents struggling with their former spouses being a doctor or first responder and being at higher risk of exposure," says Carina M. Leeson, partner, family division, Kendrick Law Group. "They asked, do I need to turn over my children? We saw those kinds of time-sharing issues early on. Courts were very clear and entered quite a few administrative orders that said, time sharing is to continue, short of somebody being very sick or testing positive. Parents who are going to use that as a sword to withhold contact or deny contact will be sanctioned."

Pieper says even without COVID in mind, the most important thing when it comes to time sharing is making sure children have the same access to both parents as they did previous to the divorce.

"The standing family law order with filing or any petition for dissolution of marriage requires that the child has equal access to both parents unless there is a substantial reason why the other parent shouldn't have time sharing," she says. "If it's something you need to protect the child from, that's one thing, but it's important for them to have equal access to both parents. There is a parenting course that both parties are required to take before any final judgment is entered, and I advise parents to take that as soon as possible so they are familiar with ways they can prevent children from being affected in a negative way."

Another big part of the divorce process is finances and debt—the No. 1 reason for divorce, according to Jodi Murphy, managing partner of Murphy & Berglund.

"It's a big discussion point through mediation and the actual divorce process of who is going to assume the debt," she says. "If it's marital debt you can't walk away from it, it affects everything—alimony, distribution of assets and it can affect someone's ability to file bankruptcy. You can't file on your own without having your spouse's finances involved. Debt plays a huge role. It is possible to discharge debt through Chapter 7 bankruptcy. That can be a good solution for individuals and couples where finances are a stress factor."

Pieper suggests individuals seeking a divorce should not spend a large amount of money to make it look like they have none in their bank account.

"You will have to provide bank statements and evidence of what your funds were three months prior to the divorce process," she says. "Some attorneys will request more; don't try and get rid of your money. That will come out in court. You are supposed to keep status quo in relation to not canceling insurance, or canceling







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# A SPLIT DECISION

their right to the joint account. All will be in standing law order. It's not going to look good if you're removing your spouse before divorce from accounts or insurance policies."

Leeson says couples need to be mindful of transitioning from one to two households. "There's going to be changes on everybody's plates and many pieces—equitable distribution, assets and liabilities and a support component. Those pieces combined need to result in a way of living going forward that both people can sustain. … We try to address families' needs by determining which spouse is keeping the home and while the other is looking [for a new home], figuring out where we can pull those funds from. Those conversations are a lot easier to have when dealing with two spouses that want to continue to work together, even in the throes of a divorce so they can facilitate a reasonable settlement that works for their family."

Working together is also key during mediation, says Pieper, along with going into the process having an open mind and a willingness to be flexible and make compromises.

"Typically, not everybody always gets what they want when they go into mediation, but if you come out with agreement, somebody is giving on one thing or another and a lot of times mediators will say it's successful when both parties come out unhappy," she says. "Both are giving in somewhere to reach an agreement. Most of the time, you're giving one way or another in something, whether it be in the amount of alimony if that's on the table or who's receiving the house, or how much you are receiving in equitable distribution. Or somebody is giving in on spending a holiday with a child, rotating or switching, things like that. If you go into it with an open mind and keep the possibility of reaching an agreement on your forefront, then it's likely you will reach an agreement."

"I think regardless of what the current climate is, mediation is as effective as the people going through it are willing to go," Murphy says. "If everyone has the same goal of resolving things, I always tell clients, going through mediation, neither party is going to get 100 percent of what they want. A good mediation means both people have given something up and met somewhere in the middle. It's typical with mediation that nobody is happy in the end, but if they are willing to compromise, step back and see the process and the end result being that even though it's not exactly what you wanted, walking away as whole as you can be is often much more effective than going to trial, and much more cost effective as well. Divorce is very expensive and there's no guarantee you will get what you want in trial either."

West says to his surprise, mediation has been effective during this pandemic where they have had to conduct sessions in a virtual environment.

"Maybe it is the comfort level provided by being

able to be in your own home and not having to confront a spouse in the midst of a divorce that makes it so, but we have been able to settle almost everything we have mediated during the pandemic," he says.

When it comes to determining what type of alimony spouses receive, Pieper says the length of a marriage is one thing to consider.

"There are different types of alimony—durational, temporary, rehabilitative and periodic alimony—the length of marriage can affect each of those," she says. "Longer term marriages have more options, typically 17 years or more you have the ability for permanent alimony."

West says alimony can also be determined by the need and ability to pay. "Need is defined as the reasonable lifestyle enjoyed by the alimony recipient during the marriage. Neither party should pass from prosperity to misfortune or misfortune to prosperity as a result of the divorce," he says. "While need is not every whim and luxury that was enjoyed during the marriage, it should provide for a reasonable way of living—eating, the cars we drive, the shopping we do and the general lifestyle enjoyed by the family.

"The other factor the court must consider in determining alimony is ability to pay. Most families are not fortunate enough to be able to maintain two households on the same amount of money that they maintain the single household. Therefore, in most divorce cases there is a balancing of interest."

Although divorce is not an easy process by any means, West says couples have more common ground than they think.

"I think it's important for people to understand that in a divorce they should not lose sight of the fact that they were not always enemies, that they are eating out of the same pot so to speak. And so, the more time, energy and money they spend fighting over who gets what part of the pot, the less there is to share."


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# Celebrating the area's TOP VARSITY ATHLETES for the upcoming fall sports season.



*Tyler Hanley, Oviedo*

# 20 star watch 20

BY MATT COSENTINO

**Each year at this time,** we focus a spotlight on area high school athletes who achieve big things in their respective sports as well as in the classroom. But this year, things are noticeably different thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic. And while there's still great uncertainty surrounding the upcoming season, we felt it was only right to still give this stellar collection of top-flight athletes the recognition they have earned. Here's to hoping they get the chance to achieve even bigger things this year.



*Emily McLatchey, Winter Park*

## FOOTBALL

**Travion Barnes, Apopka, junior:** This outside linebacker led the Blue Darters with 111 tackles last year to go with two interceptions. He is receiving college interest from schools in the SEC and Big 12.

**Tommi Hill, Edgewater, senior:** Hill excels on both sides of the ball at wide receiver and cornerback. He had 45 catches and nine TDs along with four interceptions last year and will continue his career at Arizona State.

**Christian Leary, Edgewater, senior:** Leary had 47 catches for 1,030 yards, rushed for 520 yards and scored 17 touchdowns last year for a team that reached the state championship game. One of the fastest prospects in the country, he will continue his career at Alabama.

**Jaquan Lowman, Apopka, senior:** Forced into quarterback duties last year, Lowman stepped in and rushed for over 1,600 yards and 24 touchdowns while throwing for 884 yards and nine TDs to lead Apopka to the Class 8A state final. He will play wide receiver at the next level at Appalachian State.



*Markeith Williams, Evans*

**Markeith Williams, Evans, junior:** A 6-foot-2, 170-pound safety, Williams is a playmaker who has totaled 13 interceptions in just two seasons and led Evans to a 5-5 record last fall, a four-win improvement from the year before. He has been named an Under Armour All-American and has a host of college offers from premier programs like Alabama, Ohio State and Oklahoma.

## BOYS GOLF

**Tiago Barni, Windermere Prep, senior:** A four-year varsity player, Barni was a key piece of Windermere Prep's state championship team in 2018. He will serve as team captain this fall and is looking forward to competing for a Division I college program next year.



*Tiago Barni, Windermere Prep*

**Andrew Clark, Winter Park, senior:** Clark is part of an outstanding trio for Winter Park—joining Stephen Hickham and Michael Mays—that has led the team to a terrific run over the last three years. He had a 36.5 average last year in the regular season and his two-round total of 139 was good for third place at states. He also took second at the Metro Conference Tournament, fourth at districts and fourth at regions.

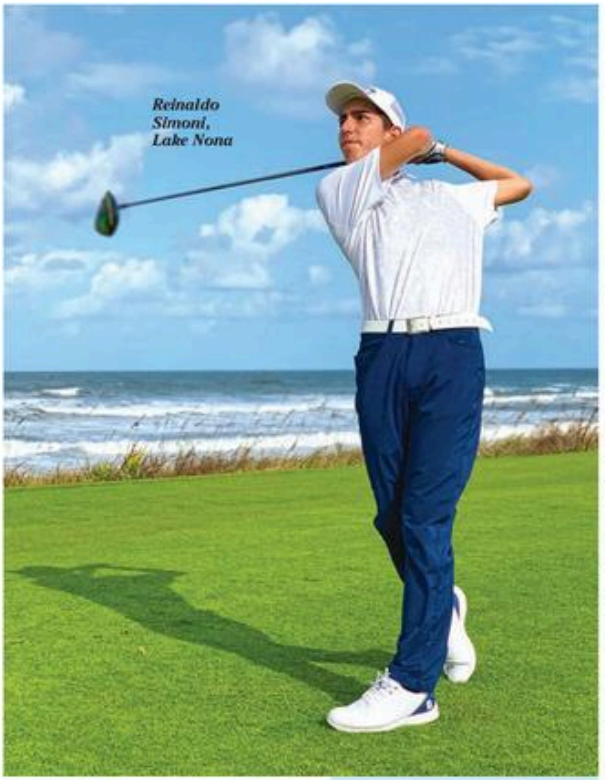


*Stephen Hickham, Winter Park*

**Stephen Hickham, Winter Park, senior:** Hickham was the district runner-up last year after shooting a 68 and carded a two-round total of 145 to place 12th at states, helping Winter Park finish second as a team.

**Shawn Lalmoni, Dr. Phillips, junior:** As a sophomore, Lalmoni averaged 35.8 during the regular season and carded a 67 to capture a district title. The Stanford recruit has rebounded from a wrist injury to play well this summer and is ranked seventh overall in the state and second in the junior class.

**Michael Mays, Winter Park, senior:** Mays' strong junior season included four individual championships, a second-place finish at the Honda Classic and a 36 average. He was the overall champ and led Winter Park to its fifth consecutive district title.


Reinaldo Simoni, Lake Nona


Ellen Dong, Lake Mary Prep


James Zhan, Lake Mary Prep

**Reinaldo Simoni, Lake Nona, senior:** A mentor to his teammates, Simoni is not only quick with an encouraging word but also lets his play speak volumes. He placed fourth at districts and third at regions last year and carded a 72-75-147 at states to tie for 16th.

**Brendan Valdes, Dr. Phillips, senior:** Valdes was in the hunt at just about every tournament last fall, including a second-place finish at districts, a third at regions and a fifth at states. He is coming off a strong summer season and is ranked second overall in the state and first in his class. He will continue his career at Auburn.

**James Zhan, Lake Mary Prep, senior:** Zhan carded an 8-under 63 to capture a district championship last year. He also tied for ninth at regionals and tied for 13th at states.

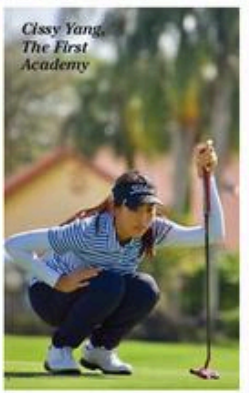
## GIRLS GOLF

**Ellen Dong, Lake Mary Prep, senior:** A district and region champion in 2018, Dong placed second at districts last year and went on to place eighth at states, helping the Griffins win the team title. The 2020 Florida Junior amateur champ, she will serve as team captain this fall.

**Bridget Ma, The First Academy, junior:** Ma was fantastic at last year's district tournament, as she fired an 8-under-par 64 to not only claim the title but tie for the lowest score ever in program history. She also took second at the regional tournament to lead the Royals to their fourth straight team crown.

**Emily McLatchey, Winter Park, senior:** The Winter Park Girls Golfer of the Year for the last three seasons, McLatchey was a district and region runner-up in 2019. She also won the Metro East title and competed at states for the third time.

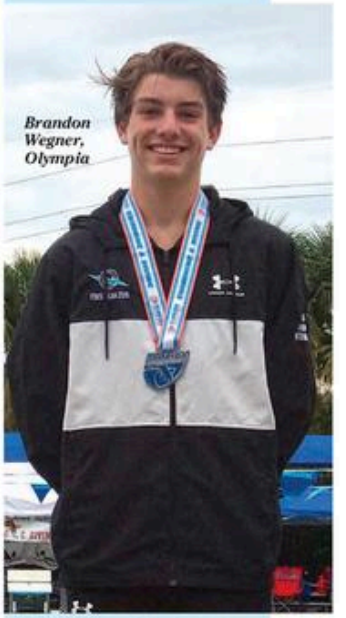
**Xinyi Wang, Lake Mary Prep, junior:** In her first season at Lake Mary Prep last year, Wang established herself as an outstanding team player. She placed fourth at both districts and states.


Cissy Yang, The First Academy

**Cissy Yang, The First Academy, senior:** Yang's phenomenal junior season was one to remember, as she averaged 68.4 in tournaments, claimed the 1A state championship and finished second at the Honda Classic. Named the *Orlando Sentinel* Player of the Year, she led The First Academy to a No. 2 ranking in the nation and is considered one of the top golfers in the country in her age group.

## BOYS SWIMMING

**Tyler Hanley, Oviedo, senior:** Hanley is an All-American and school record-holder who helped Oviedo repeat as state champions last year with fourth-place finishes in the 100 butterfly and 100 backstroke.


Brandon Wegner, Olympia

**Brandon Wegner, Olympia, senior:** Wegner, a diver, won Metro and district championships as a junior to go with runner-up finishes at regionals and states. A 2020 All-American, he has competed at USA Diving Nationals seven times.

## GIRLS SWIMMING

**Jordan Agliano, Lake Nona, junior:** Agliano had top-five finishes in the backstroke and individual medley at last year's state meet and was less than a tenth of a second from qualifying for the Olympic Trials in the 200 backstroke in March. She is being recruited by about 30 Division I colleges.

**Leah Gentry-Tuney, Freedom, senior:** Gentry-Tuney owns school records in several individual events as well as relays. She has placed in the top five at states four times, including two runner-up finishes in the 100 breaststroke, and is a team leader who inspires her teammates to push themselves.

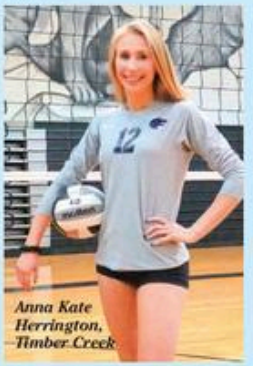


*Kaylin Herbet, Oviedo*

**Kaylin Herbet, Oviedo, sophomore:** Herbet's promising rookie year featured conference and district titles and a memorable state meet in which she placed fourth in the 100 free, sixth in the 50 free and swam on two winning relays.
**Carlie Rose, Oviedo, senior:** Rose placed fifth in the 500 free and sixth in the 200 free at states last year. She is committed to Harvard.

## GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

**Alexis Distasio, Dr. Phillips, senior:** A versatile leader who contributes all over the court, Distasio recorded a .312 average hitting percentage and led the Panthers in digs last year. She is also an outstanding student who carries a 4.2 GPA.
**Jordan Hardy, Trinity Prep, senior:** A four-year starter at outside hitter, Hardy is already Trinity Prep's all-time leader in kills with 1,008 and is closing in on the digs record. She starts at libero for her club team—which won the AAU national championship this summer—and has been offered a full scholarship to Bucknell.


*Anna Kate Herrington, Timber Creek*

**Anna Kate Herrington, Timber Creek, junior:** A middle blocker, Herrington earned Offensive Player of the Year honors for Timber Creek for the second straight year last season. She is also an accomplished club player who has twice been selected to the AAU All-American team and is verbally committed to Boston College.
**Ranya Mehta, Lake Highland Prep, senior:** Mehta transferred to Lake Highland Prep last year and fit in immediately, winning over her coaches and teammates with her passion for the game and desire to improve. She had 271 kills and 63 blocks and will continue her career at Eckerd College.
**Zoe Talabong, Boone, junior:** Talabong is on her way to a record-setting career at Boone after two stellar seasons. Last year she totaled 336 kills, 20 blocks, 67 aces and 231 digs, was named MaxPreps Player of the Game 11 times and made the all-Metro Conference first team.
**Alicia Virthe, Dr. Phillips, senior:** Virthe is a dangerous left-handed hitter who powers the Panthers' attack from her position on the right side. She has an impressive 4.8 GPA and is committed to St. Mary's University.
**Mya Wood, Lake Highland Prep, junior:** A natural athlete who is ca-




Zoe Talabong, Boone

pable of playing multiple positions, Wood finished with 211 kills and 220 digs last year. She is a fierce competitor and great teammate.

**Natalie Work, Windermere Prep, senior:** A veteran leader, Work is a three-year captain for Windermere Prep and is also involved in the sport at the club level. Off the court, she is active in the community and has served as vice president and president of the Student Government Association and chair of the school's dance marathon.

## BOYS CROSS COUNTRY


Samuel Austin, Oviedo

**Samuel Austin, Oviedo, senior:** A multiple school record-holder in several events during spring track, Austin is also a standout in cross country and helped Oviedo take first at districts, third at regionals and fifth at states last year.

**Colton Berquist, West Orange, senior:** Berquist established himself as one of the top runners in Central Florida and the entire state last year, as he became the first district champion in school history, took fifth at regions and 26th at states.

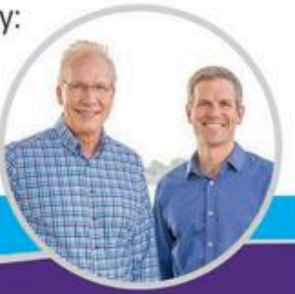
Talabong photo by David C. Evertsen/Photobous Photos


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## star watch

He has a personal best of 15:53.38 and after a great summer of training has high goals for this fall.

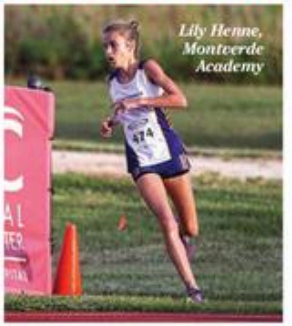
**Jared Falchook, Celebration, junior:** An ambitious, driven competitor, Falchook is hungry to follow up his breakout sophomore season. He expects to return to states after clocking a 16:30.89 last fall.

**Kai Komatsu, Olympia, senior:** Komatsu, a four-year varsity competitor, clocked a personal record of 16:44 at last year's state championships. A motivated and disciplined runner, he plans on majoring in mechanical engineering in college and is applying to Harvard, Princeton and Stanford, among others.

**Jose Nazario, Dr. Phillips, senior:** A fierce and talented competitor, Nazario qualified for states as a junior after placing 10th at districts and 17th at regionals. He hopes to shave a few seconds off his best time of 16:39 during his final campaign at Dr. Phillips.

**Ilyas Semlali, Dr. Phillips, senior:** Semlali posted five top-10 finishes last season and took fifth at districts and 14th at regionals on his way to qualifying for states. This focus and determined runner has a personal record of 16:32 and is a leader for Dr. Phillips.

### GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY



*Lily Henne, Montverde Academy*

**Lily Henne, Montverde Academy, junior:** Henne added to her impressive collection last year with two more individual titles before injuries sidetracked her season. One of the elite runners in the state will be looking to bounce back in a big way this fall.

**Maya Lis, Dr. Phillips, sophomore:** Lis' memorable rookie season included five top-10 finishes, a fifth at districts and a sixth at regionals. Her best time was 19:31 and she qualified for states.

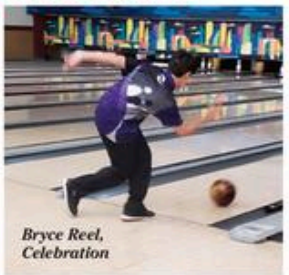
**Jasmine Little, Dr. Phillips, junior:** Little stepped up in a big way last year and should only get better as an upperclassman. She finished sixth at districts, eighth at regionals and qualified for states, and



Amber Schulz, Timber Creek

reeled off a personal-best time of 19:38. **Amber Schulz, Timber Creek, junior:** Schulz had a long list of accomplishments in 2019, as she was the Metro East, district and region champion and posted a time of 17:56 to take fourth at states. She helped Timber Creek to a district title and a runner-up finish at regionals. **Karah White, Montverde Academy, sophomore:** White turned heads with a strong freshman season in which she consistently improved her times. The highlight was a sixth-place finish at regionals, helping Montverde to its fourth team crown in a row.

## BOYS BOWLING



Bryce Reel, Celebration

**Bryce Reel, Celebration, senior:** Also a standout baseball player, Reel led Celebration in average last year and was one of only two qualifiers for states, where he placed 19th. He maintains a 3.7 weighted GPA and is both a team leader and sport ambassador.

## GIRLS BOWLING

**Jordan Walker, Apopka, senior:** Walker finished with a 186 average last year to lead Apopka to an undefeated season in the Metro Conference. She also placed sixth among all female bowlers in the state. **Jevannie Zepada, Winter Park, senior:** Zepada, Winter Park's team MVP, posted a 201 average during the regular season last year and qualified for states thanks to a series of 873. She has qualified for the Junior Gold Championships twice, and away from the lanes is a volunteer who dedicates her times to several causes.

# Orlando Family Stars

Each month, Stars features exceptional students, student-athletes, educators and all-around boons to the Greater Orlando area.

## STAR PERFORMERS

### Grant Bryden and Sophia-Bella Carrasquillo



Twelfth-grader Grant Bryden and 10th-grader Sophia-Bella Carrasquillo performed *Les Misérables* at The Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts. Bryden played Javert and Carrasquillo was Madame Thenardier. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the production was filmed and will be made into a movie.

## STAR GRADUATE

### Jaya Dayal



Recent Lake Highland Preparatory School graduate Jaya Dayal was named one of four rising collegians with a National Leaders Internship from Bank of America. She is set to attend the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## STAR PLAYWRIGHTS

### Eislinn Gracen and Adelaide Fisher

Two Youth Academy students at the Orlando Repertory Theatre have been selected as top finalists in the nationwide playwriting contest #Enough: Plays to End Gun Violence. Sixteen-year-old Eislinn Gracen says her play, *Guns in Dragonland*, was inspired by a conversation she had with her 8-year-old brother. Adelaide Fisher's play is called *Ms. Martin's Malaise* and the 16-year-old says she started getting interested in playwriting about three years ago after participating in the Young Playwrights for Change competition in middle school.

## STAR HUMANITARIANS

### Mike Bryant and Diane DeMark





Two Orlando residents were recently recognized at the Florida Coalition for Children Foundation's annual conference. Baldwin Park resident Diane DeMark was awarded the George Sheldon Lifetime Achievement award and Winter Park local Mike Bryant was the winner of the Champion for Children award. Embrace Families, Central Florida's lead agency overseeing child welfare, nominated both DeMark and Bryant for their outstanding commitment to helping families in foster care.

## STAR TEACHER

### Ms. Nicole DeLuca




Montverde Academy upper school social studies teacher, Ms. Nicole DeLuca was chosen to create curricula for the National Parks Services' exhibit on the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment. DeLuca will be assisted by recent Montverde graduate Madelyn Moore, who will be working as an intern on the project. The curriculum created by Moore and DeLuca will be used by teachers across the country.

## STAR ARTIST

### Sherise Lyou

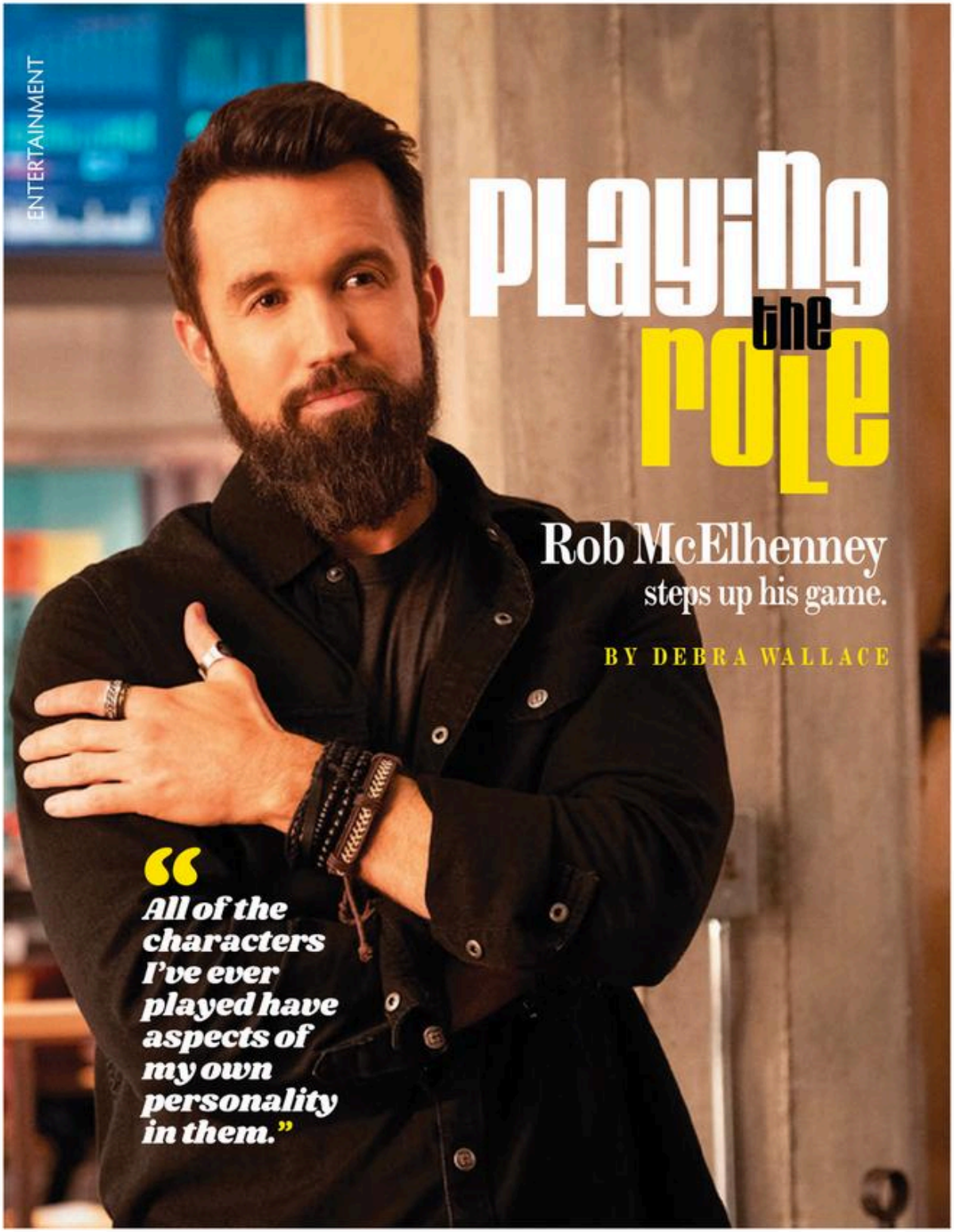
Rising high school senior Sherise Lyou recently created the website Art-Through-Heart.weebly.com to share her passion for art and provide an easy way for the community, especially children, to learn art virtually at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic has made it difficult for people to gather in person. Lyou is a Lake Highland Preparatory School student who has two national gold medal artworks that have been exhibited in the online galleries of the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards website.

## STAR STUDENTS

### Lake Highland Preparatory School's Math Teams

The math teams at Lake Highland Preparatory School placed at The Florida Math League statewide competition. In both the seventh and eighth grade contests, the Highland teams placed 5th overall. The competition was held in February but rankings were only recently published online.

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# Playing the Role

## Rob McElhenney steps up his game.

BY DEBRA WALLACE

***"All of the characters I've ever played have aspects of my own personality in them."***

***Rob McElhenney remembers Chase Utley Night*** at Citizens Bank Park as one of the most emotional—and unforgettable—nights of his life. It was pure Philadelphia magic.

The date: June 21, 2019. The Phillies had asked McElhenney if he wanted to fulfill an obsession of Ronald "Mac" McDonald, his character on the long-running comedy *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia:* "to just have a catch" with his baseball idol. That night marked the culmination of a 10-year *Sunny* storyline involving Mac's "love letter" to Utley, with the Phils' former star second baseman going along with the gag. Utley would throw the first pitch, and McElhenney would be the catcher.

"Even though I am older than Chase," he says, "just hearing this made me feel like a little boy."

McElhenney, 43, and his favorite ballplayer have a lot in common; they share local hero status, are devoted family men and they work extremely hard in their respective careers. They're also considered by their respective "teammates" to be humble guys.

That, however, is where their paths diverge. Along with his team of collaborators, McElhenney creates unique worlds for viewers to fall in love with, and he continually ups his game with clever shows that feel fresh, unique and, more often than not, right on the edge.

McElhenney is best known for portraying irascible and self-absorbed TV characters—namely, Mac on *Sunny* and Ian Grimm on *Mythic Quest: Raven's Banquet*, his new show on Apple TV+. Even so, many friends and co-stars say his off-camera personality is the exact opposite.

"The fish stinks from the head," says F. Murray Abraham, who shares the screen with McElhenney in *Mythic Quest*. "When Rob is on the set, I have the sense that everybody feels more comfortable. He gets things done. There are decisions to be made and you can count on Rob to make them—to take the heat and to also take the credit."

## The Next Home Run

The road to *Mythic Quest* began three years ago, more or less, when the gaming company Ubisoft asked McElhenney to create a TV series around the development of a video game. His initial reaction was to turn down the offer, but while touring the company's headquarters in Montreal, he told his team that he found their next home run.

Along with *Sunny's* Charlie Day and Megan Ganz, he began writing the series in July 2018. The show's first season began streaming on Apple TV+ in February, and the second season has already been ordered. Best described as a clever workplace comedy, the story revolves around the team behind the biggest multiplayer video game of all time. It may sound "geeky," but the show will likely appeal to gamers and non-gamers alike.

"*Mythic Quest* was born out of wanting to do something different," McElhenney says. "I think we could do a show about the video game industry that felt very analogous to *Sunny*. We could literally just pick up *Sunny*-esque characters, or that tone of humor, and put it in the gaming industry."

Instead, they wanted to do a show about real human beings.

"It's not that we don't respect the humor of *Sunny*," he explains. "It's because we've already done *Sunny*, we're going to keep doing *Sunny*, and this is something different."

Ganz says McElhenney's creativity and vision made her believe in *Mythic Quest*.

"From the first moment I walked into [*Sunny*], I felt the energy in the room because it was so warm and welcoming, maybe because they put all the nastiness on the screen so they don't have to have it off-camera," she says. "That's why when they came to me with another show, I said, 'Sign me up,' because I just want to keep working with these people forever."

If that's the case, then how do less than "warm and welcoming" characters such as *Mythic Quest's* Ian Grimm come to be?

"All of the characters I've ever played have aspects of my own personality in them," McElhenney says. "So, I would say with Mac, and now with Ian, both of them share some of the worst aspects of my personality. Then I get to go to work and just let it all out. But at the end of the day when I'm exhausted with being an egomaniacal, narcissistic boss, I get to go back to what I am really like at home."

Speaking of home, McElhenney now lives in Los Angeles. He may no longer live in Philadelphia, but he left a big piece of himself behind. In a case of life imitating art, McElhenney opened his own bar, Mac's Tavern in Philadelphia's Old City neighborhood. He likes to drop in whenever he's back in town.

McElhenney looks back fondly on Utley's retirement ceremony, when he took his place behind the plate at Citizens Bank Park. He still gets choked up when he thinks about it.

"So, I get there and at one point Phillies PA announcer Dan Baker says, 'We have a special guest, from *It's Always Sunny* …' and before he finished, they started the theme song and the entire stadium of some 50,000 people began cheering. I walked out to the words, 'Philadelphia's own Rob McElhenney …' and it was all about the ownership that the folks around here feel for anybody from our city that goes off and achieves something major. The fact they recognize me as an emissary for Philadelphia is something I found to be extremely profound."

He then glances over at Kaitlin Olson, his wife and *Sunny* co-star, and shares this: "I realized, 'Oh [crap], now I've got to catch this ball because 50,000 people are out there, and if I drop it, I'm going to ruin this whole thing.' But I caught it! Luckily, it was being thrown by my baseball hero, so all I had to do was hold my glove out and there it was."



*McElhenny in a scene from* Mythic Quest: Raven's Banquet

# Mac Keeps 'Getting Up'

## Coming of age in Philly 'shaped exactly who I am,' McElhenney says.

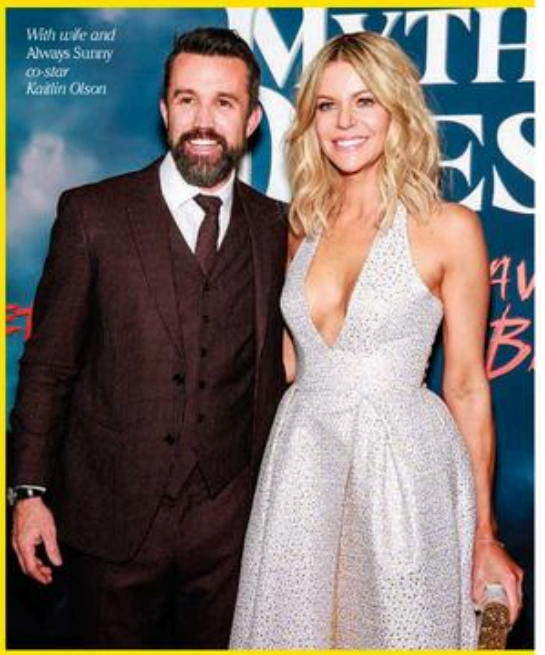
**Ask Rob McElhenney about how Philadelphia influences his everyday life,** and he responds without a breath: "I'm 100 percent Philly!"

"I grew up in the city with my Jesuit Catholic upbringing in the 1980s and '90s, which really shaped exactly who I am," he says. "I also lived partly in the gay community, being raised by two women, and by a single dad on the side. I was exposed at a very early age to so many different cultures, personalities and disparate points of view."

In addition, he has held on to "the edge and toughness that is inherent in Philadelphia," which he considers vital.

"You need those kinds of traits to be successful in our particular business, which is the ability to recognize that your perspective is not the only one that matters," he says. "You have to be tough enough to recognize that you are going to fail and you are going to get knocked down over and over."

More to the point, growing up in Philadelphia taught him this: "You have to keep getting up."



*With wife and Always Sunny co-star Kaitlin Olson*

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# Palate

By Brittany Ann Morrisey

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AT TAKO CHEENA, MILLS 50
Mixing Mexican cuisine with pan-Asian flavors, this burrito is packed with a savory, medium heat Indian curry masala that is blended with chickpeas, tomato, white and sweet potato, and rice. A touch of sour cream and cilantro rounds out the dish.

**CARNE ASADA BURRITO**
AT AZTECA D'ORO, MULTIPLE LOCATIONS
To make this dish, a 12-inch flour tortilla is stuffed with tender skirt steak, refried beans and rice. It's then topped with Azteca's Molcajete sauce and cotija Mexican cheese. Green onion, pico de gallo, crema Mexicana and a fried jalapeño come on the side.

**TEMPURA SHRIMP BURRITO**
AT FUZZY'S TACO SHOP, ALTAMONTE SPRINGS & ALAFAYA
The shrimp in this dish are lightly battered and fried before being rolled in a large flour tortilla with guacamole, shredded cheese, tomatoes, onions and garlic sauce. Your choice of rice and beans is included, too.



**MOUTH HUGGER** AT GRINGOS LOCOS, MULTIPLE LOCATIONS
The most popular burrito at this shop, this meal is a full one with ground beef, chicken, queso, rice, cheese, pico de gallo, lettuce and sour cream all wrapped up in one big tortilla.



Photo Courtesy of Fogo De Chao

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**STRAWBERRY FIELDS** AT CHEF'S TABLE AT THE EDGEWATER, WINTER GARDEN
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**PLANT CITY OLD FASHIONED** AT BITTERS & BOTTLES COCKTAIL LOUNGE, DOWNTOWN ORLANDO
This Old-Fashioned exchanges cherries for strawberries. It's made with Maker's Mark 46 bourbon whiskey, St.-Germain, lemon juice, sugar cubes, strawberries and basil.

**STRAWBERRY HIBISCUS** AT FOGO DE CHÃO, I-DRIVE
Hibiscus-infused silver cachaça—a distilled spirit popular in Brazil—is shaken over ice with muddled lime, sugar and strawberries. The concoction is then strained into a rocks glass and garnished with a half-wheel orange.

# Side Dish

By Brittany Ann Morrisey

**Restaurant news from throughout Greater Orlando**



• Dishing out *loukoumades* (a doughnut-like confection served hot) and other sweet treats, **Mr. Puffs** dessert bar has opened at the Florida Mall. This is the Montreal-based company's first location in the United States.

• The liquor license for three Downtown Orlando bars has been suspended by the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation for an alleged infraction of coronavirus pandemic rules. The bars—**Mathers Social Gathering**, **Shots** and **Joysticks**—are held by the same company.

• **Belicoso Cigars and Cafe** has closed up shop. The combination cigar shop-barbecue restaurant debuted in Mills 50 late last year.

• South Orange has another food hall in development. **The Holden Hub** will be at the corner of Orange Avenue and Holden Avenue and current plans allow for the possibility of micro-restaurants and communal outdoor gathering areas.

• **Dandelion Community Café** has closed after 14 years of business. The closure came after employees at the cafe formed a union to negotiate working conditions. Instead of meeting with employees, management locked the restaurant's doors and a few days later the owner announced that the cafe would not reopen.

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