

Ave Maria Sun

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FALL 2020

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PANTHER RUN GOLF CLUB COURTESY IMAGE

The National Golf & Country Club at Ave Maria is being designed by Gordon Lewis. Panther Run, above, was also designed by Lewis.

Landscape architect designs more than 80 local courses

BY ROBIN F. DEMATTIA

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

If you've played golf in Southwest Florida, chances are you've been on a course designed by Gordon Lewis.

An area resident since 1978, Mr. Lewis has designed more than 80 courses from Marco Island to Tampa. He is currently designing The National Golf & Country Club at Ave Maria for Lennar Homes.

"Gordy has done a lot of our courses and is a mastermind at it," said Dave Meyers, director of operations

for Lennar Southwest Florida. "His designs can appeal to anybody from the everyday golfer or first-time golfer to those playing from the back tees. He's been a great partner for many years."

Mr. Lewis grew up in Kansas in a golfing family with parents, grandparents, uncles and cousins who played the game. He lived across the street from a golf course and by age 12 was golfing every day. At 14, he was mowing the course on weekends. Around this time, he read an article by famous golf writer Herbert Warren Wind that described the job of a golf course architect and decided that's what he wanted to become.

He studied landscape architecture at Kansas State University, where he played on the golf team, and worked for golf course architects and contractors after graduating. One of them got him a job helping build Spanish



LEWIS

LEWIS

LEWIS

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LEWIS

SEE COURSES, A9 ►

"The same model we build in Ave Maria would cost almost \$200,000 more on the east coast."

— Diana Ibarria, senior vice president of CC Homes



FAIRWAY INTERIOR

Modern delights

New models entice record sales at Maple Ridge

BY ROBIN F. DEMATTIA

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

FOLLOWING THE TREND TOWARD modern design and the need for home offices, CC Homes recently opened nine new model homes to showcase some of the 26 floor plans they offer at Maple Ridge in Ave Maria.

"More than 80% of our buyers are from Florida's east coast, and they want open floor plans, lots of light and upscale amenities," said Diana Ibarria, senior vice president with CC Homes.

Ms. Ibarria happily noted that CC Homes has enjoyed record sales this year.

"We usually sell 14 homes a month, but we sold 40 in July and 40 more in August."

A presence in Ave Maria since 2013,



FAIRWAY KITCHEN

CC HOMES / COURTESY IMAGES

New model home designs include the latest in modern features and finishes.

SEE MODELS, A8 ►

Meet the townmaker

Ave Maria Development Property Manager Monica Villa. A2 ►



Open

Two new restaurants come to Ave Maria. A6 ►



Sports at Ave Maria

The game must go on. A20 ►



Meet the Townmaker: Monica Villa

BY ROBIN F. DEMATTIA

Making everything run smoothly around the community is the job of Ave Maria Development Property Manager Monica Villa. And she likes all that coordinating.

"It's like an operations manager job," explains Ms. Villa, who has held the position since 2011. "I make sure everything looks great and is clean."

Her responsibilities include overseeing landscape contractors, setting up events in the town center, coordinating building maintenance and cleaning services, collecting rents from businesses in Ave Maria, and working with the Ave Maria Stewardship Community District to maintain the roads.

Ms. Villa said her most important task is to "listen to residents' suggestions and figure out solutions to keep people happy. If everything is going well, then I feel like I'm most productive."

Recently, she solicited feedback from residents about the type of new restaurants they wanted. Their interest in Asian and Mexican led to the openings this summer of Teriyaki Madness and Lozano's Mexican Restaurant.

For the coming season, Ms. Villa hopes to help plan some of the popular annual events, such as Blues, Brews and BBQ as well as Margarita & Taco Festival, if social distancing allows.

A member of the Leadership Collier Class of 2012, Ms. Villa was appointed by the governor to sit on the Immokalee Water and Sewer Board. Prior to working in Ave Maria, she was with the agricultural side of Barron Collier Companies for 20 years, starting as a receptionist and working her way up to office manager.

Ms. Villa was raised in Immokalee, where she still lives and enjoys "a nice 12-minute drive" to work.



MILA BRIDGER / AVE MARIA SUN

Ave Maria Development Property Manager Monica Villa.

She and her husband have four sons ranging from 21 to 30 and seven grandchildren, including six girls and a boy. Biscuit, a mix of Maltese and Shih Tzu, rounds out the family.

In her spare time, Ms. Villa enjoys shopping for dresses, shoes and purses. She also volunteers with Bethel Ministries in Immokalee.

She likes to read and most recently found

"In Pursuit of Purpose," by Myles Munroe, "a reminder that there's a purpose for what I do, where I'm at and where I'm going."

And if you want to chat with her about movies, you had better be a fan of "Urban Cowboy." "I tell everybody that's my favorite movie," she enthuses. "It's about love, music and dancing." 🌟



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AVE MARIA
UNIVERSITY



“Ave Cares” promotes acts of kindness

BY ROBIN F. DEMATTIA

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

Because so many Ave Maria residents are compassionate and want to give back, the Ave Maria Master Association Lifestyle Department has launched “Ave Cares” as the program for all these activities.

“I wanted one ‘umbrella’ to list the things we do and opportunities for our residents,” said Ave Maria Master Association Lifestyle Director Carol DiFlorio.

Over the years, Ave Maria residents have donated school supplies, worked in soup kitchens and volunteered at events held by local non-profits. When Hurricane Dorian hit the Bahamas as a Category 5 in 2019, Ms. DiFlorio began using the “Ave Cares” term to coordinate the town’s relief response and realized the name resonated with everyone.

“My aim is to get a website that will list websites of charities that need help and the types of things we aid and assist with,” Ms. DiFlorio said. “People will be able to sign up to volunteer or learn about places where we give continuous gifts.” She initiated the hashtag #AveFLCares to use on social media.

“When people move into the community, they can use Ave Cares to see what’s around that they can get involved in.”

She also sends an Ave Cares e-blast with updates about current activities and new opportunities.

Ave Cares is part of the Fun Committee, whose members suggest ideas for non-profit organizations to support.

Debbie Fornwall is one of the people who leads this subcommittee. “She’s my right hand,” Ms. DiFlorio said. “Debbie is a strong supporter of anything we can do to help outside of the community.”

Ms. Fornwall came up with the “Letters of



Susan Wheeler led volunteers in making and supplying face masks .

COURTESY PHOTO

Love for Seniors” ongoing campaign. Residents provide handwritten letters or cards addressed to “Dear Friend” and write a little bit about themselves while providing encouraging words. They drop off the cards to the Master Association office or the Water Park, and Ave Cares members deliver them to various senior living facilities, where those staff members address

the envelope to a specific resident there.

Susan Wheeler, a member of the quilting group, leads volunteers in making and supplying face masks that are distributed to first responders, the Guadalupe Center, Catholic Charities Food Pantry and residents of Farm Worker Village. The Ave General Store helped by donating a 10-pack of masks for every



COURTESY PHOTO

Debbie Fornwall came up with the “Letters of Love for Seniors” ongoing campaign.

10-pack someone purchased. This project is also ongoing.

John Stuart, a singer, leads a group of Ave Maria residents who play music at senior living facilities.

Over Memorial Day weekend, residents along with the Del Webb Knights of Columbus donated four van loads of food, diapers and essential supplies to residents of Farm Worker Village. This was especially important because many families were unable to visit food kitchens due to the pandemic.

The group also coordinated the High School Students Graduation Celebration and the Congrats Heroes Drive-through Parade to honor first responders and essential workers who reside or work in Ave Maria.

“Our goal is to build relationships in our local communities and to be genuinely helpful,” Ms. DiFlorio said. 🌻



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Two new restaurants add international flair to dining out in Ave Maria

BY **ROBIN F. DEMATTIA**
Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

The first Southwest Florida location of Teriyaki Madness and the second local location of Lozano’s Mexican Restaurant are exciting new dining options in Ave Maria.

About Teriyaki Madness

The first week Phong Ho opened Tropical Smoothie Café in Ave Maria back in 2008, a hurricane came through, his dad broke his hip and the economy soured.

This summer, in the midst of a global health crisis, he opened Teriyaki Madness next to his Tropical Smoothie Café.

“I had a lot of obstacles to overcome last time,” Mr. Ho says. “Hopefully, this time it brings a sense of hope that, even with the pandemic, something is opening rather than closing.”

He’s optimistic about his chances, saying, “This town is thriving and growing.”

Teriyaki Madness is a fast-casual Asian restaurant concept that features made-to-order dishes such as chicken teriyaki, yakisoba noodles with meat or tofu, chicken katsu, egg-rolls, edamame, crab rangoon, and chicken potstickers. Ave Maria is the first location of the brand in Southwest Florida.

Several of Mr. Ho’s employees from Tropical Smoothie Café moved over to help open Teriyaki Madness. “They’ve been in the restaurant industry, are savvy and know what to



ERIC RADDATZ / AVE MARIA SUN

Teriyaki Madness is a fast-casual Asian restaurant concept featuring made-to-order dishes.

do,” he says. Mr. Ho oversees operations, but food preparation and cooking are done by his staff. As the pandemic impact was felt throughout Southwest Florida, Mr. Ho was able to keep Tropical Smoothie Café open as an essential business. “I was very fortunate

that our business was allowed to continue to operate,” he says, adding he concentrated on takeout and curbside pickup, which he continues at both restaurants. Although he cannot provide delivery at this time, he does offer catering from both restaurants in the immediate area and as far as Naples.

Mr. Ho wants customers to know that he takes health and safety precautions related to COVID-19 seriously. Employees have their temperature taken each day, and he has placed hand sanitizer throughout the restaurants and added protection panes near the registers. “We follow CDC and state of Florida guidelines,” he stresses.

As people venture out, Mr. Ho is confident they will try Teriyaki Madness.

“I’ve been here 12 years and I know what people want,” he says. “It’s been eight years since the town has had a new restaurant. A lot of people are looking for another place to eat, especially at night. For a town of this size, it’s definitely time.”

Teriyaki Madness

- >> **Where:** 5072 Annunciation Circle, Suite 103
- >> **Hours:** Mon-Sat: 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Sun: 11 a.m.-8 p.m.
- >> **Info:** 239-658-5938
- >> **Website:** www.teriyakimadness.com/fl-ave-maria

About Lozano’s Mexican Restaurant

Lozano’s has been a mainstay in Immokalee for almost 25 years and the family business is happy to have a second location close to its original home.

“We have been waiting for the right opportunity, and this is the perfect spot for us,” said Danny Gonzalez, one of the family owners along with his wife Sandy, of the location in Annunciation Circle.

Lozano’s serves homestyle meals made from scratch, including hand-rolled flour and corn tortillas. Many of the recipes have been handed down for generations.

“My mother-in-law, Loura Lozano, got many of the recipes from her mom when she was growing up,” Mr. Gonzalez said. “She has been cooking these recipes her whole life.”

Nena Herrera, who has worked at Lozano’s for 20 years, arrives at 4 a.m. each day to make the tortillas. The Immokalee restaurant opens at 5:30 a.m.

The menu at the Ave Maria location differs slightly from the Immokalee restaurant. “A lot of people don’t know or eat the foods

SEE RESTAURANTS, A10 ►



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[NCHmd.org](https://www.nchmd.org)

MODELS

From page 1

CC Homes has built more than 900 residences in Maple Ridge. And, it feels strongly about the future of the town.

“We think Ave Maria is a good community that has great potential. It’s really not that far from the east coast and it provides housing priced within reach.”

Ms. Ibarria said many nurses, fire fighters and others who work long shifts only two or three days a week are attracted to Ave Maria. “It’s a beautiful town with wide open spaces, and people are trying to get away from dense places.”

She notes that with more and more people working from home and only needing to go into an office about once a week, people don’t need to commute as often, which makes Ave Maria convenient regardless of where their office is based.

Price is also a factor. “The same model we build in Ave Maria would cost almost \$200,000 more on the east coast,” she states.

“Maple Ridge single-family homes start at \$229,990 for a two-bedroom with 1,133 square feet. Twenty-six floor plans are available to choose from with options spanning to 3,985 square feet with four to six bedrooms.”

Every new model design features an option for a den or study that can be used as a home office. There is plenty of tile and light colors throughout. All homes have smart technology and Cat-5 cable wiring installed so owners can turn on lights and unlock doors from their phone.

“What makes our homes different is every home comes with a Doctor on Demand kit that connects your tablet, computer or phone to a doctor,” Ms. Ibarria said. “They can hear your heart, listen to your lungs, look in your ears and throat. Its value is more than \$1,000.”

Indoor features can include 12-foot raised flat ceilings, stainless steel appliances, granite or quartz countertops, and 18- by 18-inch ceramic Dal-tile flooring in the foyer, family room, kitchen, breakfast nook and laundry room.

Exteriors include a brick paver driveway and covered entry and rear terrace.

Maple Ridge boasts a spacious clubhouse, resort-style pool, pickleball courts, fitness and game rooms, massage rooms, a dog park and other amenities. 🌺



HARBOR EXTERIOR



FAIRWAY KITCHEN



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CC HOMES/ COURTESY IMAGES

CC Homes sold 40 homes in July and 40 more in August.





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COURSES

From page 1

Wells in Bonita Springs. He then worked on The Forest and Eagle Ridge before starting his own firm.

The first design Mr. Lewis did on his own was The Vines, which is now Estero Country Club. With so much growth in Southwest Florida over the past 40 years, he hasn't needed to venture much further than Tampa for work, relying on word of mouth for new projects and working out of his home to reduce expenses.

Mr. Lewis said he makes about 50 to 60 plans before having the final concept for a new course. He has done a lot of work with Lennar over the years and credits it for building communities around the golf course design.

"One of the neat things about working with Lennar is they know it takes a great golf course to make a community work. They'll let me put a hole where I want, so we typically put the golf holes besides the best landscape, like wetlands or preserve."

He likes variety in designing greens, sometimes creating Donald Ross-style greens that slope off in different ways or including a Pete Dye-style island green. He likes a Redan, where golfers can't see the pin, or a Biarritz with a swale through the green, though he tries to feature several pin positions to make that type of green a little easier. He even once patterned a layout after number 6 at Bay Hill, one of his favorite holes.

He shared that The National at Ave Maria will have one of the longest holes in Southwest Florida, stretching 701 yards from the tips. "You need to hit it 280 yards just to get to the forward tees." In contrast, he also has designed one of the shortest holes in the area for that course, a par 3 that is just 115 yards from the back tees and has a diagonal green. "You have



PANTHER RUN GOLF CLUB COURTESY IMAGE

Panther Run, designed by Gordon Lewis, was ranked in the Top 25 courses for women golfers.

to have the right angle and right distance. It will be a lot of fun."

While Lennar Homes has certainly kept him busy over the years, he spends about half of his time renovating existing courses. Two of the biggest changes he implements are new grasses, like Platinum Paspalum, and better irrigation systems, including sprinkler heads that can rotate the degree and altitude of the water.

For decades, he has worked with draftsman Jeff Argue, who lives near him in Naples. A course can take one to two years to design, from creating the general layout and then spending months selecting locations for tees,

greens, traps, lakes, and cart paths.

He is proud to note that Panther Run, which he designed, was ranked in the Top 25 courses for women golfers. "It's important to me that I make good courses [in honor of] my grandma and my mom." Mr. Lewis, who will be 70 in September, has four children and eight grandchildren.

He charges a rather modest \$150,000 to \$160,000 to design a new course, compared to golf course architects such as Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods, and about \$6,000 to renovate a couple of golf holes. "I never thought it was fair for an architect to charge a percentage of construction. That behooves you to

want change orders because you make more money."

Despite all the time he spends around golf, he only plays about 10 to 15 times a year. His handicap is around a 10 or 12. "Every summer I say I'm going to play more, but that's our busiest time for renovations."

His biggest tip for golfers is that "the traps tell you what's going on. Get the closest you can to a trap and that will be perfect for your next shot." Mr. Lewis also advises leaving an approach shot shorter rather than going over the green. "I like to have one side of the green that's safer than the other to give people a pretty easy chip." 🌻



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The Lozano family spent more than \$30,000 to update and decorate their new restaurant location in Ave Maria.

RESTAURANTS

From page 6

we sell, like a Menudo (soup made with cow's stomach in broth) and Barbacoa (taco meat from cow's head).

Combination plates with tacos and enchiladas are popular in Ave Maria, Mr. Gonzalez said.

The Lozano family spent more than \$30,000 to update and decorate their new restaurant location. They added arches, painted with about five colors, and brought Aztec and historical pictures that Mr. Gonzalez went to Mexico to purchase. "It's very different than the pizza place that was there before," he stated.

Mr. Gonzalez called the opportunity to

open in Ave Maria "a blessing" and said the family "wants to thank Blake Gable, CEO of Barron Collier Companies, developer of Ave Maria and Cee Cee Marinelli, Director of Development for Ave Maria. They believed in us and what we're trying to do here."

Lozano's Mexican Restaurant

- >> **Where:** 5080 Annunciation Circle, Unit 106-107, Ave Maria
- >> **Hours:** Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- >> **Info:** 239-455-0200

AVE MARIA reports another record-setting month for new home sales

SPECIAL TO AVE MARIA SUN

Ave Maria, Florida continues to set sales records with its best month ever reporting 66 new home sales in September 2020. Announcing 350 new home sales year-to-date, the master-planned community has already surpassed its total sales for the entirety of 2019. Home sales were reported from the four residential builders in Ave Maria —CC Homes, Del Webb Naples, Lennar, and Pulte Homes.

Since the opening of the master planned community in 2007, Ave Maria continues its strategic approach of using smart growth principles in residential and commercial land development. As the first town developed under the ground-breaking Rural Lands Stewardship Area program, Ave Maria is committed to the conservation of the area's natural resources and wildlife and preservation of 17,000 acres in and around the community. Ave Maria has a walkable town center, parks, recreational spaces, various housing types from condominiums to attached villas to single-family homes, shops, restaurants and more than 100 miles of walking/running trails and sidewalks.


"This is the first time Ave Maria has surpassed 350 new home sales in a year since the opening of the development. We continue to see an unprecedented demand as interest continues to rise," comments Cee Cee Marinelli, Director of Development for Ave Maria. "Home sales have more than doubled month over month for September. With more people spending time at home, people are evaluating where and how they live, and Ave Maria is an attractive choice. With an array of floor plans and amenities, home shoppers are flocking in droves to our



The gathering room of the Heatherton model by Pulte Homes in Avalon Park.

Southwest Florida development."

The active lifestyle and robust amenities program in Ave Maria provide new residents with an instant source of socialization and recreation, whether on-site or virtual. On-site amenities feature open spaces for its homeowners such as a water park, soccer and baseball fields, fitness center, amphitheater, dog park, trails, bocce and tennis courts, Town Center with Publix Supermarket, commercial center with Mobil gas station, private schools from preschool through university, and onsite free events throughout the year. The Ave Maria Master Association organizes ongoing events for residents, including virtual trivia, happy hour, fitness classes and club meetings while also providing access to outdoor recreation with proper social distancing guidelines ensuring everyone can enjoy having fun safely.



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| A11



AVALON PARK

About the Community

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About the Community

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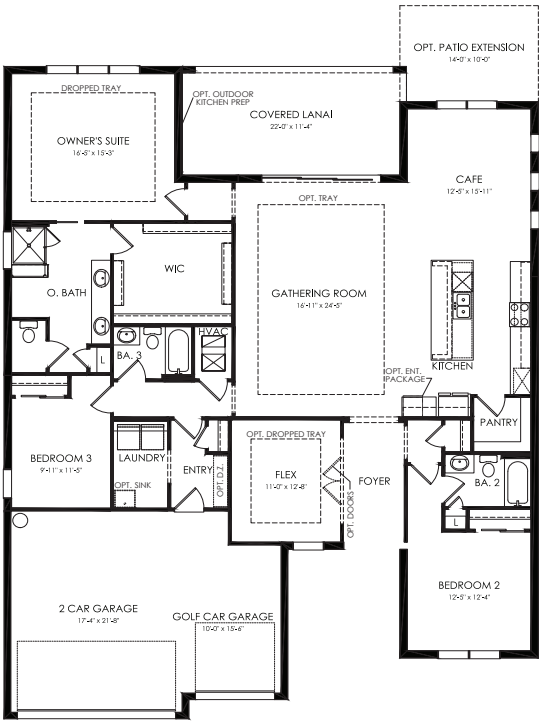
Director who plans clubs, classes and events all year long. With so many ways to stay active and have fun, it's easy to see why Del Webb Naples neighbors become long-time friends. Offering 21 home designs to choose from including carriage homes, villas and single family, starting from the \$190s to \$600s, you are sure to find a home where you can create an inspired, personalized design to fit your style, and budget. End your search for your ideal Florida oasis...it's all waiting for you at Del Webb Naples.



Del Webb[®]

No one understands the importance of community like Del Webb. Del Webb communities are an extension of the homeowners who live there – a collection of passions and activities you love to enjoy with others. When you choose to build in a Del Webb 55+ active adult community, you get the benefit of more than six decades

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Del Webb Naples
6028 Victory Drive, Ave Maria, FL 34142
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About the Community

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

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



Harbour

- 3,522 a/c square feet
- 4 to 6 bedrooms
- 3.5 to 5.5 bathrooms
- Ground floor owner's suite
- 2 or 3-car garage

New Contemporary Homes Available Now at Maple Ridge, Tour New Models Today!



Starting from \$252,990 to \$417,990

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

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

Maple Ridge
5009 Alonza Avenue, Ave Maria, FL 34142
855-280-4648 | www.MapleRidgeFL.com



About the Community

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

Floor Plan Spotlight: The Encinitas is a new

construction, two-story home with 4 bedrooms, 3-and-one-half baths, great room, eat-in kitchen, upstairs laundry room, loft, storage closet, downstairs master suite with walk-in closet and attached garage. 5th bedroom or a wet bar in the loft are available options. Premium features included standard, such as designer brand faucets & fixtures and tile flooring. Gourmet kitchens have stainless steel appliances, European-style wood cabinetry and granite countertops. A spa-like master bathroom features double sinks with marble vanity tops, a spacious shower. Best of all, this master suite is conveniently located on the ground floor.



Starting from \$229,990 to \$269,990

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

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



Huntington

Model home is now open for viewing.

- 1,630 a/c Sq. Ft.
- 3 bedrooms
- 2 bathrooms
- His and her walk-in closets at master bedroom
- 1-car garage

Maple Ridge
5009 Alonza Avenue, Ave Maria, FL 34142
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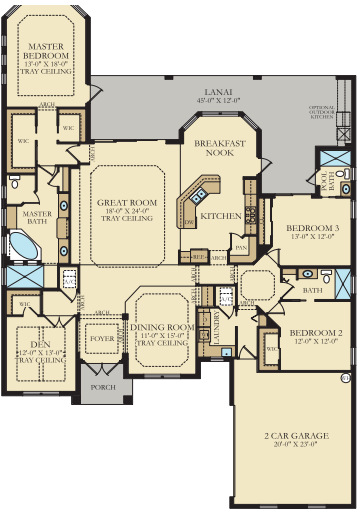
THE NATIONAL GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB AT AVE MARIA, FLORIDA

About the Community

Lennar is excited to bring its popular Everything's Included® homes and resort lifestyle amenities to the charm, convenience, and values of Ave Maria. The National Golf & Country Club will offer a fresh coastal aesthetic throughout the home designs and on-site amenities including an 18-hole Gordon Lewis-designed golf course, complimented by world-class amenities for the entire family to enjoy. A variety of floorplans will be offered in Terrace and Veranda Condominiums, plus Executive and Estate single family homes, starting from the upper \$100s.

The National Golf & Country Club will feature its own Clubhouse with a pro shop, formal and casual dining, a resort-style pool and spa, state-of-the-art fitness center with yoga/aerobics room, spa treatment rooms and beauty salon. Active residents can take advantage of Har-Tru tennis courts, pickle and bocce ball, putting green, chipping area, and a driving range. This all-encompassing amenity campus is designed to bring our community together, with spaces to congregate with friends new and old.

Whether you are a seasonal resident or looking to lay down roots, The National Golf & Country Club has the ideal home for you!



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Simplify your home buying experience by including everything you need in a new home and community. And once you find your perfect home, our family of companies are there to assist you every step of the way with your mortgage, title and insurance needs for an enjoyable and hassle-free closing.

The National Golf & Country Club
5080 Annunciation Circle, Suite 101, Ave Maria, FL 34142
888-214-1476 | www.TheNational-AveMaria.com



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MINUTES AWAY
FROM MORE



Golfers can play Pebble Beach without leaving Ave Maria

BY **ROBIN F. DEMATTIA**
Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

Golfers who have ever wanted to play Pebble Beach, Muirfield Village, Bethpage Black and other famous courses can now do so without leaving Ave Maria.

The Club at Del Webb Naples has a new golf simulator loaded with 86 breathtaking courses from around the world.

“The number of options is pretty amazing,” said Jack Bruce, assistant community manager and a golfer. “You can select courses where the majors are played. Pebble Beach has been the most popular, because the par 3 hole number seven is so iconic. The details on the screen are unbelievable. I’ve never seen anything like it.”

Through the end of the year, Mr. Bruce and Community Manager Ken Rice are teaching 90-minute simulator instruction classes from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Once people are approved to use the machine, it is available on a first-come, first-served basis from 9 to 10 a.m. and 5:30 to 10 p.m. After most people have received instruction, the hours will be expanded.

“It’s very user friendly,” said Mr. Bruce of the simulator, noting that there are also instruction handouts in the room.

The simulator is open to members and their registered guests. Up to six people can use the machine at a time.

Mr. Bruce has also noticed about a dozen golfers returning on a regular basis to use the simulator for practice and fine-tuning their game.

“Using it is similar to being in the practice areas, but the feedback is better,” he explained. “It is really good for showing where on the clubface your ball is hitting, your miles per hour, and your carry and distance. When you go on the course, you can use that data for club selection.”

The machine can email this data to each golfer, so they can review their analytics. Users can sort their shot history by date, round and club.

The pros from Panther Run can also meet golfers at the simulator for golf lessons.

Mr. Bruce recommends that golfers bring their own clubs, so they get a better feel for how they hit them, though some clubs are available near the machine.

Golfers hit into a screen filled with beautiful graphics of each hole. A camera above the golfer offers instant replay and a pause feature so golfers can assess their swing.

“This is invaluable, because there’s no play-back on the range,” Mr. Bruce asserts.

The course graphic advances to the fairway, or rough, based on where the ball would have landed, for the next shot.

Golfers must bring their own balls, and Mr. Bruce emphasized that, to protect the screen,



PHOTOS BY MILA BRIDGERE

Above: Jack Bruce tees off at Pebble Beach’s iconic seventh hole on the new golf simulator at the Club at Del Webb.

Left: The ball hits the screen as the simulator analyzes Bruce’s shot for speed, distance and more.

“You can select courses where the majors are played. The details on the screen are unbelievable. I’ve never seen anything like it.”

— **Jack Bruce**, Del Webb Naples assistant community manager

they must be new, unscratched and without any markings.

The club recently hosted a match play par 3 tournament on the simulator over the course of two weeks, and Mr. Bruce expects to schedule similar events because they offer fun while meeting social distancing guidelines.

While about 80% of the machine’s users are playing golf, the simulator is also loaded with soccer, Zombie Dodgeball, football, lacrosse and baseball.

“It’s great for residents who have children or grandchildren,” Mr. Bruce said. 🌟

The Club at Del Webb Naples

» **Where:** 6008 Victory Drive, Ave Maria

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Ave Maria sports: The game must go on

BY LAURA TICHY-SMITH

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

After months of waiting, sports are back in the town of Ave Maria at the collegiate, academy and community level. COVID-19 and even facilities problems have thrown hurdles in the way of the season, but collaboration, cooperation and comeback capture the nature of what it's taking to make those sports happen this fall.

Donahue Academy Athletics

Because Ave Maria University's own gym needed to be redone, Donahue Academy is lending gymnasium space for collegiate basketball and volleyball. With the university's basketball teams needing additional space for practice, the Ave Maria Master Association's Parks and Recreation Department is providing space on its outdoor courts in North Park. In return, the university is providing Donahue's football team use of its Gyrene Field, and Parks and Rec is also providing the K-12 school some sports space as well. And Ave Maria Little League is aiming to be the comeback kid after the mandatory pandemic closures shut down the league shortly after its opening day extravaganza.

"This summer, it came to our attention that AMU's gym is not usable right now," said Deacon Thomas Kinnick, athletic director, head football coach and track coach at Donahue Academy. "Joe Patterson, the director of athletics at AMU, and I started the conversation about how we could make this all work so that everybody is served in one small gymnasium."

The space-sharing arrangement has the college athletes entering the gym through an outside door after going through their pre-practice COVID-19 checks, so they never enter the rest of the academy building, and their practices fall before and after the academy's use of the gymnasium. This means the gym opens at 5 a.m. for men's basketball practice, and the university women's volleyball and basketball teams finish their drills around 11:30 p.m. With all of the use the gym is getting, it gets sprayed down with a CDC-approved sanitizer after every activity.

"It's a fogger that's actually in a backpack," Mr. Kinnick said, "so we call it the 'Ghostbuster machine.'"

The cooperation goes both ways, with Donahue's football team playing at AMU's football field. The boys' soccer team will be playing some games on AMU's facilities this fall as well, when the university's own teams aren't using the turf. Once basketball starts at the K-12 level, Donahue will have another half-dozen teams needing practice space. Some of them may be practicing on the master association's courts at North Park, where the AMU's junior varsity basketball team is being provided practice space.

The academy, university and parks and rec also collaborated to host the Ave Invitational, an annual cross-country meet for elementary, middle and high school students from 28 schools, which serves as a state qualifier for middle school runners.

"We have a great track here for cross country, through the woods and through ponds," said John Croce, the Parks and Recreation manager. "The university is having an invitational meet here in October, and then they're going to have the Sun Conference Championship in November."

Ave Maria University Athletics

The fact that AMU is playing sports this fall when sports are on hold at many other Southwest Florida colleges owes in part to the Sun Conference, a conference of smaller schools in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina, deciding to move forward with games this fall. The Gyrenes are fielding teams this fall in football; men's and women's basketball, soccer and cross country; as well as women's volleyball and fall-ball softball.

"At the university, we really value human-to-human interaction, and since March, it's become even more evident the value of that interaction," said Mr. Patterson, who is also



Ave Maria University won 42-6 over Florida Memorial University on Sept. 19.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AVE MARIA UNIVERSITY MARKETING DEPARTMENT

"There are a lot of protocols in place, and the diligence has paid off thus far. We expect it to continue to be successful because the athletes are very adamant about participation."

— Joe Patterson, director of athletics at AMU

AMU's head football coach. "So, we were really excited that (AMU's) President Ice, along with the other presidents of the Sun Conference, voted unanimously to have fall sports, even as conference after conference shut down. We knew that in order to do it we would have to have a great maturity level on the parts of the athletes. There are a lot of protocols in place, and the diligence has paid off thus far. We expect it to continue to be successful because the athletes are very adamant about participation."

Student athletes were tested for COVID-19 when they arrived to campus this fall. They undergo a 14-point symptom checklist before they even go to breakfast, and any symptomatic player gets retested and quarantined — along with close contacts such as roommates — until the test results come back. Assigned workout partners are roommates in order to reduce student athletes' close contacts, and masks are required at the socially distanced team meetings. The season has also been truncated to reduce the distances the team travels in order to eliminate flying and overnight trips. While sports such as softball have a measure of social distancing built into the games, it would be impossible to accomplish with sports such as football.

"There would be a lot of missed tackles," Mr. Patterson said with a chuckle. "I think that what it came down to was a philosophical decision as to the value of participation. We could prioritize safety and prioritize participation if we started sports on time. It's always easier to not do something than to do something. I think that at times we're presented with a false choice between safety and participation. I think that not participating doesn't guarantee that you'll be safe, and participating doesn't guarantee that you won't be safe. It's really going to come down



Women's volleyball team won 3-1 win over College of Coastal Georgia on Sept. 19.

to the protocols that are in place and our confidence in those protocols."

Ave Maria Little League

The university isn't the only one running fall-ball. Ave Maria Little League is regrouping to make a comeback with six teams following the mandatory closures that shut down its spring season. While the governor lifted the moratorium on youth sports on May 22, two months after play was suspended, restarting the season proved impossible.

"It was devastating for the players, the parents and the volunteers for our season to be canceled," Ms. Green said. "After having such a wonderful opening day in February, with a parade of teams and elected officials doing the honorary first pitches of the season with monogrammed balls, it was a big heart break."

To stage the comeback during fall-ball season, all children who had been registered for

SEE SPORTS, A21 ►



COURTESY OF AVE MARIA UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS
Ave Maria University players enter the field for a game against Florida Memorial University.



COURTESY OF AVE MARIA UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS
The Ave Maria University men's soccer team celebrates a victory

AROUND TOWN

Ave Maria Master Association Events (resident only)

Events are subject to change. Please visit avemaria.com events calendar for the most updated information.

■ Fall Festival

Saturday, October 24, 2020
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
North Park

■ Dive-in Movie

Friday, October 30th
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Water park

■ Music in the Park

Saturday, November 14, 2020
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
South Park

■ Hometown Christmas

Friday, December 4, 2020
5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Open to the Public Events

Events are subject to change. Please visit avemaria.com events calendar for the most updated information.

October

■ Oktoberfest at Oil Well Craft Beer

7 p.m. Thurs-Saturday October 15th-17th
We'll have several American Crafts presenting their take on traditional German styles along with soft pretzels, pretzel necklaces, a photo booth and MORE!

■ 5th Annual Trunk or Treat at Oil Well Craft Beer

5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24

November

■ First Fridays at Oil Well Craft Beer

5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Friday, November 6th
Food, Drinks, Games and Fun!

■ Ave Maria Farmers Market

9 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Saturday starting November 7, 2020 through May 1, 2021
Outdoors at Ave Maria Town Center, the market features locally grown produce and citrus, fresh



seafood, Italian breads, local honey, soaps, candles, oils, jewelry, crafts, flowers, hats, handbags, clothing and more.
Presented in conjunction with SW Florida Markets. For more information please contact Dennis with SW Florida Markets: (239) 293-6266

■ Free Bingo at Oil Well Craft Beer

5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, November 7th
Prizes, food truck and fun for all ages.

■ Pumpkin Dessert Bake-Off at Oil Well Craft Beer

Saturday, November 21st. Bring your best Pumpkin Dessert & recipe and be at Oil Well between 7 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. for judging. Top 3 winners get a prize!

December

■ Holiday Cookie Bake-Off at Oil Well Craft Beer

December 12th. Bring your best Holiday Cookie & recipe and be at Oil Well between 7 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. for judging. Must HAVE at least 1 Dozen, but feel free to bring more to SHARE! Top 3 winners get a prize!

■ Ugliest Christmas Sweater Contest at Oil Well Craft Beer

Saturday, December 19th from 8 p.m.- 11 p.m.
Christmas Karaoke with DJ DiFlo, prizes, food trucks and more.

Ave Maria University Athletic Games

In person attendance limited to students and student families. Live broadcast available on The Sun Digital Network at www.thesundigitalnetwork.com/avemariagyrenes

■ AMU Women's Soccer vs. Florida College

7 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 13

■ AMU Volleyball vs. Keiser

7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 14

■ AMU Volleyball vs. Florida Memorial

2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17
AMU Football vs. Southeastern
7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17

■ AMU Women's Soccer Reserves vs. St. Thomas

6 p.m. Monday, Oct. 19

■ AMU Women's Soccer vs. USCB

11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 24
AMU Women's Basketball vs. Trinity (Fla.)
1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24

■ AMU Men's Soccer vs. Webber

7 p.m. Wed. Oct 28

■ AMU Volleyball vs. St. Thomas

7 p.m. Wed. Oct 28

■ AMU Women's Basketball vs. Johnson (Fla.)

6 p.m. Fri. Oct 30
AMU Men's Basketball vs Johnson (Fla.)
7 p.m. Fri Oct 30

■ AMU Men's Soccer vs. Southeastern

11 a.m. Sat, Oct. 31
AMU Women's Soccer vs. Florida Memorial
1 p.m. Sat. Oct. 31

■ AMU Volleyball vs. Warner

2 p.m. Sat. Oct. 31
AMU Football vs. St. Thomas
7 p.m. Sat. Oct. 31

■ AMU Cross Country vs. The Sun Conference Championship

Saturday, November 7

■ AMU Volleyball vs. Webber

2 p.m. Saturday, November 7

■ AMU Women's Soccer vs. Keiser

5 p.m. Saturday, November 7

■ AMU Men's Soccer vs. Keiser

7p.m. Saturday, November 7

■ AMU Men's Basketball vs. Florida College

7 p.m. Tuesday, November 10

■ AMU Women's Basketball vs. Thomas

5:30 p.m. Thursday, November 19
AMU Men's Basketball vs. Thomas
7:00 p.m. Thursday, November 19

■ AMU Men's Basketball vs. Coastal Georgia

2 p.m. Saturday, November 21
AMU Women's Basketball vs. Coastal Georgia
2 p.m. Saturday, November 21

December

■ AMU Men's Basketball vs. Webber

2 p.m. Saturday, December 5
AMU Women's Basketball vs. Webber
2 p.m. Saturday, December 5 🌟

SPORTS

From page 20

spring are being allowed to play for free this fall. New safety protocols include all adult personnel wearing masks, players not sharing equipment such as helmets and gloves, and

sanitizing wipes for bats and balls.

While sports will be different this fall, everyone seems to be pleased that they will provide a welcome diversion.

"What we're seeing now that we're a month into it is a tremendous energy surrounding the sports," Mr. Patterson said. "It's something that we can really rally around, and there's evidence that, with diligence, we can do this, so that's particularly exciting." 🌟



COURTESY OF AVE MARIA LITTLE LEAGUE

The Angels softball team is one of the teams in the Ave Maria Little League.

Ave Maria University Athletics

4810 Kelleher St., Ave Maria
239-280-1675

- » **Composite sports schedule:** www.avemariagyrenes.com/calendar
- » **Spectators in Gyrene Field:** Restricted to AMU students, faculty, staff and players' guests.
- » **Spectators at indoor games** (at Donahue Academy): AMU-affiliated spectators reserve first come-first served tickets online.
- » **Health protocols:** Spectator temperature checks; masks required; socially distanced seating groups; no spectators near playing surface.
- » **Screaming while streaming:** Watch the games online at www.thesundigitalnetwork.com/avemariagyrenes

Donahue Academy Athletics

4955 Seton Way, Ave Maria
239-842-3241

- » **Spectators:** Must obtain ticket from player.

- » **Health protocols:** Mask or face shield required; socially distanced seating groups; opposing team spectators seated separately.
- » **Screaming while streaming:** At this time, the academy does stream games online.

Ave Maria Little League

973-650-4732
www.avemarialittleleague.com

- » **Games played** at both North Park and South Park.
- » **Game schedule** to be announced in October.
- » **Spectators:** Bring own lawn chair to watch games from outside the fence.
- » **Health protocols:** Maintain six feet distance between spectator groups.
- » **Screaming while streaming:** Coaches input real-time game statistics into GameChanger app for people to follow games; download from www.gc.com.

New businesses open in Ave Maria

BY ROBIN F. DEMATTIA

Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

As Ave Maria continues to add residents, more businesses are opening to serve the community. Here are some that have recently opened or signed leases.

So Balling Sportswear

New Ave Maria residents Christina Zibell and her fiancé Adrien Harris are sports nuts who saw a need in their new hometown and were happy to fill it. They started Ave Maria Youth Sports (Ave-Mariayouthsports.com) and are opening So Balling Sportswear next month at 5064 Annunciation Circle #108, Ave Maria, 34142. “Sports was always important to Adrien growing up and is important to our kids,” said Ms. Zibell. “It’s a really good way to engage youth and get them involved in the community. We try to do anything we can for kids who don’t have any other outlet for sports.” Until they moved to Ave Maria this past spring, Ms. Zibell lived in North Port and Mr. Harris lived in Miami, where they run the Hoops Is Life Youth Basketball League (HILL). In Ave Maria, they started the youth sports league to offer NFL flag football and a Junior NBA league.

“We noted that Ave Maria had baseball and soccer, but my 5-year-old daughter kept asking to play football.” They also realized that many people in Ave Maria play sports, but that there isn’t a local store to get clothing and equipment. So, it was a natural fit to open So Balling Sportswear. “Everybody needs a good sporting goods store,” Ms. Zibell said. They will carry clothing such as workout and golf wear, shoes, balls for several sports, and accessories such as water bottles and



COURTESY IMAGE

Inside CC Homes’ Huntington model in Maple Ridge.

towels. They plan to obtain a permit from Nike and become an authorized retailer for the brand. The store will open once renovations of the space are completed.

Cross Country Mortgage

With so many new homes being built in Ave Maria, it’s natural to have a new mortgage company open an office to support homebuyers. Cross Country Mortgage, which has locations throughout Southwest Florida, recently opened in Ave Maria at 5080 Annunciation Circle, Unit 103. Ave Maria resident Mark Fein is the branch manager, aided by Ivette Espinal as loan officer assistant. Mr. Fein has more than nine years of experience as a mortgage loan officer. He also graduated from Ave Maria University in 2005, so he knows the community very well. “Mark wanted to open up something in his neighborhood to service his neighbors,” said Mike Wesson, regional manager for Cross Country Mortgage. “He is very close knit in the community.” Mr. Wesson said that Cross Country Mortgage uses technology to quickly process loan applications, leading to closings within 30 days. He said the company “has a loan product for everyone,” including first-time homebuyers, construction loans, refinances, bank-statement loans and alternative income source loans. “We help clients mitigate the painful process of mortgages better than anybody in the



COURTESY IMAGE

Mark Fein is the branch manager of the Cross Country Mortgage in Ave Maria. industry and without burdening them for additional documentation,” he states. “Private mortgage banker is the most fluid form of mortgages in the industry and functions as both a bank and a broker in one shop.” Mr. Wesson wants Ave Maria residents to know that “my group is a family, not a business. Everybody helps everybody out. We take that mentality and pass it on to the client, so they feel comfortable working with everyone on our team.”

New Sales Office and Models for CC Homes

CC Homes recently opened a new sales center, which doubles as a model home, and eight additional models that are open for tours near The Club at Maple Ridge. The sales center features two 75-inch touchscreen computers to view the 26 different floor plans available at its Maple Ridge development. The new designs feature modern, light-filled architecture, home office space and smart technology. Indoor features can include elegant 12-foot raised flat ceilings, stainless steel appliances, granite or quartz countertops, and 18-by 18-inch ceramic Dal-tile flooring in the foyer, family room, kitchen, breakfast nook and laundry room. Exteriors include a brick paver driveway and covered entry and rear terrace. The builder also is opening its CC Homes Design Center in the Town Center this month. It will serve as the space for new homebuyers to choose their design selections with CC Homes consultants.. 🌻



COURTESY IMAGE

Ave Maria residents Christina Zibell and Adrien Harris started Ave Maria Youth Sports and are soon opening their So Balling Sportswear store.

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Mother Teresa Museum and Canizaro Exhibit Gallery bring inspiration to Ave Maria

BY **MARIA RAKOCZY**
Ave Maria Sun Correspondent

Tucked away on the campus of Ave Maria University, the Mother Teresa Museum and Canizaro Exhibit Gallery offer history and art to both university students and the Ave Maria community.

The Canizaro Exhibit Gallery, located on the second floor of the Canizaro Library, was started in 2008, and the Mother Teresa Museum, across the academic mall from the library, was founded in 2013. Curator of the Canizaro Exhibit Gallery and Mother Teresa Museum, Jennifer Nodes, started working at the university in 2005 and played a role in the founding of the gallery and the opening of the museum.

“The library is the heart of the university. It’s nice to put art there,” Ms. Nodes said on the idea for starting the Canizaro Exhibit Gallery. When the town of Ave Maria was just starting, she believed it was important to share art with students until the school offers an arts program.

The Exhibit Gallery showcases about three exhibits a year. When looking for exhibits to display, Ms. Nodes wants pieces that can marry what is taught at the university and what students experience in the world. At the same time, Ms. Nodes realizes that different media of art appeal to different people, which is why the Canizaro Exhibit Gallery has featured many types of art, from photographs to watercolors.

The current exhibit, “Urban Sketchers: Sketch Tour Portugal,” is an example of the different art the gallery displays. Instead of photographing what they saw, in this exhibit, artists in Portugal sketched their experiences. The display includes the artists’ sketches along with videos of the artists at work.

Ms. Nodes said this exhibit is timely because, “You can document what you experience by sketching, and you can social distance!”

Overall, Ms. Nodes hopes that the Canizaro Exhibit Gallery provides “something that the students will find inspiration from.”

Further inspiration can be found at the Mother Teresa Museum, where the life and legacy of St. Teresa of Calcutta is told so that others may continue her work.

The Mother Teresa Museum operates under the Mother Teresa Project and is just one arm of the Project’s mission.

The Mother Teresa Project serves others locally and throughout the world, with over 35,000 service hours logged by students for 127 different nonprofits in Southwest Florida and having visited 11 different locations on mission trips, including Calcutta, Brazil and Peru. The Project also includes the Mother Teresa Scholar’s Program for students who wish to incorporate Mother Teresa’s mission in their academics.

“It’s one thing to go out there and serve other people. It’s another thing to understand why she went out there and served other people,” Michael O’Donnell, Director of the Mother Teresa Project, remarked on the goal of the project to give a well-rounded understanding of Mother Teresa’s work.

Ms. Nodes commented on the relationship between the Mother Teresa Project and the museum, “[Guests are] not just learning about Mother Teresa but what the students here are doing.”

The museum serves the Project’s mission in a unique way. It is the only museum in the United States that is certified by the Missionaries of Charity, the religious order founded by Mother Teresa.

The museum tells the life of St. Teresa of



AMU MARKETING / COURTESY IMAGE
A life-size statue of Mother Teresa located in museum.

Calcutta in over 30 storyboards starting with her childhood in Albania to the events surrounding her death. The story of her life is brought to life by a replica of her room in Calcutta and various artifacts. Artifacts include a piece of her sari, her crucifix and rosary, and letters from her and former Ave Maria University president, James Towey.

The museum also includes a place of reflection, a theater playing clips of Mother Teresa and a library space. The museum moved in January 2019 from the Town Center into a larger space within the new Thomas and Selby

Prince building on campus.
“The two things that I would want everyone to come away with are the education of who Mother Teresa was and the inspiration to go out and live a life similar to hers ... like [Mother Teresa] said to find our own Calcutta.” O’Donnell hopes that guests of the museum leave having found a meaningful experience.
Admission to the museum is free, but donations to the Mother Teresa Project can be made online, by mail, or by filling out a card at the museum.

While the museum and exhibit gallery are closed to the public because of world health concerns, a virtual glimpse into both along with more information can be found online at www.motherteresaproject.org and www.ave-maria.edu/library/.

Further inquiries about the Mother Teresa Project can be made to Michael O’Donnell, Director of Mother Teresa Project, at Michael.ODonnell@avemaria.edu or by telephone at 239-304-7954. 🌻

Mother Teresa Museum

The Mother Teresa Museum is presently open to only Ave Maria University faculty, staff, and students, but usual hours are:

- Fall Semester (Sept to Nov)**
➤ Tuesday-Friday: noon-5 p.m.
- Spring Semester (mid-Jan to April)**
➤ Tuesday-Friday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sat-Sun: noon-5 p.m.
- Summer (May to August)**
➤ By appointment only

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