

INSIDE: Discover the joy of South County's hottest sport: Pickleball

free

SOUTH COUNTY

MAY 2023

*Life*  
MAGAZINE

A photograph of three people, two men and one woman, standing in a room that is in the process of being painted. They are all wearing grey hoodies and khaki pants with paint splatters, and black baseball caps with the 'DMP' logo. The man on the left is clapping his hands and laughing. The woman in the center is leaning on a silver Werner step ladder, holding a paintbrush. The man on the right is standing with his hands in his pockets, smiling. A paint can sits on the ladder. The room has white walls and a window in the background. The floor is covered with a white drop cloth. The text 'FEELING FRESH' is overlaid on the bottom right of the image.

# FEELING FRESH

Want to shake things up this spring?  
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experts dish on what's in and what's out  
for your next home improvement project.

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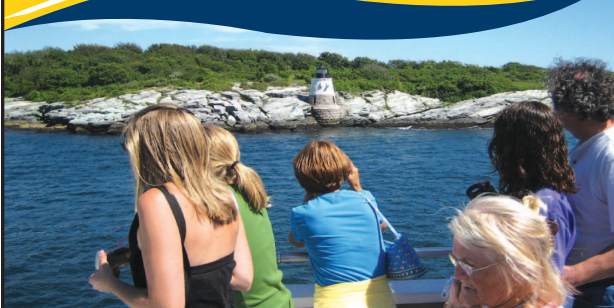
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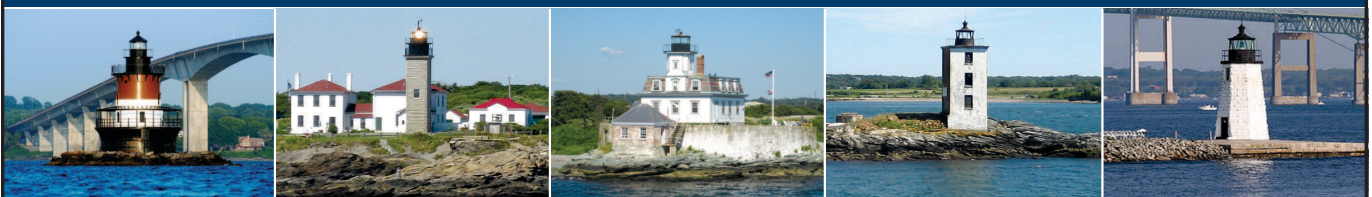


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| *editor's* welcome |

## A time of renewal

There's nothing quite like spring.

Just as Mother Nature is awakening from hibernation and bringing out all the colors and foliage that make New England so beautiful, there's a renewed sense of hope and wonder from all of us at the possibilities this amazing time of year may bring.

Perhaps that's why the idea of "Spring Cleaning" is so ubiquitous. Be honest. There's a home improvement project you've put off for years that suddenly seems like a great way to spend a weekend, right?

We can't blame you. This is truly a season of endless possibilities and that's why for our May issue, we're focused on helping you make the most of your opportunities this spring.

To start with, in our cover story "With Flying Colors," reporter Liz Boardman talks to local experts to see what the latest trends in South County are for those hard-to-perfect painting, flooring and framing projects.

The big takeaway? This year is all about big, bold, bright colors and we are here for it.

If your projects are smaller in scale, well, we've got expert advice there as well.

In "Patience Makes Perfect," reporter Rachel Philpson chats with professional organizer Patience Sivillo of the North-Kingstown based company Lil Mess Perfect to find out the best and most practical ways to tackle that long-forgotten cleanup project.

Whether you're trying to declutter your garage or just looking to free up some cabinet space, Sivillo's advice will take you going from "I should do that soon" to "Let's begin!" and, really, who couldn't use a little inspiration to finally get over the mental hurdles that slow down home improvement?

Speaking of inspiration, you may find yourself feeling inspired after reading Philpson's profile on local farmers Ben

Coerper and Rachael Slattery of Wild Harmony Farms.

In "Finding 'Harmony'" the pair discuss their motivations for creating their own homestead to raise meat for their family and how that little decision turned out into something much bigger and grander in scale than either of them could have ever imagined.

From a small operation meant to serve just the two of them to a business that is thriving and now has customers from nearly 50 different zip codes, Wild Harmony Farms' message of ethically-sourced protein sure is a hit in Southern Rhode Island.

In many ways, the same can be said about one of our favorite stories this month as reporter Stephanie Bernaba hits the court to take a look at one of the country's fastest rising sports in pickleball.

South County residents are more than familiar with this suddenly popular game which was originally created in the 1960s, as it's been a force locally for years. What's the future hold for this fun activity? Check out "A Smash Hit" and see for yourself.

Lastly, we wrap things up this month in a tasty way as we head over to Wakefield and do a deep dive on one of South County's most distinctive drink options.

In "What's Old Is New Again," Bernaba takes a look at Green Line Apothecary's vintage soda fountain. A true blast from the past, this unique feature of the popular local pharmacy has developed quite a devoted customer base eager to return to the classic flavors of their youth and to try something bold, new and fresh.

We hope you do the same this spring whether it's in the games you play, the drinks you order or the projects you finally knock off your to-do list.

Thanks for picking up this edition of South County Life and enjoy the nice weather. We sure will.

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## contents

### 6 Local Catch

Check out some of the upcoming events in Southern RI. This month, be sure to check out a fashion-forward exhibition at URI and be sure to make time to find your favorite tulips ...

### 8 A Smash hit

South County is always ahead of the latest trends and the rise of pickleball is no exception. See why this “new” sport is all the rage.

### 12 With Flying Colors

A new paint job can transform any spot in your home. But, before you grab your brush, check out the latest trends and advice from local experts to make your project truly pop.

### 16 the who

#### Patience Makes Perfect

Everyone wants to be more organized but where do you start to tackle that long-neglected project? Local expert Patience Sivillo has you covered.

### 20 Shop Local

#### Finding ‘Harmony’

At Wild Harmony Farms, raising the meat for your next meal is about much more than money.

### 24 Food & Drink

#### What’s Old Is New Again

The classics never go out of style and there’s always something new brewing at Green Line Apothecary.

### 30 #mysouthcountylife

South County Instagrammers.

#### ON THE COVER

Etelberto Gómez, left, Stormi Letourneau, and Edgar Rosales, all employees of Dennis Moffitt Painting, enjoy a light-hearted moment on the final day of a recent painting job.

Photo: Michael Derr



# IF THE SUIT FITS ...

Special URI Textile Gallery exhibit looks at 100 years of the business suit, celebrates the College of Business' centennial

The power suit is far from dead. But in the last 100 years, it's gone from the essential business wear for men and women to just one of the many choices available today for the high-powered executive or the nervous job seeker.

That is one of the storylines in a new exhibit, "Dressed for Business: A Retrospective Look at the Suit and Beyond (1923-2023)," that has taken over the University of Rhode Island's Textile Gallery in Quinn Hall. Presented by the Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design Department, the exhibit fits like a well-tailored suit with the College of Business' 100th anniversary, providing a celebratory display of clothing from the University's Historic Textiles and Costume Collection.

"The idea of dressing as a business person – typically a man – has evolved as society has changed," says collections manager Susan Jerome, who curated the exhibit with adjunct professor Rebecca Kelly. "The sports coat with a

tie replaced the uniform of the three-piece suit in the 1970s. Now in 2023, people remain a bit confused between casual and business and what is appropriate to wear in business settings. We live in a more casual world."

The exhibit traces the trajectory of the business suit – from three-piece suits of the early 1900s that included vest, jacket and trousers, to a more modular look of sports coats and slacks that came into vogue in the 1970s, to the more casual, nearly-anything-goes dress of today.

The exhibit mixes a display of 13 women's and men's business suits and numerous accessories – ties, vests, shirts and shoes – to show the evolution of business dress. Adding to the story are numerous posters that combine URI yearbook photos across the decades along with fashion advertisements of the day.

Through the suits on display, the norm goes progressively from formal to increasingly casual. As women enter the business world, their early business suits show elements of men's attire. Men's suit lapels grow and then shrink. Fine fabrics, nice tailoring and beautiful details give way to synthetic fibers.

Like everything else, fashions are affected by times of political, economic and social changes of the day, says Jerome. And in the 1940s and '50s, men's and women's suits show influences of the World War II era.

That is evident in a 1940s woman's charcoal suit with a military cut, eased by elaborate buttons. The suit was one of two donated by a man whose aunt was a retail buyer at the old Gladding's and Cherry & Webb department stores, Jerome says.

With the societal changes in the 1960s and '70s, the URI yearbooks show an absence of the dress suit, which was a staple two decades before. "Nobody's wearing a suit and there's lots of facial hair," says Jerome. "If you see a group of people and there's one person in a suit, it's the professor."

"I do think formality lingers a bit with the women's wear," adds Kelly. "I think women who are high-powered in these business settings feel that the suit is part of their armor to enter this world."

Today, "Dressed for Business" may mean different things to different professionals. The tech boom of the 1990s and 2000s – and the COVID-19 pandemic, which moved many workplaces online – have had their influence, Kelly says.

The exhibition will remain on display through December in the Textile Gallery on the first floor of Quinn Hall, 55 Lower College Road. The gallery is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The exhibit is free and open to the public.





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# IN FULL BLOOM

Spring is a time of rebirth and, at Wickford Tulips in Exeter, there's no better time than now to see nature's true colors

Tulip lovers need only go to Exeter to see over 500,000 in different varieties.

At Wicked Tulips, located at 400 Hog House Hill Road, visitors can tiptoe, waltz, walk, perhaps even skip or sashay their hips and shoulders among the acres holding 100 unique blooming varieties.

It could even be an existential sense of leaving Rhode Island and being in Holland.

"We love to give people a unique experience to slow down and enjoy the beauty nature has to offer," said Jeroen Koeman, who, with his wife Keriann, own the farm.

The location, close to the border of South Kingstown, opened for the season last month.

Rows of pick-your-own tulips line the farm and could be irresistible to anyone enjoying this many of the solitary bell-shaped flowers that have three petals and three sepals.

A sea of red, yellow, pink, yellow, white, and blended colors flash in the eyes in the daylight sun at their farm.

The size of these flowers ranges from four inches up to six inches. The cultivar "Giant Sunrise" has blooms that are 10 inches wide. Tulips are also known for their signature pointed petals which often curl back at the tips when they are fully open.

In Exeter this spring demonstration began with Jeroen, who hailed from a Dutch family of tulip growers. He and his wife, a native New Englander, fell in love, got married, and started EcoTulips LLC while living in Central Virginia.

In September 2015, they moved to Rhode Island and started their new endeavor, Wicked Tulips Flower Farm.

Rhode Island's proximity to Keriann's Massachusetts family combined with the colder climate made it perfect for starting a tulip farm here in the States — a long-time dream of Jeroen's.

When they first started their business in 2009 in Central Virginia, the bulb industry had a long way to go toward becoming more



Tulips are in bloom at Wicked Tulips Flower Farm in Exeter, which offers U-Pick events over a short period each spring generally beginning in early April and lasting while supplies last through mid May.

eco-friendly.

They decided then, that they would purchase and sell certified organic bulbs until things improved.

At that time most Dutch bulb farmers were using neonicotinoids, which are known to harm bees. In addition, there was a lack of information regarding the importance of soil health which led to greater use of chemicals.

They are happy to say that now, over a decade later, things are changing for the better and the bulb industry has made some big steps in the right direction.

Soil health has become a priority for most farmers and neonicotinoids have been banned. As long-time vocal supporters of these issues, they said it is with great pride that they are seeing these best practices put in place.

Because Dutch tulip businesses are oversaturated, Jeroen saw the opportunity to grow his own here in the United States, the couple told Rhode Island Magazine two years ago.

"It turned out to be a great success and people loved it," Keriann said at the time about

the flower whose roots are in Central Asia.

It has now spread to three tulip farm locations with Exeter and then others in Johnston and Preston, CT. And long before that the popularity fed a popularity seen today.

Cultivation of the flower began in Turkey around 1000 A.D. From then on, they became highly prized in the Ottoman Empire, such that they were specially cultivated for the pleasure of the Sultan.

The flower's sojourn to Europe took place in the 16th century when they were planted in the Netherlands for medicinal purposes. Today, tulips are still heavily associated with European country.

They even have their own national celebration day-May 13-in the United States.

"As long as people continue to enjoy visiting us and experiencing the magic of tulips, Jeroen, our team and I intend to keep growing tulips with love," said Keriann.

For more information and to buy tickets for entry — sold only online — visit [wickedtulips.com](http://wickedtulips.com).

# A SMASH HIT

Pickleball is, without a doubt, the hottest “new” sport in America right now. But the popular game has been quite the rage in South County for years. Why? Grab a paddle and see for yourself.

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Story by Stephanie Bernaba,  
Photography by Michael Derr





Andy Carr and Kara Biller, owners of Ocean State Pickleball, are pictured at left in their new indoor facility in Wakefield. Above, Carr, the recently-retired former coach of the South Kingstown boys tennis team, demonstrates proper technique during a lesson for beginners at the facility.

**W**hen you think of the things that bring you joy, what comes to mind? The first snowfall of winter? The smell of an infant? The laughter of loved ones? A rapidly-growing population of South County residents is finding their joy in pickleball, a badminton-tennis-ping pong hybrid born in 1965 in Washington State. If you look closely enough, you can find adults of all ages playing pickleball year-round at local indoor, and, thanks to a mostly mild winter, outdoor courts.

Pickleball sprang to life in South County in 2016. The South Kingstown Recreation Center, having received a grant, started a pickleball program at the Neighborhood Guild, serving approximately 20 participants.

Once the South Kingstown Recreation Center was completed and opened in 2017, the program was transferred to that facility. Pickleball, according to Recreation Center administrators, has been rapidly growing to accommodate hundreds of individuals who

have all but fallen in love with the game.

During the pandemic, South Kingstown's outdoor courts, which were largely unused in the evenings, were seeing pickleball players until around 9 p.m. And, thanks again to the mild winter, players have been doing the same through colder months.

Speaking to the sport's exponential growth, Parks & Recreation Superintendent Lenka Capek noted that the program grew in 2020-2021 from 416 participants and 47 programs, including leagues and lessons, to 888 participants and 97 programs in 2021-2022.

Rex Eberly, South Kingstown Park Superintendent overseeing Facilities, noted an increase in pickleball court reservations from 13,658 from July 2020 to June 2021 to 18,032 the following year. To meet this hefty demand, existing tennis courts had to be transformed to accommodate additional players, and the town is looking over the next few years at potential additional locations to host even more pickleball enthusiasts.

The sport has grown faster than the area can contain it.

So, what is it about this sport that's got

everyone hooked?

Players say it's the spirit.

As the owner of More Joy, an East Bay/South County pickleball club, M.J. Miniati says, "It's more than a sport. It's a lifestyle."

The game itself is quite accessible. Once a player learns the rules, they are ready to play, regardless of age or physical ability, and are often encouraged to jump right in. Programs only require that players wear sneakers, and provide the game's essentials – wooden paddles and special wiffle balls – during all periods of play. Players are welcome, of course, to upgrade their equipment, which has become readily available all over the country, but the sport itself maintains a very low buy-in.

Courts are available for open play, allowing incoming players to rotate through, taking on new teammates and opponents each round, and giving players priceless opportunities to connect with like-minded peers. Pickleball players also become so invested in playing with their particular groups that they have taken their friendships

*Continued on page 10*



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Continued from page 9

off the court, often hosting parties and traveling together.

Several local pickleball clubs and leagues have also seen amazing growth over the past few years, picking up members either from the local community or other local clubs. Players of this game are convivial in this respect. If there is a pickleball court and players available at any time of day, pickleball games will happen.

Most players opt for the recreational drop-in method, where they arrive at a court or facility hosting pickleball, and patiently wait their turn to play. For more competitive players, leagues such as More Joy, which operates locally at the Monsignor Clarke School gym, and the recently-expanded Ocean State Pickleball at 217 Church Street in Wakefield, are available.

The South Kingstown Recreation Center also hosts leagues and hosted the inaugural Rhode Island Recreation and Parks Association State Pickleball Tournament last August. The tournament brought players from North and South Kingstown, East Greenwich, Narragansett, Lincoln and

Charlestown.

Kara Biller, co-proprietor of Ocean State Pickleball, said she and her business partner and South Kingstown PE teacher and retired tennis coach Andy Carr, wanted to expand local pickleball offerings. Their facility, newly expanded to double its size, provides both a club and competitive atmosphere.

"The sport of pickleball allows so many people to be active and social," Carr said. "So many generations can play this game, meet new people, and develop a sense of community."

Biller, a former occupational therapist, says she is very excited about the facility's new additions, including recently-installed fatigue-resistant flooring. Biller, despite no longer working in occupational therapy, often finds ways to improve movement and ergonomics for all of her members and is planning to create a 'healthy movement' area of the gym to benefit all who use the facility.

Both Biller and Carr are independent contractors working with the South Kingstown Recreation Center. Biller provides instruction and runs leagues, and Carr facilitated an afterschool pickleball program during last school year and runs



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pickleball and tennis camps in the summer. They are also ramping up hours and programming at Ocean State Pickleball. The facility was created to operate indoors year-round, with the option of providing open-air play via large garage doors in good weather.

Biller says she hopes to create a more 'homey' environment as well, by bringing in furniture and a television, and providing additional space for members to socialize. She says she has nearly reached membership and guest capacity and has members aged 14 and up.

A unique aspect of Ocean State Pickleball is Kara's assessments of players once they join. The pair spend 45 minutes with each player to determine both their temperaments and skill levels to ensure they are paired with partners and teams that enhance their enjoyment of the sport. Ocean State Pickleball, when fully operational, will provide local pickleballers with court times from 5:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. each day. The pair is also working on creating a remote access system for members wishing to play very early or late in the day.

"I've had so many success stories," Biller shared. "People have come right up to me and said 'This is changing my life. This has changed my life. Thank you so much.'"

Credits to pickleball from Biller's perspective are the rewards of friendship and quality social interaction, increased physical activity and health, and the satisfaction of being successful at a sport.

Ocean State Pickleball caters to more serious players by providing coaching to those who wish to improve their skills, hosting tournaments and competitions, and giving out prizes. Membership at Ocean State Pickleball costs \$59 per month, which allows those who join the chance to drop in to play anytime.

M.J. Miniati, owner and coach at More Joy, has had similar experiences both as part of the pickleball community and as an instructor. Her favorite sound to hear is laughter from members playing together.

More Joy Pickleball operates out of the gym at Monsignor Clarke School in Wakefield as well as The Pennfield School in Portsmouth (More Joy Pickleball Aquidneck Island). She says she and her team of four coaches will travel anywhere to teach interested folks the art of pickleball. She has taught private lessons, large and small

groups, and also teaches at birthday parties.

"I've taught over 2,500 people in the last two years," Miniati said. "And people of any age can play. I've taught people in wheelchairs. I've taught people from as young as 3 to 103."

"It doesn't matter what level you are at, you can find and have fun at that level," she added.

Because players find both the game and social interaction so rewarding, they will often carve out larger and larger chunks of time to play. With the help of smartphone apps like Pickleball+, PicklePlay, directory websites, and Facebook groups, anyone yearning for court time any hour of the day can almost always find teammates and additional players.

Francine Corvese, 58, of Wakefield, is a member of Ocean State Pickleball. Her sentiments seem to echo throughout the pickleball community.

"This sport is amazing. It has brought so many people, of all ages, together. Not only is pickleball addictive, the friendships built have spilled over into our personal lives. We get together just to spend time with our new friends. It's the best thing

for so many."

David Kraus moved to Wakefield from Connecticut with his wife in 2017. He found pickleball after retiring and explained it's been very helpful in his transition both to Rhode Islander and retiree. Kraus explained it was pivotal to get out and meet people, especially since his wife had not yet retired at that point.

As a former tennis player, Kraus said he found familiarity, comfort, and fun in a sport he says makes him feel 20 years younger, and that he could not have asked for a better way to be welcomed into the local community.

"I've made some really good friends," Kraus said.

Kraus had spent so much time in and around the South Kingstown Recreation Center that in addition to his full pickleball roster, he now works part-time at the Center's front desk, checking in guests and performing administrative duties.

On the last shift he had worked, Kraus said 75 people came in to play pickleball.

"Seventy-five of my closest friends came in today," he laughed.



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# WITH FLYING COLORS

It's spring and there's no better time to refresh your home with a new coat of paint. But before you get 'rolling', check out this advice from local experts on the latest trends to make sure your walls POP like never before.

**Story by Liz Boardman, Photography by Michael Derr**

**T**ake a look at history. The 1910s — marked by World War I and the Spanish Flu pandemic — gave way to the vibrant, wild Roaring '20s. In a similar way, the COVID pandemic has given way to a new era in the 2020s, one that's more colorful, unique and closer to nature. And that's playing out in our homes. We asked South County home design experts where they are seeing these trends. Here's what we found:

## **Color is definitely back.**

"We're seeing rooms drenched in color," says Mike Moffitt, owner of Dennis Moffitt Painting in Peace Dale. "Our clients are increasingly shifting away from

simple, streamlined grays and bright whites, and instead opting for cozy warm vibes, with richer tones and textures."

Deeper, moodier colors add a touch of drama and are great for creating contrast between rooms or different functional spaces in the same room, he says.

Here's a pro tip if you're a DIY-type:

"When working with deeper/stronger colors, it helps to use a gray primer first, along with the highest quality paint," Moffitt says. "This will help you save on coats, and costs! We've heard from homeowners painting themselves that deeper colors required four or five coats for ideal coverage. With the right color primer and paint, it should be just three, one primer, and two finish colors."

Jan Bertwell, co-owner of Finishing

Touches Picture Framing in Wakefield, is seeing more requests for color, too. "As a trend, more and more people are very attracted to something different colorways," Bertwell says. "There may be a distressing or distinctive grain on the frame or some unexpected ornamentation. For instance, we have a line of black and silver frames that feature vines, skulls, musical notes, and other whimsical things. Those have been popular."

## **Let your personality shine**

Houses are getting away from HGTV/ magazine-perfect looks and are showing more personality — with an eye toward creating scenes that pop on Instagram or

*Continued on page 10*



Etelberto Gómez, an employee of Dennis Moffitt Painting, removes paint from window panes on the final day of a painting job in Newport last month.

Continued from page 13

during a Zoom call.

One way to showcase your personal flair is to look at often-overlooked spaces and items.

"Consider using the fifth wall (the ceiling) as a pop of color," suggests Moffitt. "If your room has plenty of natural light, you can keep the walls a lighter color and have fun with color on the ceiling for a dramatic effect. Then, you can pick up the color from the ceiling in other furnishings/accents around the room."

Decorate with deeply personal items, Bertwell suggests.

"People are looking at things they have saved over the years that have become a little too fragile to handle, like vintage linens and treasured recipes that are handwritten on paper," Bertwell says. "Framing preserves the objects, and they can still enjoy looking at them."

Vintage furniture is also making a comeback, sparked by supply chain shortages during the pandemic, and by the desire to create a look that doesn't look like a showroom. Scout shops like Consignments



Evan Bertwell builds a frame in his family's business, Finishing Touches Picture Framing in Wakefield, on a recent spring afternoon.

Ltd., in Wakefield, Rø in North Kingstown, Jonnycake Center of Westerly, and South County ReStore in Charlestown for unique finds.

### Bring Mother Earth inside

In the interior design and architecture

worlds, biophilic design is a hot topic. It focuses on bringing the natural world into the home. That's more than adding a few houseplants to your home (which is also a great idea) — it's about creating spaces with abundant natural light, views to the natural world outside, curved lines, and natural

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Richard, left, and Mark Zambarano, owners of Rawlings Floor Covering in Wakefield, are pictured in the hardwood flooring section of their showroom.

colors and materials.

Earth-inspired colors with richer, warmer tones are becoming more popular, Moffitt says. "We're seeing lots of greens and browns, as well as a rise in the use of natural wood-stained cabinetry and trim."

"We are seeing more hard surfaces purchased than soft," says Mark Zambarano, co-owner of Rawlings Floor Coverings in Wakefield. "Over the last few years hardwood, tile and modular click lock floating floors have exploded."

### It's South County, coastal will always be in.

The coastal trend, whether casual or kitschy, will always be popular in South County.

It's a common request for our experts. For instance, Moffitt has done accent walls in a coastal kitchen that he drenched in an unapologetically bright blue.

Gray tones are still hot, especially the coastal looks, Zambarano says.

"Our customers definitely lean to the coastal look with driftwood styles and distressed frames, but that's no surprise, given our location," Bertwell says. "We are also seeing a lot of natural woods, often leaning toward the lighter woods — again, they are very coastal in look."



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# PATIENCE MAKES PERFECT

You don't need to be a superhero to get organized this spring. Just follow the advice of Patience Sivillo and your next project will be easy as 1-2-3.

by Rachel Philipson

**B**eing messy is easy; becoming organized during the spring-cleaning season is easier than it seems. Patience Sivillo, the owner of the North Kingstown-based professional organizational company Lil Mess Perfect, said the keys to turning a cluttered home into an organized paradise are learning how to both get rid of undesired items and then how to constructively rehouse meaningful pieces.

Sivillo uses three main methods as part of her organizational philosophy: six sigma, minimalist writing and agile development. She described the three principles as being methods to reduce waste and redundancy by adapting to circumstances and prioritizing efficiency.

"There is an undeniable connection between our physical environment and our emotional wellbeing," Sivillo said. "Now more than ever, we need our living spaces to be calm and comforting. Organizing helps us maintain that state."

Before creating Lil Mess Perfect, Sivillo



For Patience Sivillo, owner of Lil Mess Perfect in North Kingstown, the key to starting any organizational project is first finding ways to reduce waste and redundancy.



Starting a long-overdue organizational project can be daunting for any homeowner. That's why Lil Mess Perfect owner Patience Sivillo begins every new project with a client in the same way: Taking everything out of the space, categorizing the items, removing the trash and wiping down the surfaces. The result? Turning a room like this garage in East Greenwich from cluttered before she began, shown at left, into a whole new space before she left, as shown at right.

was a software engineer. When she began watching Marie Kondo's televised work, she realized she could channel her engineering skills into organization and in that moment, Lil Mess Perfect was born. Nowadays, her projects range from nursery setups and cleaning home offices to closet design and whole home assessments. In 2022, she organized 76 spaces (35 of which were utility spaces like basements or garages), helped 13 families with "life events" and had consultations with 22 new clients.

"Making sense out of chaos is in my DNA," she said.

To start the organizational journey at Lil Mess Perfect, Sivillo talks to potential clients about the space, the type/volume of items and their goals. She assesses the comfort level of getting rid of unneeded items and if permission is needed to get rid of or repurpose them. If the services appear to be a good fit, she will do an in-home consultation.

The in-home consultation allows Sivillo to take pictures and measurements, which

help finalize a project plan. Her project plans include "zoning" or categorizing items, space planning and product suggestions for each room or closet.

No matter how big or small the project is, her organization process is the same. She begins with taking everything out of the space, categorizing the items, removing the trash and wiping down the surfaces. Once everything is cleared, Sivillo brings the client into the space to make decisions about what to keep, donate or discard.

From there, Sivillo repurposes any usable or well-loved containers and furniture to optimize the space. If the client needs anything else, she will shop and assemble the pieces as needed. During the final step, Sivillo builds the space and creates a system that will work with the client's needs.

"Clients have called me 'a sanity saver,' 'organizing high priestess' and 'an actual superhero' but my work really boils down to getting the most out of your space in a way that works for you and your family," Sivillo said.

For those who are looking into starting the organization process themselves, Sivillo recommends "decluttering," which is the act of getting rid of anything that no longer serves a purpose. She said it is best to remove anything that is broken, damaged, has missing pieces, no longer fits or is uncomfortable, no longer fits personal style, is redundant, takes up space out of guilt (such as gifts that aren't well liked) and/or borrowed items that have not yet been returned.

"Decluttering doesn't have to be painful ..." Sivillo said. "The goal is to slim down your home to just the items you use and love. When you reach that point, you're ready to categorize and contain."

When she works with clients to declutter, she uses a series of logical questions and scenarios. The questioning starts with how many times the item was used in the past year — if it hasn't been used in a long time, there may no longer

*Continued on page 19*



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Continued from page 17

be a need to keep it. She also asks if the client is willing to reduce the quantity of items (for example keeping five leggings instead of nine.)

"A big barrier to letting go is not knowing where items can go," she said. "Many times, clients just need permission to let go."

Another trick is to not give an option of a "maybe pile," Sivillo said. When sorting, she emphasized it's better to only have two options: keep or donate/trash. By adding a hint of doubt, it prevents effective decluttering.

"I never force clients to get rid of items, but I do strongly encourage them to let go with love," she said.

It is possible to have a small budget and be organized, Sivillo said. For those looking for low-budget solutions, she recommends starting with repurposing already purchased items in unconventional ways.

"For the longest time, I used laundry baskets for my son's toys, and shoe boxes in my drawers to separate socks from



No matter your budget, there are plenty of useful ways to reorganize your home and make it more user-friendly, says Patience Sivillo, who is pictured here in a client's home in Narragansett. Sometimes, all it takes is thinking outside the box and finding new ways to store familiar items.

underwear," Sivillo said. "As you live with your systems, you can slowly swap out your solutions for drawer dividers, fabric or woven bins, and containers that match your desired aesthetic."

After one has exhausted their previously purchased items and determined what they want to accomplish with the space, there are already existing organizational items that are relatively inexpensive, Sivillo said. Organizing doesn't have to be completely out of the box thinking.

She recommended looking at places including Marshalls, HomeGoods, Target and The Container Store for their storage items.

"I use these solutions the most, and they are all under \$20: over-the-door hooks and shoe organizers to get items off the ground, cascading hangers to save horizontal space, hanging closet rods to double vertical hang space [and] risers and undershelf baskets to maximize cabinet space," she said.

There is always an option to be more organized. Sivillo said she is willing to do whatever it may take to transform a place into a home.

"I want your home to be the place where you live, laugh and make memories; not storage for your stuff," she said.

For more information on how to begin an organizational journey, visit <https://www.lilmessperfect.com/>



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AT LEFT Rachael Slattery and Ben Coerper, owners of Wild Harmony Farm in Exeter, roll out a hay bale to feed their cows. AT RIGHT Coerper leads cows into the farm's pasture. The pair pride themselves on providing consumers with physically and ethically healthier food options.

# FINDING 'HARMONY'

Needing a healthier diet, Ben Coerper and his wife Rachael Slattery decided to raise their own food. What they didn't know was one simple decision to humanely-raised protein would change their life and launch Wild Harmony Farm.

Story by Rachel Philipson, Photography by Michael Derr

**H**ealthy land, healthy animals, healthy people—these are the three pillars that the Exeter-based Wild Harmony Farm embodies when raising their humanely raised beef, pork

and poultry.

Unlike standard mass-produced livestock farms, Wild Harmony Farm doesn't put economics first. Instead, the smaller family-owned business is philosophically driven to "lovingly" raise high-quality protein. Along with Rachael Slattery, his wife and fellow

co-owner, Ben Coerper, Wild Harmony Farm co-owner, said they are nicknamed as "purists farmers" in their pursuit to provide consumers with physically and ethically healthier food options.

"The idea behind us selling ourselves as purists is that we are not willing to cut corners or sacrifice our mission or ethics because we have to make money," Coerper said.

The farm works to support the animal as much as possible, while still producing enough product to sell. Although there is no magically perfect way to create an ethical farm, the Wild

Harmony staff strive to build, maintain and improve upon a better agricultural system. With numerous techniques such as pasture raising, grass feeding and rotational grazing, this ethics-based agricultural model will result with more natural protein.

"We already have a broken system. Sustaining a broken system is not what we need," Coerper said. "We need to regenerate the whole system, the natural system, to get back to the healthy land that is producing

*Continued on page 22*

*Continued from page 21*

healthy food for people and improving the production ability of every acre of land that we can produce food on.”

As of last year, Wild Harmony Farm processed 150 pigs, 30 cattle, 2,000 chickens and 150 turkeys across 60 acres of land. When they started over a decade ago, Coerper said he would have never envisioned his mission of ethically grown food would blossom into a family-owned business that is it today.

When Coerper was in his early twenties, he was suffering from chronic sinus and ear infections to the point of debilitation. Multiple doctors told him he had two choices: undergo invasive sinus surgery or be on drugs to subdue his symptoms for the rest of his life. His mother urged him to get a fifth opinion from an alternative doctor, leading Coerper to a naturopath who tested him for food sensitivities.

The test results showed a newfound sensitivity to milk, wheat and sugar. Coerper started to actively avoid all these food sensitivities — ultimately leading to reduced inflammation and a full recovery without surgery or drugs. After his recovery, he began educating himself in food, nutrition and agriculture, leading him to work on different farms in the quest to learn how to produce food without negative health and environmental effects.

The longer he worked on different farms, the more Coerper witnessed farmers starting out with the same philosophy of ethical growth but struggled to make it work financially. He was getting frustrated and was ready to quit agriculture, but then he met Slattery — his future wife and co-owner of Wild Harmony Farm.

Slattery had spent 15 years in the maritime industry and felt disconnected from food and was beginning to volunteer on some farms, leading her to volunteer for the farm Coerper was managing at the time. Both had a passion for sustainable farming, leading them to start their own livestock farm together.

“We actually decided together that we were either going to be vegetarians or that we were going to start our own livestock farm,” he said. “And it took us a few weeks to decide that we wanted to continue eating meat and that we should just grow it ourselves.”

Coerper and Slattery began with an unnamed homestead that was intended to be food just for them. In this first experimental year, they had approximately 10 laying hens, 50 meat chickens, six turkeys, two cows, two pigs and two dairy sheep, as well as a vegetable garden.

During that year, they started talking about their livestock farm with their high-standard values to family members and friends. Eventually, their loved ones started to ask if they could produce a “tiny bit extra” and buy some extra livestock from them.

“It accidentally grew into a business, as we were sharing our story with people as they were eating our food at our dinner table and they wanted some too,” Coerper said.

They then started a meat CSA, short for community-supported agriculture, which allows patrons to pick exactly what meat they want and can adjust selections month to month. They had 10 to 12 customers, all family or friends, use the CSA — leading Wild Harmony Farm to lose money by the end of the year.

Initially, Coerper and Slattery were going to close the CSA, but several of their customers wrote back saying they could not go back to eating any other meat. After analyzing the numbers, they realized they would have to charge double for the same amount of product. To their surprise,



Berkshire pigs are pictured at the feeder at Wild Harmony Farm in Exeter. For owners Rachael Slattery and Ben Coerper, building a livestock business from the ground up hasn't been easy but it's a task that has proven rewarding both personally and professionally.

every customer agreed to the price increase. They learned that it could be possible to stick to their morals and try to create a way to financially make their dream a reality. Since then, they have grown to keep the balance between morals and finances.

“It was really helpful for us to hear and recognize that what our customers were trusting is our judgment that we weren't going to cut corners,” Coerper said. “We were getting in return was this loyal customer base that was willing to follow us wherever we needed to go... That is what we stuck with ever since.”

Nowadays, Wild Harmony Farm has expanded, but keeps to their small roots. Interested customers have three main options on how to order. They still offer a monthly subscription to a meat CSA, which is now available to patrons from 47 different zip codes. Additionally, patrons can do bulk orders, which include a quarter cow or half hog, or order one of their most popular items online and pick them up from a self-service pick-up shed located at the farm.

To be profitable, Wild Harmony Farm must sell and promote ways to efficient use the whole animal, Coerper said. This leads to lesser-known cuts, such as shoulder ribs and round roast in the CSA that the average home chef may not know to cook. To make these meats more approachable to more novice cooks, they post recipes on the Wild Harmony website by their staff recipe creator, showing how to properly cook all types of meat.

“A huge part of our mission is education, not only around the food system but around the food itself,” Coerper said. “In order for the whole system to work and for our culture to shift to prioritize this type of meat, we need people to know how to cook it and understand what it is.”

The next few years may have some difficulties for Wild Harmony Farm — due to their average costs skyrocketing. Coerper predicts they will need to double in size to maintain a certain level of profit. No matter the challenges that come their way, he said Wild Harmony Farm will never sacrifice on their morals: healthy food always comes first.

“I was sick because of a lack of information,” Coerper said. “We want to help other people get over their sickness by giving information and food.”

To learn more about Wild Harmony Farm, visit <https://www.wildharmonyfarm.com/>

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| food & drink |

# WHAT'S OLD IS NEW AGAIN

There's a reason some drinks never go out of style and, at Green Line Apothecary, an always fresh take on the classic soda fountain will keep you coming back for more.

Story by Stephanie Bernaba,  
Photography by Michael Derr



Soda fountain attendant Emma Davis prepares an orange float at Green Line Apothecary in Wakefield. Green Line's soda fountain remains one of the most well-known and unique food finds in South County and with a constantly-changing lineup of beverage offerings, there's no wonder it attracts a crowd.



Scoops of nostalgia are being served up every day to ice cream lovers of all ages at Green Line Apothecary's soda fountain.

Green Line Apothecary has been in operation for nearly seven years, recently moving from its previous location, 203 Main Street in Wakefield (now Town Made) to 245 Main Street, a larger and brighter space.

The Apothecary has been providing prescriptions and pop to local customers since 2016, and in Providence since April 2019. Over the past few years, the Apothecary has expanded its offerings to include bagged coffee and seasonal flavors.

The soda fountain operates both on precision and care, explained Rachael LaPorte, Food and Beverage Director, who oversees the soda fountain and Town Made, a community kitchen owned by the same company.

"The owners, Ken and Christina, really wanted to bring a nostalgic and what-is-old-is-new-again feel into the community. And they felt that bringing a 1940s-style authentic soda fountain to the community would be a great way to bring multiple generations together," she said.

Green Line owner Ken Procaccianti explained that the recipes of days gone by that constitute the bulk of the soda fountain's menu, were developed through painstaking hours of research, and were the vision of his wife, pharmacist and Green Line CEO, Christina Procaccianti.

"Green Line was really born out of my wife and partner's experience," he said. "Christina is the daughter of a former greeting card salesman, a single dad, and he would bring his daughters to work with him."

Christina, who grew up in New Jersey, found herself in independent drugstores all around the country, and when Christina wasn't helping her dad change out the cards for new occasions and holidays, she was observing and patronizing the pharmacies' soda fountains.

"It's really a modern interpretation of that classic American drugstore," Procaccianti said, "and we felt like you really couldn't tell that story without a soda foundation figuring very prominently."

LaPorte explained Ken Procaccianti found and singlehandedly restored an original Bastian-Blessing soda fountain built in the 1940s, which is in full operation today at the



Vera Procaccianti, 9, enjoys a strawberry shake at the soda fountain at Green Line Apothecary in Wakefield. Her parents, Christina and Ken Procaccianti, own the business.

fountain's Wakefield location.

"What makes it really interesting is its slant front," LaPorte said. "You can tell it was designed in the late '30s, early '40s, because during that time World War II was happening and a lot of women were returning to the workforce."

The slant front, as LaPorte explained, allowed for shorter people to reach in and operate the machine.

"And because this is a woman-owned

business, it was really important to give homage to women in the workforce," she said.

Neither the Procacciantis nor LaPorte take the recipes, ingredients, or operation of the soda fountain lightly. Based on menus studied from soda fountains around the country that included drinks like the Lime Rickey, the egg cream, and the phosphate, unique and specific items had to be located, obtained, and tested to ensure perfect flavor combinations.

One such recipe is for the Lime Rickey, a

virgin version of a Gin Rickey, a cocktail created at Shoemaker's Saloon in Washington, D.C. in the 1880s. The non-alcoholic Green Line Apothecary version features cold-pressed organic lime juice, simple syrup, and soda water. The soda fountain also offers this refresher with added cherry or raspberry.

Phosphates are another menu staple, created with phosphate from Extinct Chemical Company's Horsford's Acid Phosphate, which comes in a blue glass bottle with vintage imagery.

"What's interesting about the phosphate is that it has a pH of two or three, which is the same acidity as a lemon or a lime," LaPorte said.

"If you are ordering a phosphate, the classic versions of a phosphate will generally be cherry or strawberry or raspberry or chocolate," she explained, "and adding the phosphate will just kind of push all those flavors really forward."

LaPorte shares culinary wisdom gained through the culinary arts and restaurant management bachelor's degrees she received from Johnson & Wales University. She was certified in Connecticut as a professional culinary educator and was the proprietor of her own food business.

LaPorte's scientific knowledge of food and culinary techniques shines throughout her explanations of menu items and new product development. She says she especially enjoys sharing the origins and ingredients of menu items with guests.

"People ask, and I highly encourage they inquire," she said. "One of the fun things about working at the soda fountain is being able to expose different generations to interesting ingredients."

Another classic and highly-sought menu item is the egg cream, which LaPorte explained was named based on the Yiddish word for cream, but contains neither eggs nor cream. A classic egg cream incorporates milk, syrup, and seltzer water.

If you're an egg cream purist, the syrup can only be Fox's U-Bet chocolate syrup, which originated in Brooklyn, the epicenter of American soda fountain culture. LaPorte says she always keeps the U-Bet behind the counter to show guests should they request proof of its presence at the Apothecary.

Since this is Rhode Island, though, and Ken Procaccianti is a coffee flavor lover, the soda fountain does offer egg creams in coffee alongside its traditional flavors of vanilla and chocolate.

Malts were a wildly popular drink in the '30s, '40s, and '50s, found at ice cream shops and soda fountains across the country. People fell in love with the hearty flavor of malt, derived from barley, a key ingredient in the creation of beer, whiskey, and other spirits.

"Originally, malted milk powder was designed as a nutritional

supplement for the country," LaPorte said. In the 1930s, she explained, malt was created and made available to keep U.S. defense forces strong, and reduce the rates of rickets and vitamin deficiencies.

"Historically, you would sprinkle it on your oats in the morning or you would put it in your coffee," she said.

"What's interesting here," she continued, "is that all of our ice cream is gluten-free. So when we were designing our hot cocoa ice cream, we designed a gluten-free malted grain powder to simulate the taste of malt."

LaPorte said that after toasting multiple grains, they found a near-perfect gluten-free replacement using toasted organic basmati and texmati rice, amaranth, and dehulled quinoa.

All of the ice cream at the Apothecary's soda fountain is handspun in small batches at the commissary kitchen, which is located at Town Made.

"Our ice cream base is super simple," LaPorte said, explaining it contains only cream, sugar, and a small amount of stabilizer. The Apothecary gets its ice cream base from S.B. Windsor Dairy in Johnston, which has been operating since 1908.

"And then to that," she added, "we add very special ingredients."

LaPorte shared that for their chocolate ice cream, they use a single-origin Ecuadorian cocoa powder that they cold bloom to release and accentuate all the flavors. For the Rhody favorite coffee, they use an organic Colombian they also allow to bloom and steep to enhance the flavor. Strawberry features fresh strawberries with a touch of sugar and Tahitian vanilla, and the vanilla is simply the ice cream base with added

*Continued on page 28*

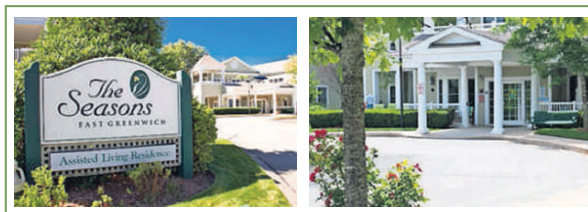


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Continued from page 27

vanilla. The caramel is made in small batches, a small amount of pink Himalayan salt is added, and the caramel is ribboned into the ice cream.

She emphasized the simplicity and purity of the ingredients used, noting that the owners have three children, and would not want to offer their guests any food they would not feel comfortable offering their family.

The Apothecary has a lot of fun developing special and seasonal flavors for their patrons. LaPorte explained their seasonal flavor changes every four to six weeks depending on demand.

"We work with local farms to create different seasonal flavors," she said. The team worked with Charlestown's Earth Care Farm on Strawberry Rhubarb, Narrow Lane Orchard on Toffee Caramel Apple, and Kenyon's Grist Mill on Corn Pudding, which is currently available in the store's freezer in pints.

The team is always dreaming up new flavors.

"We do flavor contests, so everybody gets to have ideas, the entire staff and the



One of the ways Green Line Apothecary keeps its soda fountain drinks popular is experimenting with flavors while still offering the classics.

pharmacy staff from both stores," she said.

She emphasized that conceptualization to landing on an actual sellable product is a very involved process.

"There are a lot of qualifiers that go into making a really great ice cream," she said.

"You want to think about texture, flavors, colors — Can I get everything into one scoop? Do I want it chunky? Am I going to be swirling two different flavors?"

The most popular items on the menu across locations remain classics like root beer floats and coffee cabinets, with vanilla shakes coming in a close second. All of the soda fountain's staple ice cream flavors have vegan equivalents, and as with the malt flavor, all specialty ingredients are offered gluten-free.

For a special treat, guests can request secret menu items like the coffee float, which is iced coffee with coffee ice cream, or they can ask their soda fountain attendant for their own recommended specialty.

LaPorte and the soda fountain team are currently working on developing new products including a high-protein, lower-sugar ice cream, a crushed-fruit ice cream topping, and preparing Clara's Cart, their mobile ice cream trailer, for the summer season.

Green Line Apothecary is open from 8:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m. seven days a week. Announcements about events, promotions, and special flavors are shared regularly on the store's social media channels.

## SUMMER CAMP AT NARRAGANSETT 2023

The Camp at Narragansett, located at 170 Clarke Road is a summer favorite for boys and girls, age groups **5-8 & 9-12 years old**. The camp offers a summer full of activities including sports, games, arts and crafts and weekly field trips including trips to the Town beach.

**5 year olds must have completed kindergarten**

**REGISTRATION WILL BEGIN APRIL 3<sup>RD</sup>, 2023**

⇒ **BIRTH CERTIFICATE REQUIRED AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION**

⇒ **FULL PAYMENT DUE AT REGISTRATION IN THE RECREATION OFFICE PRIOR TO SESSION**

⇒ **SIGN UP EARLY, THERE IS LIMITED SPACE IN EACH AGE GROUP**

**MEET THE COUNSELORS NIGHT  
WEDNESDAY, June 21<sup>st</sup>**

**Field Trips/Performers  
To Be Determined**

**ONE WEEK SESSIONS**

**July 3<sup>rd</sup> - August 18<sup>th</sup>  
No Camp July 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Monday-Friday • 8:30-4:00pm  
Late Pick-up 4:30pm**

**\*\*Resident: \$150.00 per session  
Non-resident: \$190.00 per session**

**\*\*Financial Aid Forms Available for qualified residents of Narragansett at 170 Clarke Road and on our website [www.narragansettri.gov](http://www.narragansettri.gov)**

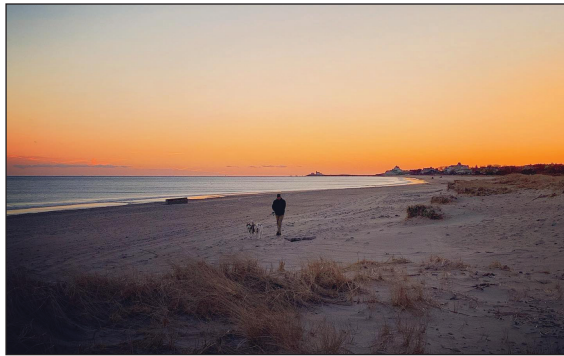


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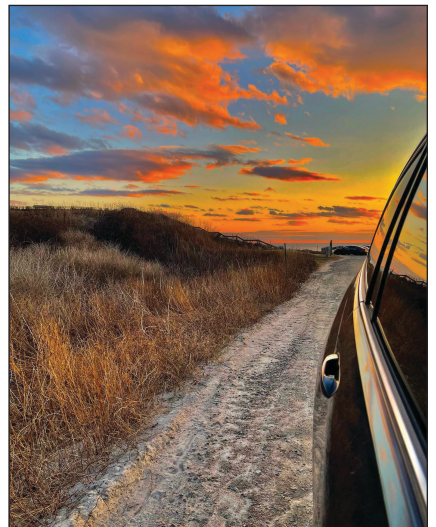
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# A 55+ COMMUNITY OF ACTIVE PEOPLE *Golf is coming to South Shore Village*

## *Fall 2023!*



- Nine-hole golf course and club opening Fall 2023
- Community center – indoor/outdoor pools, full gym
- BUILD a new, customizable, detached, single-level home
- LIVE closer to the beach. Only minutes from South County's best beaches
- ENJOY a relaxed, active lifestyle with more time outdoors
- BE yardwork-free
- VISIT with children/grandchildren more often

[southshorevillageri.com](http://southshorevillageri.com)

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