

NAPLES[®] ILLUSTRATED

POOLSIDE
MIMOSAS

*An intimate
patio brunch*

COOL HOME
OFFICES

*+ Hot Decor
Upgrades*

GARDEN
& DESIGN

K.C. SCHULBERG
Naples' Hollywood progeny
on making films and
protecting our waters

FROM THE EDITOR

The Reluctant Gardeners

We downsized into a fixer-upper in August 2018 and lived there with our three teens and dog during the extensive renovations, much to their dismay. Michael and I bunked the two girls together in the living room, where they slept on mattresses on the floor, surrounded by giant moving boxes. My son was in an adjacent space with a similar ambience. We stapled painting tarps to the room openings to give them a semblance of privacy. There were lots of huffs and puffs about the situation being annoying—and dusty. Did I mention that the five of us shared one bathroom that didn't have a door?

To help with school work, we moved all of their desks into a small family room off the kitchen. They tuned each other—and me—out with their headphones and tried to focus. Many of you can relate to this sense of displacement after quarantining shifted us out of traditional offices and into work-from-home zones. Because this space is a new top priority for so many homeowners and buyers, we offer home office design inspiration beginning on page 92.

When it came to the exterior of our renovation project, we took the annoyance to a new level and had the kids help us redo the garden beds. First, we ripped out the overgrown, and in many cases diseased, hedges and shrubs. The root systems on some of these plants were 30-plus years old and beastly. This required numerous sweaty weekends filled with pickaxes, chain saws, long garden spades, and Advil—and the aid of a few neighborhood high school football players—to complete. After yanking out a bush, we'd fill the holes in with dirt and rake them smooth, giving us a blank canvas for planting irises, roses, hibiscus, foxtails, lemon trees, and more.

While we were plant scheming, one of our daughters, Remy, got over her negative attitude toward being a worker bee and became a friend of the bees instead. She did her own research and asked if we could designate a portion of the garden to pollinator plants. It's now a glorious highlight in our yard, bustling with hummingbirds, butterflies, and nectar-seeking bees. I'm sure the gals in the Naples Garden Club, featured in our "Friendship Toast" story on page 64, would approve. In fact, I think local clean water champion and cover guy K.C. Schulberg, profiled by Daphne Nikolopoulos on page 70, would be happy about all my pollinators, too.

The garden overhaul rubbed off on Piper, my older daughter, as well. She is obsessed with house plants and has a nice display in her room at home and in her apartment at the University of Florida (Go Gators!). My son, Thomas, still helps us out by occasionally mowing the lawn and assisting with countless sprinkler tweaks and repairs. And our dog, Tilley, well, she just wants to sniff out lizards under the mulch.

Enjoy our Home & Garden issue!

Christina Cush

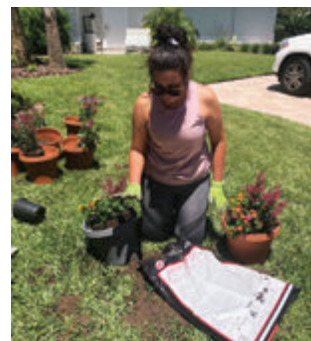
Christina Cush
ccush@naplesillustrated.com



KAREN TYRRELL



REMY AND MICHAEL PLANT SHOPPING; REMY FELL IN LOVE WITH GARDENING AND PLANTING POLLINATORS.



TILLEY AND ME, AS SHE CHILLS OUT AFTER AN EXHAUSTIVE SESSION OF LIZARD HUNTING.



INSIDER

By Christina Cush



THE HEITMANN FAMILY, FROM LEFT: CHANDLER, MAYOR TERESA, DR. JEFFREY (AN OB/GYN), ZACHARY, AND JEFFREY

Q&A

The Mayor of Home

Since 2008, it's been anything but politics as usual in Naples, where she has lived for more than 30 years and raised her three children. During her first 100 days in office, her familiarity with local issues was tested beyond her wildest expectations.

"There's been a pandemic, fires, protests, and floods," she says.

Teresa Heitmann was elected Mayor of Naples on March 17, when the pandemic was starting to reveal its disruptive path. For Heitmann, who has been involved with the city

"It's been one decision after another. Thank goodness I am spontaneous and don't shut down when I have to make hard decisions. I have a strong spiritual and centered mind when things are coming at me, like deciding to close the beach."

Despite the stresses, she wouldn't change a thing. "My new city manager and I have had a great experience, even in the worst of the craziest times," Heitmann says. What keeps her grounded, she asserts, is that she has much to accomplish, such as keeping our community green and getting things back to normal. Another motivator is knowing that her sons and daughter, all currently working in Orlando, may come back to Naples to raise their kids. On the next page, Mayor Heitmann shares a glimpse into her domestic bubble and hopes for the future.

THE MAYOR OF HOME CONT.



FROM LEFT: MAYOR HEITMANN; FAMILY DOGS FERGIE AND HEIDI; A HOLIDAY WITH JEFFREY, BERNICE, DR. JEFFREY, AND CHANDLER; BERNICE WITH HER SON, DR. JEFFREY.

NI: What's the Heitmann household like?

Heitmann: I love animals. Right now, we have two dogs, Heidi and Fergie, but we've had up to four—and my son's cat. Heidi is a white lab and Fergie is a King Charles. We just lost a schnauzer that was the boss of the house, but now it's Fergie, who demands lap-dog attention. We also have a bird atrium with white doves, canaries, and finches that I put in when we built the house. My therapy is listening to them singing different songs. It's a beautiful ambience.

Are you a gardener or a home cook?

I love orchids and am always in my yard, until the cane toads come. I'm afraid of them. But, my orchids, I love how they come back every year. I attached them to trees and they make the yard beautiful. I love to cook and entertain friends and family. My ideal is to gather

around a good bottle of wine and make dinner together. I also love to dance in the kitchen to Earth, Wind, and Fire.

How do you think season will go this year?

When I started in 2008 as a council member, we had a big recession, and Naples rebounded quickly. I'm hoping that will happen again. We are hungry for being social. And in Naples you can meet the most interesting people at cocktail parties and restaurant evenings. Season comes with fury, and there are typically so many activities, I can't get them all in.

Do you have other mayor friends?

As a council member, I made great friends on the Bonita Springs council, like Martha

have weekly calls, because I'm so focused on Naples, but I appreciate an exchange of ideas.

Who inspires you?

My dad passed right before I ran for mayor, so it was an interesting way to grieve. He said, "Quitters never win, and winners never quit." My mom is always upbeat and there for others. She lives in the Georgia mountains and has a boyfriend now, which cracks me up. For the past 20 years, my mother-in-law, Bernice, has knitted booties for every baby my husband delivered.

Simons and Mayor Peter Simmons. I am friendly with colleagues in Jacksonville, too. We don't

RELATIONSHIPS

NAPLES ROMANCE



GORDON LOVE AND SHARON BAYATA GOT ENGAGED AT THEIR GYM, WITH HELP FROM COACH JUSTIN WOOD.



Forget swiping right or left and try sweating instead. Two Naples singles, Sharon Bayata and the aptly named Gordon Love, met while burning calories and taking turns on treadmill 12 at the North Naples Orange Theory Fitness in November 2018. Love, the owner of Luv-a-Wash car wash in Naples, and Bayata, a paralegal at Long, Murphy & Zung, P.A., who is taking the bar exam this month, spent their first date eating tacos and getting to know one another. They quickly realized how easily the conversation flowed and have been inseparable ever since.

When Love decided to pop the question, in June 2020, he knew the perfect

location: in front of their favorite piece of exercise equipment. Coach Justin Wood was present for the proposal and helped get Bayata to the gym at the odd time. After Love got down on one knee on the treadmill and Bayata said yes, the lovebirds joined their parents and a couple of close friends for dinner, feeling grateful that they could share this special moment with their inner circle despite the pandemic.

"Gordon really made it special that the people who are most important in our lives were able to participate in the day," says Bayata, who wants to practice family law. Although a wedding date is in flux, these fitness pals know how to deal with things they can't control while keeping each other motivated to stay healthy.

NEW BUSINESSES

JEWELS, CHANDELIERS, AND CAKES



LA MAISON YAMRON CARRIES JEWELRY BY BRANDS SUCH AS CARTIER, INCLUDING THIS CAT RING.

LA MAISON YAMRON

Following a September launch in the Waterside Shops, La Maison Yamron offers an impressive collection of pre-owned luxury jewelry and timepieces in-store and online. Yamron Jewelers has been a vibrant part of the Naples business community for more than 50 years, and owner Benji Kendall is thrilled about this new venture. “We’re seeing an incredible demand for pre-owned jewelry and watches,” says Kendall. With a rigorous authentication process overseen by in-house gemologists, horologists, and brand authenticators, this stunning outpost will be a reputable venue for customers to buy and sell luxury and vintage jewelry and timepieces from brands such as Cartier, Van Cleef & Arpels, Bulgari, and Patek Philippe. (lamaisonyamron.com)



STONE & MOSAIC GARDEN

Fresh from Juneau, Alaska, husband-and-wife shop owners Burak and Eda Bulgen have opened a funky store that sells Mediterranean-style mosaic chandeliers and marble sculptures. How did this artsy duo hone in on Naples? “We had a gallery in Juneau that catered to cruise ship passengers,” Burak Bulgen says. “Because of quarantine, that season got cancelled. We came down here this summer because we had customers from Naples who bought our artwork and told us to check out Naples.” After visiting three times, Bulgen was smitten enough to take

a chance on a Fifth Avenue South address, right next to Starbucks. “It’s so nice and elegant. It’s our style. I love how people waltz down the street.”



TAMU CUPCAKERY

Monica Tamu Spivey is the smiling face behind Tamu Cupcakery, which made the scrumptious bundt cakes pictured in the “Friendship Toast” outdoor entertaining feature on page 64. Back in June—when Spivey first came onto the *NI* radar—she was working full-time during the day then turning her attention to the cupcakery at night, operating out of a shared commercial kitchen space that she leased. Though she established her delivery service in 2016 and has long served the Southwest Florida area, this past year has been one of her best yet. So, she went for it, and found a brick-and-mortar of her own in Cape Coral, which she opened in mid-August. How sweet it is to be passionate about what you do. (tamucupcakery.com)



THE BAKER MUSEUM NORTH ENTRY

COURTESY OF WEISS/MANFREDI

REAL ESTATE

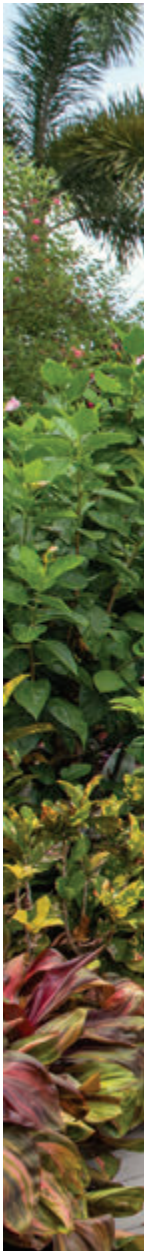
Small City CHARM

Naples is sandwiched between Reno, Nevada, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, taking second place out of 100 in the Best Small City ranking for cities with populations under 100,000 by bestcities.org. To get some context for this designation, *NI* spoke with Chris Fair, the president of Resonance Consultancy, which produces these rankings by collecting data that demonstrates 23 characteristics that make cities desirable. For instance, they look at Instagram and Facebook for posts about cities, as well as Yelp and Google reviews about public amenities and things to do.

“This year Naples ranked first for outdoor activities and parks,” Fair says. “Naples has more ‘very goods’ and ‘excellents’ from Trip Advisor, so it’s second for restaurants. It ranked fifth in terms of Google trends score, meaning searches are going up or down for a city, which is the leading indicator of interest in folks living, working, traveling, or doing business in a city.”

Fair says that there is a renewed focus on small cities now that the pandemic has normalized working remotely. “People are looking for alternative places to live with a less dense population, plus they want access to culture, great dining, and outdoor activity,” he notes. “This will serve Naples well in the long-term as a desirable place to live and work remotely or start a business.”

Looking to 2021, Fair says he expects Naples to stay in the top five, with Asheville, North Carolina, and Savannah, Georgia.





BRUNCH HOST LINDA LARUE BROWN (FRONT) WITH FELLOW NAPLES GARDEN CLUB MEMBERS (FROM LEFT) SANDY LASCH, ABBIE JOAN SLADICK, AND TERRY AUFRANC

Friendship TOAST

Join four influential members of the Naples Garden Club poolside as they sip mimosas, chat tropical flowers, and celebrate camaraderie over brunch

By Christina Cush | Photography by Audrey Snow

Sauntering down the cream paved path toward the purple front door of the Wedgewood blue house with the lime Bahama shutters on an early June morning, you may not hear the gleeful chatting from the back of the house by the patio and pool. There, underneath the shaded canopy, gather four dear friends who devote countless hours to propagating the mission of the Naples Garden Club, which is 250 members strong. This cheerful group of green-thumbed pals is delighted to be together outside, after quarantining at home.

Homeowner Linda LaRue Brown joined the Garden Club in 2005, served as president from 2013 to 2015, and most recently chaired the Idea Garden Committee with the Naples Botanical Garden. Married with two children





[THE GARDEN IS] ALL ABOUT COLOR, TEXTURE, AND LEVELS, JUST LIKE OUR HOUSE .”

—Linda LaRue Brown

Four years ago, Brown became a serious student of gardening and started keeping a computer database organized by location and type in order to keep track of when she adds or removes a plant, plus match the botanical name to its common moniker. “I probably have hundreds, approaching a thousand plants,” says Brown. She has many prized plant collections (Cordylines, Crotons, Copperleaves, and Clerodendrons) and plants (Strongylodon macrobotrys, or jade vine, and Montanoa grandiflora, or tree daisy).

The Garden Club gals are quick to notice the plants around the pool and are happy to see the two varieties of hibiscus are thriving. After sipping mimosas on the shaded patio and standing by the bay for a few minutes, the group is hungry and ready to dine on fresh berries and small, glazed bundt cakes from Tamu Cupcakery in Cape Coral. Brown’s clubmates “ooh” and “aah” over the creative table setting, which she curated from her selection of vintage linens and tableware. They can tell that each piece has a story behind it, and they are right: Brown purchased the blue plates from an antique shop; the linen is part of her collection of coverings from the 1940s and ’50s; and the silverware is a vintage set she bought from a dealer 30 years ago. Of course, the women appreciate her decorative use of flowers, too.

Like all good girlfriends do when they are invited to someone’s house, they asked, “What can I bring?” In Lasch’s case,

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ROSÉ CHAMPAGNE ON ICE TO CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER; PLACE SETTINGS ARE A CURATED COLLECTION FROM BROWN’S TREASURE HUNTS; BROWN AND HER GARDEN CLUB GALS STAY IN THE SHADE ON HER PATIO. OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: BROWN’S WHIMSICAL FRONT DOOR; A PERSONALIZED PLACE HOLDER; BROWN’S TABLE WITH VIEWS OF NAPLES BAY; LASCH’S FLORALS.

and six grandchildren, she moved to Naples from Barrington, Illinois, 11 years ago, after living here part-time since 1983. Following the cancelation of the Spring 2020 Naples Flower Show, Brown was eager to reconnect with some of her closest friends from the Garden Club: Terry Aufranc, Abbie Joan Sladick, and Sandy Lasch. At the Brown home on Naples Bay, the ladies enjoyed a simple yet elegant brunch and blooming conversations about their families, club, plants, and gardens.

Even in the heat of summer, Brown spends up to 18 hours a week in her garden, starting the day with an early cup of coffee before putting on her gardening gloves. The garden is her ultimate pride and joy. It “fits the house as it meanders and surprises,” she says. “It’s all about color, texture, and levels, just like our house.”



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: GLAZED BUNDT CAKES FROM TAMU CUPCACKERY IN CAPE CORAL; FRESH FRUIT AND VINTAGE SILVERWARE; THE GARDEN CLUB WOMEN CHAT.

OPPOSITE PAGE: BROWN'S BRUNCH BUFFET SPREAD WAS MADE ALL THE MORE LOVELY WITH THE ADDITION OF LASCH'S CREATIVE CITRUS AND FLORAL CENTERPIECE.



GARDENING DURING COVID-19 HAS BEEN A LIFESAVER. ... I'VE TURNED A COURTYARD INTO A WALLED GARDEN. —Sandy Lasch

she was on buffet-table floral duty. She got the memo on Brown's blue and white color scheme and chose flowers to complement the palette. With a nod to brunch, she filled the vase with slices of pink grapefruit before adding garden-fresh greens, purple salvia, and orange crossandra. Most prominent are the miniature golden roses edged with red and the purple mini daisies.

Lasch landed in Naples in 2001 from Wisconsin and just relocated with her husband to a condo south of Downtown Naples. As past president of the Garden Club, she keeps busy as Special Installation Chair for the Idea Garden at the Naples Botanical Garden. When they are seated around the brunch table, she tells her friends, "Gardening during COVID-19 has been a lifesaver. I've been helping with our condo association landscaping and have turned a courtyard into a walled garden." Lasch asks the ladies for advice on building a sustainable succulent collection, and Sladick has lots of tips, since she has a robust succulent garden on her property.

A Naples resident for more than 30 years, Sladick lives in the Golden Gate area with her husband and doesn't miss the traffic in her New Jersey hometown. Though her two children are out exploring the country and enjoying the freedom of their mid-20s, Sladick never slows down, caring for her three dogs and 85-year-old mother-in-law, as well as running her interior design business, Abbie Joan Fine Living. Involved with ticketing for the House & Garden Tour, the club's primary fundraiser, Sladick laments having to cancel the 2021 event and schemes with the brunch bunch about the germinating alternative—a virtual garden tour, an online gift to members and recent tour attendees.



As president-elect of the Garden Club, Aufranc is tasked with propelling it forward after a difficult stretch for many Naples nonprofits and community organizations. Sitting on Brown's pool deck, she keeps that pressure in the distance and instead smiles about enjoying her first full summer in Naples. Recently, Aufranc and her husband took the plunge to sell their Massachusetts home and live in Naples year-round, moving on from 25 years as part-timers. Being on the Paradise Coast means she's farther away from her three children and nine grandchildren but having a sister-in-law and circle of friends nearby helps. Aufranc wants to brunch and brainstorm about how to make her lanai feel more like a garden. After they suggest ways to incorporate some vintage plants that Aufranc has had for year, she feels accomplished and says, "Surrounded by a beautiful garden and views of the water—what could be better!"

Grabbing the last of the rosé Champagne on the buffet near Lasch's grapefruit masterpiece, Brown refills her friends' flutes, not letting one drop, or one moment of their wonderful company, go to waste. ◀◀

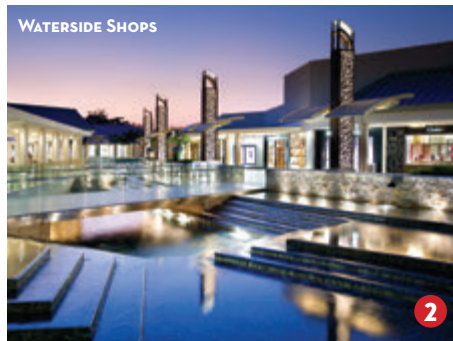


FAVORITE THINGS



PEGGY FARREN

Roz Travis has been beautifying interiors in some of Naples' finest neighborhoods for more than 40 years. She still loves the challenge of working with her small but mighty team on a complete gut job in an elevator high-rise during remodeling season, between May 1 and October 31. The Cleveland, Ohio, native is a proud Buckeye and a mom of two grown children, Kristin and David. Travis' cowboy boot-wearing partner of 29 years, Matt, is an attorney, and they live together in a 40-year-old courtyard home in Pelican Bay. During quarantine, Travis had a slew of clients wanting to update their homes, with a focus on improving cooking and dining areas, as well as making living spaces multifunctional. Though arts causes are a passion, Travis also supports the Shelly Stayer Shelter for Victims of Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence and will chair the Old Bags event on April 15 to benefit the shelter. She is grateful to live in a generous community that privately funds important organizations and thankful for the clients she works with. "I want them to feel like they have a wonderful home here," she says. Below, her top spots to...



WATERSIDE SHOPS

2



1

HUNTER RYAN PHOTO

- 1. **Have a girls' outing:** Veranda E at the Hotel Escalante
- 2. **Break a sweat:** In the mornings, I walk around Pelican Bay or Waterside and I pray for my kids and in gratitude.
- 3. **Grab lunch:** I love Ridgway Bar & Grill for the Truffles Tuna Caesar and Larry's Lunchbox for a quick one.
- 4. **Splurge:** My splurge was the wonderful trip to Europe that we enjoyed last year. We had a week in Paris and Bilbao, Spain. A sapphire ring? Nope. I have my travel memories.
- 5. **Watch the sunset:** Pelican Bay Beach
- 6. **Fulfill a culture fix:** The Gulfshore Playhouse, Sugden Community Theatre, and TheatreZone
- 7. **Take out-of-town guests:** I like The French, The Continental, and The Turtle Club, so you can sit outside.



THE TURTLE CLUB

7

NICK SHIRGHIO



3



BILBAO, SPAIN

4



8

MICHAELA MILLER



6

SUGDEN COMMUNITY THEATRE

NEUBEK PHOTOGRAPHERS



5

- 8. **Get a business coffee:** Kunjani Craft Coffee
- 9. **Enjoy some "me" time:** The Woodhouse Day Spa for a massage –Christina Cush