SIZZLING SUMMER SPECTACULAR

CASA COASTER

This publication of the Social & Welcoming Committee does not necessarily reflect the views of the Board of Directors nor managing agent of Casa Costa.

June 6, 2023 | Volume II, Issue Six | CasaCoaster.com

What's News

Neighborhood

★ **Billy Joel** is selling his longtime home on Long Island with plans to move to South Florida permanently. **A16**

★ **A local newspaper** overlooks the quality hamburger options available nearby. **A16**

Casa Costa

★ **Would-be buyers** once camped out for days for a shot at buying at Promenade. After a housing bust and a rebranding campaign, Casa Costa emerged. **A6**

★ **Time is running out** for residents to join a campaign against dryer vent lint. **A4**

★ **A retired medic** certified fourteen residents after a CPR training. **A15**

★ **Greeting her slowly** and calmly is a good idea with "street smart" Rosie. **A15**

"Neigh"-bors embrace Derby chic 1,000 miles away



J.T. HARRINGTON

Residents gathered for a menu of Kentucky Derby favorites at NYPD Pizza to watch the race.

Ocean One makes its case

As plans and permits wind through city hall, would-be neighbors to the south hosted a virtual town hall for our "most professional" residents

The latest owners of Ocean One, the approved development plot to our immediate south, held a virtual meeting with Casa Costa residents on May 17. Organizers planned the community workshop after the city greenlit the latest drawings for 371 market-rate rental apartments and retail spaces, but design and feasibility questions remained.

Topics included financing details, the appearance of the facade and rooftop facing our community's south tower and the makeup of retail tenants. The *Casa Coaster* received a recording of the meeting, which centered on Jordan Thaler, a vice president at New York-based Hyperion Group. Representatives from the city joined the call as well.

Mr. Thaler was quick to assuage concerns about his firm's commitment, drawing a sharp contrast between Hyperion and the previous land owner, who delayed approved plans for years, goading the city to extend tax incentive deadlines several times. "It is our full intent to go forward and build this project," Mr. Thaler said. "Not to sit on this property." Bonnie Miskel, the developer's attorney, added: "These are not neophytes, not speculators."

Hyperion Group has been a committed and thoughtful neighbor so far, one resident noted, referencing how the firm allowed Casa Costa drivers to use its empty lot as excess parking free of charge as our parking garage

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INSIDE

MISTER B'S NEIGHBORHOOD
One part entrepreneur, one part engineer. **A10**

OPINION

Parenting during the teen years

By J.T. Harrington

I don't have kids but I've been around real estate long enough to know that now that our building is a teenager, we have the obligation to be good role models and provide a path for success. It needs our love.

Many South Florida condominium associations face a reckoning as state laws force better parenting. Since the Surfside collapse, regulators now mandate condos here to inspect and fix structural defects and to fund a reserve account for major building infrastructure. To waive the funding of reserve money over time through HOA dues – that is, to ignore known future bills to keep expenses artificially low – was a popular way for Boards to minimize dues. That tactic is now illegal, so some condos are playing catch-up. It's a double whammy because they also need to quickly address structural problems they ignored for years.

Admirably, Casa Costa's owners have continually paid into our reserve, our leaders secured a settlement with the developer and contractors for some construction defects and we've been committed to making the building safe since before it was a law.

But despite these good intentions and prudent actions, we face a cash crunch in a building that has already seen better days in its short life. Our predicament leaves us with two decisions: how should we pay for new elevators, and should we set up our teenage building a chance to succeed?

* * *

Our latest challenge is not because we failed to save money like some peers, but because those plans didn't anticipate a $2 million elevator fix decades ahead of schedule. We have accumulated cash in our reserves, but for 129 different building components, some scheduled for repair or replacement decades out. To spend it all on elevators now makes little sense, and puts us in the same category as irresponsible associations that never saved in the first place.

As prices skyrocketed, we did less with less.

I advocate a special-purpose special assessment to pay for 100 percent of the elevator modernization job. This is not the path we've pursued thus far and it would take a vote, but I prefer a one-time bill for this purpose, rather than draining our reserve account completely and refilling it through HOA fees forevermore. The Board negotiated favorable terms with the contractor, spreading out payments over two years. This equals an average of $7 per day per owner for two years to put it behind us.

The argument against a special assessment has been that it's a bad look to realtors and loan officers, as some think buildings with assessments can't manage money, making expenses unpredictable. But this situation checks all the boxes: an expensive, unexpected emergency with a known price tag and timeline.

* * *

Since I moved here in 2020, I've heard that Casa Costa is on the decline. Worsening curb appeal, complacent service, no budget beyond keeping the lights on. These reflections are in sharp contrast to the hard work by our Finance Committee volunteers to balance a budget that is divorced from reality.

Between 2016 and last year, real estate values here increased by at least one-third and some residences doubled in price. Inflation averaged five percent, U.S. wages rose 14.8 percent in April of 2021 alone. Last February, South Florida salaries grew faster than anywhere else in the country. Meanwhile our stingy budgets have challenged service quality. I looked at Casa Costa's budget for the front desk concierge and security patrol in 2016 and since. While the market rate for the job increased 34 percent in those seven years, our budget actually *decreased* for four of them, and is now just 4.9 percent higher than seven years ago. As prices skyrocketed, we did less with less.

We fired our landscaping company last year, hired a new one and gave them a smaller budget, perhaps hoping that money will grow on the trees they maintain to make up the difference. Three years back, we spent $87,000 on new hallway carpet. The appeal of the carpet tiles we chose is plug-and-play maintenance: we can quickly replace a stained area that cannot be cleaned. But we didn't spring for an extra box of carpet tiles, so now there are stains anyway.

OPINION

I'm afraid the new elevators may face a similar fate. If we don't spend more than the bare minimum, the scratched cabin interiors won't get upgraded – hardly the outcome from a multi-million dollar project of which we can be proud.

I concede that building a budget isn't easy, particularly here. Permanent residents, snowbirds, investors, renters, guests and commercial tenants all have different perspectives and desires. We share the common goal not to waste money, but that's where the consensus seems to end. Recall the survey on how to redesign the pool deck: opinions range from keeping up with the fanciest hotels to keeping it simple.

But if we continue to ignore large and visible deferred maintenance, our real estate values will never reach their full potential.

A former customer of mine was a "value-add" investor in apartment complexes. This business plan involves buying an older building, renovating selectively, raising rents and then selling it for more. What's the first thing he renovated? Not the kitchens or bathrooms in apartments, but the common areas that are most visible like the lobby or club room. The surest way to increase value is to fix the dated or deteriorating elements that everyone sees and uses.

Consider sales prices at Marina Village, a slightly older building with slightly smaller balconies but slightly higher HOA fees. Their units sell consistently for 30 percent more than ours. Their less stingy budget continues to pay off.

I would think investors that lease units short- or long-term here should be the most concerned that we are being pennywise and pound foolish. Tour Avion Riverwalk on the Intracoastal 1 ½ miles south. With fresh amenities and similar views, its unfurnished studio rental prices approach what Casa Costa two-bedrooms rent for. Or look at the plans for the 2,000 market-rate rentals that will spring up within three blocks. I guarantee their owners won't run out of carpet.

As more housing rises in East Boynton, I believe the best thing we can do for our real estate values, not to mention our quality of life, is to fast-track beautification of our common areas.

I propose that we adopt broadly the perspective we have toward fixing construction defects: spend the money to do the job right. Real estate appreciation is a handy hedge against inflation, but only if the place isn't falling apart.

I know that the tedium and dust of construction has left many residents hopeless, or at least weary. Reading the builder's spiel for this place – from exacting standards to swift and silent elevators – might make you wonder where they are talking about. But the dream of the Promenade is not dead. A restauranteur downstairs is doing his part to invest in high-quality, lasting amenities.

Let's do our part as owners. We should continue creative "value engineering" where it makes sense, but big ticket items require a realistic budget for quality work worthy of our enviable views. Good parents know that money doesn't grow on trees.

J.T. Harrington is publisher of the Casa Coaster and president of the Board of Directors. His opinions do not necessarily reflect those of the Board or anyone else.

LETTERS TO THE PUBLISHER

The news that's fit to print

The article on Briny Breezes by Elizabeth Wilson ("Oceanfront mobile home park endures," May 2023) was extremely well-written and quite fascinating. I also got a kick out of John Battista's experiences at public hearings ("Mister B's Neighborhood," May 2023).

I may skim the *New York Times*, but I read the *Casa Coaster* cover to cover (including the ads) as soon as it comes out.

Elizabeth Pearce

Voter momentum building

I totally agree with Candace Ayers' letter ("Form a Casa Costa voting bloc," May 2023). I would join. How do we proceed?

Randy Johnson

CASACOASTERNEWS@GMAIL.COM



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EST. 2022
CASA COASTER
Boynton Beach, Fla.
CasaCoaster.com

War on lint heats up

When Castle Group officials asked residents to pay for a relatively obscure home maintenance job, the response was surprising. So far 65 residents have signed up to have their dryer vents cleaned this month.



More than just hot air

Castle managers are looking to line up similar projects for residents with bulk discounts. Thanks to a similar initiative in March, nearly two dozen residents paid for patio slider door replacements. Some providers are willing to offer discounts if they can service multiple jobs the same day and if payment and job scheduling is centralized.

Dryer vents expel heat and moisture to the outdoors during a laundry cycle. They also collect lint that isn't captured by a lint trap. Experts say that professional dryer vent cleaning will boost energy efficiency and reduce the risk of fire.

Two crews from Lint Out will be on site June 23 and residents have until June 14 to sign up for the discounted cleaning service, Castle officials said. Lint Out uses a seven-step process, including spiral rotation brushes, specialized high-powered vacuums and pressure gauges to complete the job.



J.T. HARRINGTON

An international potluck inspired three dozen resident top chefs to share their favorite foods in late April.

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Three simple stretches for seniors

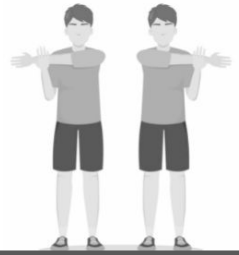


Hamstring

Quadricep

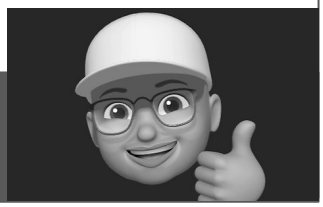


Shoulder



In addition to muscle and movement maintenance, stretching exercises can help delay the onset of diseases, such as diabetes and arthritis – it can even improve mental health. **The goal here is not to "feel the burn," but to gently bring your muscles to life.** For active seniors who routinely exercise, the best time to stretch is at the end of the activity while your muscles are still warm and loose. For less mobile seniors, stretching can be done at virtually any time of the day, and some may feel more comfortable stretching from a seated position. Make sure to walk around for a few minutes before stretching to ensure your muscles are loose and warm. Note that the stretches themselves are not the warm up. **Remember to pay attention to your breathing throughout the stretches.** During exercise, it's easy to forget and not realize you are holding your breath.

EXCERPT FROM
one medical Blog



I read the fitness news so you don't need to.
Join Bobby Hall's aquatics class Mon-Wed-Fri at 9am in the pool.

CASA COASTER INVESTIGATES

What happened during Casa Costa's early days?

"This is an exciting time for Boynton Beach," a city official told *The Palm Beach Post* in 2006. That May, the mayor joined in a ceremonial demolition event to knock down the Kwik Chek Shopping Center, built in 1955, later anchored by Winn-Dixie. Panther Real Estate Partners and builder Coastal Construction Group, both based in Miami, made way for two Mediterranean-style twin towers called the Promenade.

The name came from a pond boardwalk and walking trail through the preserve east of the site and the planned paved public walk to restaurants and stores in front.

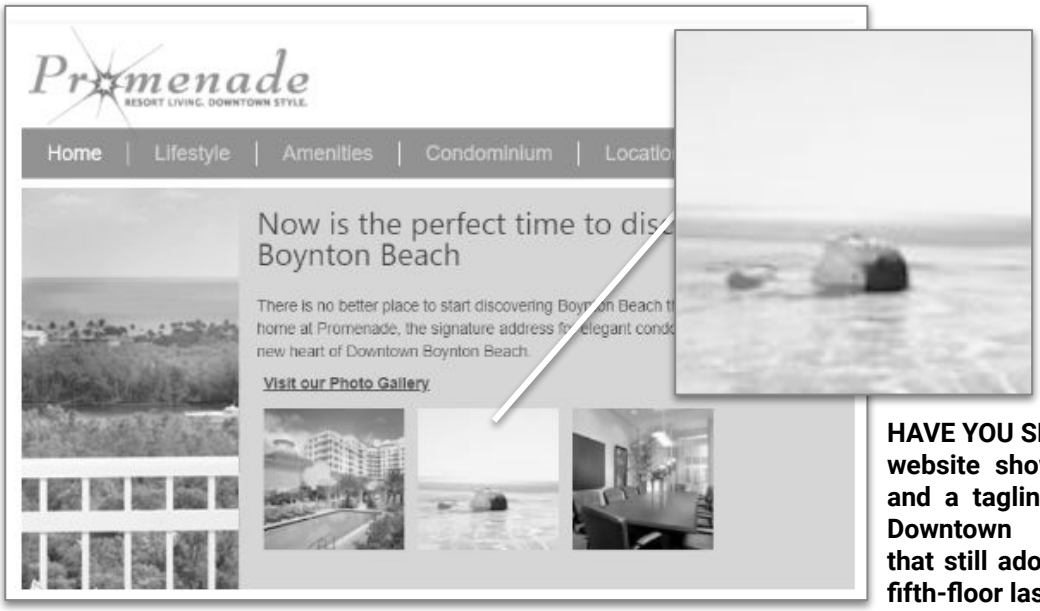
To encourage construction, the city's Community Redevelopment arm had agreed to $6 million in incentives so long as Panther offered 16 "affordable" condos and 100 public parking spots. But in October 2006, its board nixed the deal after Panther didn't pay city processing fees in time. The following month, the CRA decided that affordability was no longer important and dropped that requirement, lowering the incentive slightly.

The developers said the new retail space "will consist primarily of businesses catering to residents: eateries, dry cleaners, coffee shops," and wanted to include two tenants from the shabby strip mall they were replacing: Margy's Restaurant, a cheap breakfast spot, and the Chinese food takeout restaurant Happy Garden.



ALL IMAGES FROM THE PALM BEACH POST

HEADLINE ACT: Two days before the sales office first opened, would-be buyers camped out to review plans and put down deposits.



HAVE YOU SEEN HER? A 2010 website shows stock photos and a tagline "Resort Living, Downtown Style, elements that still adorned the walls of fifth-floor last month.

A commercial tenant from the razed strip mall signed on to open an Italian restaurant in the southeast corner of the new development. He later alleged in a lawsuit to void the contract that the developers weren't realistic about the retail component. The space was built without a venting system, restaurant permit or the connected patio the deal called for. On the alleged poor design, he wrote: "If the patio was to be used for restaurant patrons, the food would have to be delivered by servers having to exit from the restaurant and literally walking around half the building."



Special to The Palm Beach Post

The Promenade was launched during the real estate boom and completed during the bust, and as a result always has struggled to sell units. Only about a fourth of the 318 units have been sold.

High-profile Boynton condo in foreclosure suit

$2 million in deposits for the Promenade are in limbo.

"NO ONE WANTS TO CLOSE ANYWHERE": Built during a real estate boom, the community's developers fell victim to a market downturn in 2012 after selling 72 of its 395 residential units. A firm tied to Magic Johnson later bid to buy the distressed asset.



Marketing materials for the resort condominium boasted a screening room in the club room, fountains on the pool deck and how "golf enthusiasts will enjoy practicing their game at Promenade's putting greens, while others kick back with cocktails at the deck's outdoor bar."

The "Lifestyle" tab of the old Promenade website includes a laundry list of five-star services: "No matter what the hour, there is a porter to assist you with your bags … Swiftly and silently, the elevator delivers you to your floor … From the Business Center to housekeeping and personal services, Promenade equips you with the help and facilities you need to make the most of every moment. Even when you are away, Promenade can maintain your home to your exacting standards and prepare it for your return at a moment's notice."

Early interest was strong. In February 2005, 1,500 people had registered for property tours. When the Promenade starting selling units, would-be buyers camped out for two nights to snap up a unit with views. But as the towers rose, the real estate market crashed. Two months after the city gave the property its certificate of occupancy in late 2019, no units had closed, despite reports that 40 percent of the building was pre-sold. A challenge was financing: Fannie Mae's rules require that over half the units be pre-sold before the agency will buy mortgages, and the contracts were spread between its two towers,

"No one wants to close anywhere," a real estate lawyer told the *Palm Beach Post* that October.

"Swiftly and silently, the elevator delivers you."

Panther and its financial partners mulled their options. They considered converting everything to rental apartments, selling units in bulk or else just "mothballing it," a director at the developer's equity partner said at the time. They worked with Fannie Mae for each tower to be recognized separately, and pleaded with buyers to switch their south tower contracts to the north, so they could achieve the critical mass for financing, and so that one tower could "be brought to life."

In May 2010, nine months after the towers were completed, the developers had closed sales on only two units, but they declared their commitment to selling out as a "value play with finishes akin to that of a Ritz Carlton hotel."

Panther contributed $1.5 million to the association's coffers to reassure buyers, reduced prices with the promise not to discount further. Smaller units asked as low as $150,000 and Panther lined up a bank offering a 30-year fixed rate mortgage. Some business terms also changed, according to one New Jersey buyer who put down $57,000 on a $285,000 condo-hotel suite. She says she was promised a "fully furnished luxury hotel suite" operated by a "flagship hotel manager on par with Marriott and Hyatt." She sued to void the contract when the developers said that instead, she would be responsible for marketing and renting the suite herself. Advertisements from the period confirm references to furnished suites for sale but do not detail the hotel management plan.

The *Casa Coaster* spoke to a current resident who remembers these early days, having put down a 20 percent deposit in 2007 when the towers were one third built. At the closing table three years later at the depths of the real estate collapse, the owner said the developer credited cash buyers like him fifty cents on the dollar, slashing agreed-upon prices to get deals done.

There weren't enough deals to save the project for Panther. In early 2012, a real estate lawyer told the *Palm Beach Post* that "sales are effectively frozen" because so many pre-construction buyers had won court judgments against the developer to void their contracts and get back their deposits. The legal victories were thanks to a technicality over how Panther held escrow money, but while the developer appealed the court decisions, title companies refused to do business here.

In late 2012, Miami-based Related Group took control of 323 unsold residences (including 77 hotel units) and 12 commercial units in a so-called

Please turn to page A8

Related Group rebrands, cleans up

Continued from page A7

"friendly foreclosure." Related reportedly bought the loan for less than half its $122 million value, beating out a rival bid from a real estate company where Magic Johnson is a partner.

A real estate consultant praised it as an "excellent acquisition … one of the last great bulk buys. It's a nice building."

Related, led by "condo king" Jorge Perez, rebranded the community as Casa Costa, or "beach house," to emphasize its ocean proximity, and moved the sales gallery to a penthouse apartment to show off the water views. The company apparently used a portion of the "Elegant Residents Club with bar" as a makeshift reception desk and leasing office to rent unsold apartments, according to longtime housekeeper Eutrice Headley.

The company put its marketing machine to work, tapping a network of buyers from Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela that was drawn to South Florida investment property with a lower price tag than in established neighborhoods in West Palm Beach, Delray Beach and Boca Raton. Other buyers came from the Northeast, many which bought second homes here. Facebook posts in 2013 invited real estate brokers to weekly "Wine Down Wednesdays in the Penthouse Sales Gallery" and once hosted a "Think Pink" party for breast cancer awareness.

Mr. Perez is no stranger to Boynton Beach. Related built Marina Village in 2006, betting on a downtown renaissance. "We believe in 24-hour communities," he said, adding that Casa Costa "will act as a catalyst" for activity. But whereas Panther, the original developer, touted proximity to a growing downtown vibe, Related looked eastward and inward, adopting "Your Beach, Your View" as a tagline. A poster for the property at a "developer's showcase" trade show in Miami refers to Casa Costa in "East Palm Beach." Related also doubled down on amenities and services, including a "beach club jitney" with "membership automatic for all owners" to an on-call shuttle to two beach locations with "complimentary beach chairs, umbrellas and towels," according to an archived version of their website.



RELATED GROUP

Related: We've got condos, now let's get the 'fun'

A decade ago, Related Group opened a penthouse sales center with a model of the property after its founder Jorge Perez and then-mayor Woodrow Hay cut a ribbon at the newly rebranded building.

Rather than finding a hotel operator, Related sold the residences on the lower floors as "transient" units to individual investors who are permitted to offer them for short-term stays. Advertisements from the period offer fully-furnished units. With the new development real estate market recovering, Related publicized its advantage, writing on Facebook in July 2014 that with "nearly 3,000 coastal condo units on the way … Thankfully, Casa Costa is already complete and move-in ready!"

By August 2015, after just over two years since its takeover, Casa Costa was sold out. "Related is very happy. We sold it in a shorter amount of time and made more money than projected," said a representative for the firm. Its haul: $95 million in sales.

Related would retain the retail spaces that they called "Shops at Casa Costa" for two more years. But upstairs, owners took the reigns, choosing to retain Castle Group as property manager, a company originally hired by Panther. A 31-minute Board meeting was held Dec. 1, 2015; the 2016 budget was $2,759,963. *CC*

Selling real estate is a Mann's job

I moved here in 2012 but I've been representing buyers and sellers for 35 years. This $50 million of experience has taught me the best ways to market a property.

It's all about exposure. This starts with the Multiple Listing Service, which is how realtors share and compare, and also a way to distribute listings to sites like Zillow and Homes.com. These sites spend millions in advertising.

For some listings, local ads work well – online newspapers, social media, glossy magazines.

Coldwell Banker is an international expert in marketing, and many buyers in Boynton Beach are from out of the country.

When sellers trust me with a listing, I make sure the home is staged right and always take fresh photos before going live.

I'm invested in maximizing values at Casa Costa, and that includes fostering an enjoyable lifestyle. I'm the chairperson of the Social & Welcoming Committee and we sponsor activities every month here in addition to publishing this newspaper.



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We don't take the summer off.
CasaCostaBB.com/events

No Bonz about it: My new barber downstairs

There are more than just barber chairs and mirrors when you walk through the doors of Qure Barbershop downstairs. And there's much more to owner Corey "Bonz" Sturkey than just an internationally trained barber.

I walked into the barbershop and was immediately taken with the artwork that adorns the walls. Mr. Sturkey displays and sells local artists' works in his shop. Unlike most arrangements, he doesn't take a commission when someone buys the art. "I just ask that the artist hang up another piece when something sells," he says. "I use the barbershop to support the creative community."

"My dad taught me strength through vulnerability."

He always wanted an art district look. "A Wynwood-type vibe," he says, referring to the Miami neighborhood famous for colorful murals and large-scale works by world-renowned street artists. He feels the best way to create that vibe was to create a platform for local artists." He's hosted poetry readings and concerts in the space, which can accommodate 125 people when he relocates the barber chairs.

Mr. Sturkey's journey to a Casa Costa storefront wasn't easy. He moved to South Florida from Long Island with his parents as a young child. The family bounced between hotel rooms and cramped quarters in his aunt's home. His father learned the barbering skills that would eventually encourage him to learn the craft. "My dad is my hero and my best friend, and we talk every day. He taught me strength through vulnerability," he said.



Mister B's Neighborhood, Pt. 1

After high school, Mr. Sturkey enrolled in college to become an accountant, but quickly dropped out despite solid grades.

He was too eager to make money and become the first business owner in his family. He worked at local barbershops, always planning his own venture, earning the nickname "Bonz" from his skinny frame. Friends made fun of his dream, he said, but his bosses were supportive – even accepting delivery and storing equipment for him as he searched for a space of his own.

Along the way, he befriended a local sheriff with a real estate license, who told him about a vacancy here – as well as an angel investor to get him started. Mr. Sturkey pounced. The space needed tremendous work: flooring, electricity, sheetrock. But after he signed the lease, his investor ghosted him.

"Fire either consumes you, or it can polish you," he told me. "Like curing metal, fire can make you stronger."

Mr. Sturkey embraced the fire. He sold his car, moved in with his dad, and poured every dollar he earned into the venture amidst long delays by the city to gain the proper permits. With $50 to his name, he opened Qure in the summer of 2018.

He credits the barbershop's name, derived from "cure," as symbolic of his journey to open it. "Cutting hair saved my life," he said.

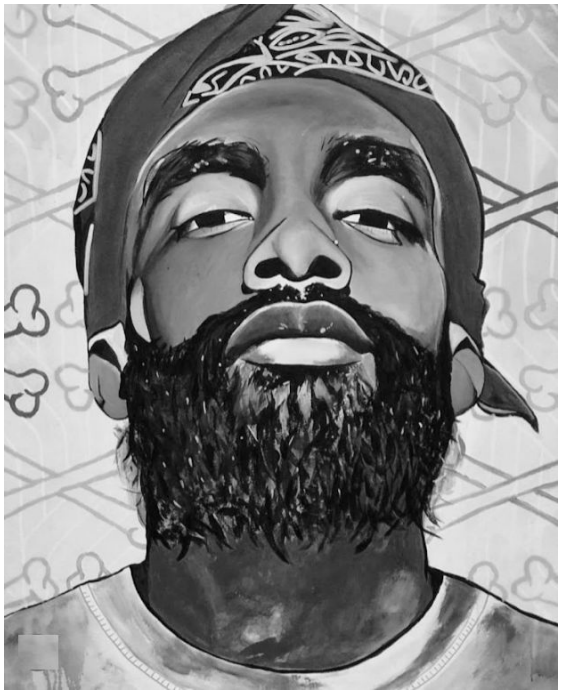
"Fire either consumes you, or it can polish you … Cutting hair saved my life."

Along the way, Mr. Sturkey's networking and cutting skills made him a celebrity barber. One Friday afternoon, a barber friend with an expired passport told him to head to Miami airport. He flew to the Bahamas to style DJ Khaled and Nas, the famous music producer and rapper, prior to a video shoot. NFL cornerback and Delray Beach native Brandon Flowers has been coming in for eight years.

Black-owned barbershops and salons



have long served as social clubs. At times, the businesses were one of few ways that Black entrepreneurs could achieve economic mobility. Mr. Sturkey's goal for his shop – which he describes as "a lounge, a refuge and a barbershop" – is to expand its customer base and breadth of services while continuing to support local artists. He sees his shop as a hub for self-care: physically through haircuts, straight razor shaves and facial treatments, and psychologically by candid conversation often "off limits" among men, including mental health.



Mr. Sturkey credits his father for his progressive perspective on masculinity and ego: "Being yourself, being real, is the best way to present yourself as a man."

He acknowledges that so far, Qure may have alienated anyone who's not a young African American man. "I know how I look, I know how I choose to dress," he says. But it's not lost on him that Casa Costa represents an untapped group of customers that initially drew him to the building's commercial space. He and his barbers are trained to cut all types of hair and treat skin of all types.

For Mr. Sturkey, his kids, Kai, 9, and Nova, 2, "are at the center of everything I do. This business will help cement a legacy for them. We welcome all customers to our shop and we hope that the residents of Casa able to walk downstairs and enjoy their experience with us."

Following a brief remodel, Qure is planning a special event for the building along with the Social & Welcoming Committee. He also plans to offer discounts to residents.

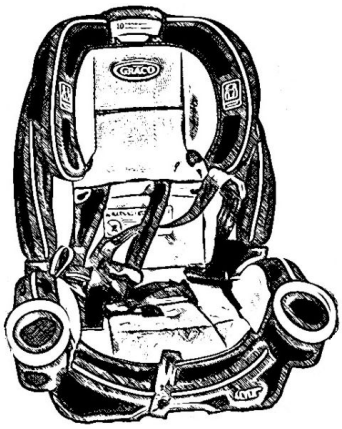
"Being yourself, being real, is the best way to present yourselves as a man."

With less hair on my head lately, I've tended to be a Supercuts guy – cheap and quick. So I didn't know what to expect when I sat down for a haircut with Stephane, another barber at Qure. The cut was great and the conversation was even better. I enjoyed learning about his journey and how he came to work there.

I learned even more about Mr. Sturkey that afternoon. Mr. Sturkey is among the most impressive people I've ever met: entrepreneur, motivational speaker, sensitive soul. It's no wonder he's built a community-centered business where "a haircut is just the cherry on top."

I've found my new barbershop. It was hiding in plain sight. *CC*

'Lil Coasters ready to play



Our latest amenity

The Social & Welcoming Committee has organized a collection of handy items for when kids are in town. Residents loan stuff to the collection in exchange for free storage. Borrowers reserve an item using the amenities tab in BuildingLink and receive a code to access a storage room.

"Some kid stuff is bulky and expensive, especially if you only need it when the grandkids are in town," said Roberta Mann, chairperson of the committee. "Just clean it before you give it back or you're out of the club."

The collection includes a car seat, various chairs so infants and toddlers may eat at your dinner table and a bouncy chair that provides gentle rocking to soothe small children and stimulate balance and motor skills.

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DIY Dan has the keys and the key to success

When I asked the concierge desk to contact Dan to see when I could interview him, he was taking care of some emergency. A few days later, I was able to catch up with our Chief Engineer to chat about his backstory and his role in the building. Danilo Cajina was born in Nicaragua to a German-born mother and a Nicaraguan father.

His family moved to the United States when he was ten years old and he has lived in Florida ever since. Today he lives in Lantana with his wife of 19 years, Ester, his daughter Emily, 14, and his son Erik, 9.

His job here is often 24/7, but when he does have free time, he and his family enjoy many outdoor sports, including snorkeling and diving. Family time is important to him and carves out as much as possible with all of his responsibilities.



Mister B's Neighborhood, Pt. 2

A great deal of experience led him to Cosa Costa. He was a part of a maintenance group for high rise commercial buildings for 17 years. He has worked for Castle Group for seven years, the last three here. He has extensive training and certifications in the mechanics of high-rise commercial and residential buildings. In fact, Dan is the only engineer at Castle who has specialized training with cooling towers and rebuilding mechanical boilers. Castle sends him to other properties when his expertise is needed.

We are very fortunate to have him leading our maintenance team and overseeing the extensive mechanics here. Dan took me on a short tour. The magnitude of working parts just to cool the building and provide hot water is impressive. Each of these systems have to be checked daily, to make sure they are running properly and are not in need of repair. Dan is proud of the new hot water storage system and boilers in the south tower. These updated systems will save money by more efficient heating and ensure that the residents will continue to have hot water on demand. The north tower is planning the upgrade too.

Dan is the only engineer at Castle who has specialized training with cooling towers.

His objective is that everything runs



J.T. HARRINGTON

WELCOME TO DAN'S WORLD

Most of Casa Costa's mechanical and electrical systems are housed on the roofs of its two towers. Aside from cooling pumps that he can diagnose remotely, all the equipment needs in-person attention.





COOLING TOWERS FOR AIR CONDITIONING



PUMPS IN THE GARAGE SEND WATER UPSTAIRS

DANILO CAJINA



HEAT EXCHANGERS FOR AIR CONDITIONING

The replacement cost of these cooling towers, heat exchangers and pumps total well over half a million dollars on their own. Aside from one new boiler, all major building systems are original equipment.

smoothly. "Preventive maintenance is the key to success," he said. He starts his day by checking the building "vitals" to be proactive before trouble starts. When I was leaving the garage the other day, I saw him working on the electric gate arm. When I asked him if someone hit it, he said no: "This is an example of preventive maintenance. During my routine inspection, I saw the bolt was worn thin. Changing the bolt before it broke did not inconvenience any residents and did not result in an expensive overnight emergency call to the repair service."



J.T. HARRINGTON

His extensive mechanical background often saves us money. His goal is to do as much repair work in-house as possible. Not having to hire outside vendors to fix a sprinkler head or to install tile by the elevator buttons have proven to be cost effective for the building. Art Rome, our treasurer, told me, "Dan has saved us a lot of money by not outsourcing. His vast knowledge of all of the systems here is vital."

Dan supervises the housekeeping and maintenance staff of six people. He supervises any outside vendor work that occurs. In fact, signs off on any residents' remodeling work to make sure everything is within code. The 24/7 aspect of his job ensures that any emergency is covered.

"I take pride that any overnight call is responded to within 30 minutes," he said. Thankfully, it is a quick ride from Lantana, as he is the one who typically responds.

The maintenance group's official job is to update, repair and maintain the common areas of Casa Costa. But since they've seen it all, Dan says "I want residents to contact us, by phone or work order, if they have an issue in their units. The maintenance crew will assess the situation and either repair it themselves or point you in the right direction to avoid or minimize the cost of an outside service call." For example, they routinely change toilet flappers to conserve water.

Dan clearly wants to support all of us in the building, which is fantastic because after three years, he knows so much about everything here. He is an example of the quality people who support the residents of Casa Costa every day. *CC*



MARNA ATKIN

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE? The official answer is the umbrella is missing (now replaced), but we'll also accept: It depends on whom you ask, and Nothing at all. Eight gentlemen enjoy the spring weather before two of them head north.

Developer: "It's not going to be a blank wall"

Continued from page A1

construction displaced dozens of cars last year. Ms. Miskel likewise said she appreciated our contingent's "most professional" approach in the face of a development next door, as opposed to others' vocal knee-jerk opposition.

Mr. Thaler estimated breaking ground late in the first quarter of next year for two years of construction before admitting "that's optimistic."

One resident asked: why rentals? Mr. Thaler replied that given construction costs, condominiums would need to sell for $1,000 per square foot -- a rate that is nearly triple the current pricing in the area, according to recent transactions.

On the planned commercial spaces, the Hyperion representative said he expects the project's 21,000 sq. ft. of "retail space on Ocean Ave. to be very attractive to retailers," suggesting that a "boutique fresh grocer" or Italian market are ideal businesses there. Two smaller spaces, including one on the corner of Boynton Beach Blvd. and N. Federal Hwy., are better suited for storefronts like a coffee shop, he said.

"These are not neophytes, not speculators."

With seven of Casa Costa's south tower levels at or above Ocean One's roofline, Mr. Thaler didn't address a lingering concern about how rooftop equipment like air conditioner units will look from above. He maintained that city codes require equipment to be disguised from street view while a resident urged him to "go above and beyond the code" to relieve the potential eyesore.

Ocean One's 633-space parking garage also makes some resident uneasy, as its eight-story wall faces Boynton Beach Blvd. and the south tower. To cover the wall, Mr. Thaler said that Hyperion is considering a "green wall" with living plants that will grow year-round, but is "looking at other options like a mural," he said, adding "It's not going to be a blank wall. It can't be," referring to city requirements. Mr. Thaler said his team is open to suggestions, but that ultimately the decision is theirs.

Ms. Miskel chimed in: "Technically the city has the final say."

COASTER SPOTLIGHT

Rosie has a new fave street

Rosie is a mixed breed dog who has lived in Casa Costa for the last six years. Chihuahua is definitely a big part of her DNA. Rosie likes routines very much. Her walks around the building are met with many people stopping to say hello. Rosie, estimated to be seven years old, is very friendly and welcomes a pat on the head or a scratch behind the ears.



Street smart

Greeting Rosie slowly and calmly is always a good idea, as she is protective of her humans Roberta and Don, and wants them to be safe.

"She's from the streets, so she's very street smart," Roberta says of her rescued pup, adding that Rosie's phobias include motorcycles, bicycles, skateboards and people walking on staircases.

Rosie and her Golden Doodle friend, Bentley, whom we spotlighted in February, can be seen walking together throughout the day. The favorite part of their evening walk is when they stop at NYPD Pizza for dog treats. Restaurateurs Mohammed, David and Louis have definitely made a friend with Rosie who excitedly awaits her nightly treat.

Remember: it's always smart to pick up after your dog.



MARNA ATKIN



STAYIN' ALIVE: Over a dozen residents spent Cinco de Mayo earning CPR certifications.

Future life savers train up

Cinco de Mayo was a celebration of acronyms for fourteen Casa Costa residents who learned about CPR and AED from a former EMT from the EETI certified by JAMA as an ASHI.

Anthony Scaramellino just retired from a career as a Broward County firefighter and emergency medical technician, and now he's a full-time storyteller equipped with a limbless plastic manikin.

Marna Atkin of the Social & Welcoming Committee tracked down Mr. Scaramellino to conduct a life-saving class. Using humor and anecdotes, he taught the group the "when" and "how" of techniques like chest compressions and a defibrillator.

"This education is priceless for a community like Casa Costa," he began. "You never know when you may need it."

The class was an important refresher for roughly half of the residents who attended, as some guidelines have changed recently. For example, some experts no longer advise blowing air into the victim's mouth.

Mr. Scaramellino praised the quality of the building's automated external defibrillator mounted outside the club room, which uses electricity to shock the heart back into rhythm and speaks over thirty languages.

"I have always wanted to take a CPR class and having it here at Casa Costa was so convenient," said Carla Geisler, a newly certified resident.

The trainer explained to always call 911 first and look for who's next up to take over chest compression duties, as even seasoned firefighters tire after four minutes of aid.

Café Prélude opens

Mohammed Kaada's restaurant team debuted another eatery downstairs with French flair and flaky pastries. The bakery offers coffee, pastries, quiche and a variety of crispy baguette sandwiches.

Residents welcomed Mr. Kaada's NYPD Pizza in mid-February after That's Amore closed after four years and Bond Street Market quickly fizzled in the space.

The bakery occupies the storefront previously stocked with Middle Eastern pantry staples at Euro Market. One five-star Google review of the café says "the chocolate croissants are the real deal."

Coaster Classifieds

The only guaranteed way to lose weight is to get rid of those keys in your pocket or purse. Steve installs Casa Costa approved keyless **DOOR LOCKS** or replaces the standard ones if you can't remember a four-digit code: casacostalocks@gmail.com

Matt Hirsch is the secret weapon for all your **HANDYMAN** needs, from simple fixes to major renovations. He knows the building well, as many of your neighbors who rely on him will tell you. Call or text: 561-444-6315

If you don't know Roberta Mann, you're just not paying attention. Coldwell Banker guru and local **REAL ESTATE AGENT**, she has your back whether you're buying, selling, renting or leasing. And if you're doing all four, she'll even wax it : 412-999-2888

Holly sits, walks and trains your dog as Casa Costa "resident" go-to for **PET CARE**. Contact her for an orientation today: www.purr-fect.biz

The secret is out for immune support, emotional balance, anti-aging and more **HEALTH SUPPLEMENTS** downstairs at Longevity Secrets. Use discount code "Local20" at: LongevityReserve.com

Waterfront Homes and Condos LLC has a 4% commission special so secret that the *Coaster*'s best investigative journalists couldn't figure it out. Visit their **REAL ESTATE BROKER** office downstairs or WaterfrontHomesTeam.com

Join Bobby Hall's **WATER AEROBICS** every Mon., Wed. and Fri. at 9 a.m.

Looking to lease out your residence? Who's better to handle day-to-day **REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT** than the experts at RHOME by Castle Group? rhome@castlegroup.com

RESTAURANT options downstairs just doubled with the debut of Café Prélude, a French bakery next to NYPD Pizza. With more eateries on the way, for now, call ahead for pizza (561-220-7265) or pastries (561-536-5386).

Be thrilled to know a Medicare and **RETIREMENT PLANNING** expert lives in the south tower. Brian Goldman gives free consultations: 412-897-0760

Lori Porges provides peace of mind for snowbirds as your **HOME CARETAKER**: casacosta.away@gmail.com

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

Local events

ROCK THE PLAZA
Thu, June 8 | 6 - 9 p.m.
One Boynton | Free
Live music by Rogue Theory

POOL REOPENING BBQ
Tue, July 4 | 4 p.m.
Pool deck | Free
Sign up to bring a side dish

ICE CREAM SOCIAL
Wed, July 19 | 7 p.m.
Club room | $5

NIGHT MARKET
Sat, July 29 | 5 - 10 p.m.
120 E. Ocean Ave. | Free
Stroll the green space and meet local exhibitors

Billy Joel moving to Florida full time

"New York State of Mind" singer Billy Joel has listed his longtime home on the North Shore of Long Island for sale. The listing broker says the 74-year-old artist and his wife are spending so much time in Florida that it's time for them to be movin' out.

Known as Middlesea, Mr. Joel's estate includes a 20,000-sq.-ft. mansion plus a three-bedroom beach house, helicopter pad, bowling alley and multiple pools indoors and out. The 26-acre waterfront property is near his hometown of Hicksville and is asking $49 million.

Among his South Florida properties is a nine-bedroom home in Manalapan three miles north of us, which is also for sale for $65 million as Mr. Joel eyes other properties in the area. Real estate aside, the Piano Man is performing monthly concerts at Madison Square Garden.

Quality burgers are closer than they think



The *Palm Beach Post* recently listed the 15 best burgers in the Sunshine State to celebrate National Hamburger Day last week.

Shockingly, they only highlighted a single restaurant in the newspaper's hometown county.

Casa Coaster readers should be pleased to know of five excellent walkable options, including Banana Boat, The Butcher & The Bar, Hurricane Alley, Nicholson Muir and Two Georges Waterfront Grille.

Any favorites that we missed? Vote for your favorite burger at casacoaster.com and you might end up our food critic.