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# contents



# 22

HOME & FAMILY

## Custom builds

Columbus builders work with clients to construct their dream homes



**ON THE COVER**  
Shantal Huckaby  
photographed by  
Angela Jackson

MEDLEY

- 8 EDITOR'S NOTE
- 10 WHAT DO YOU THINK?
- 12 BOOK NOOK

14

TASTE  
Burgers



14



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## contents

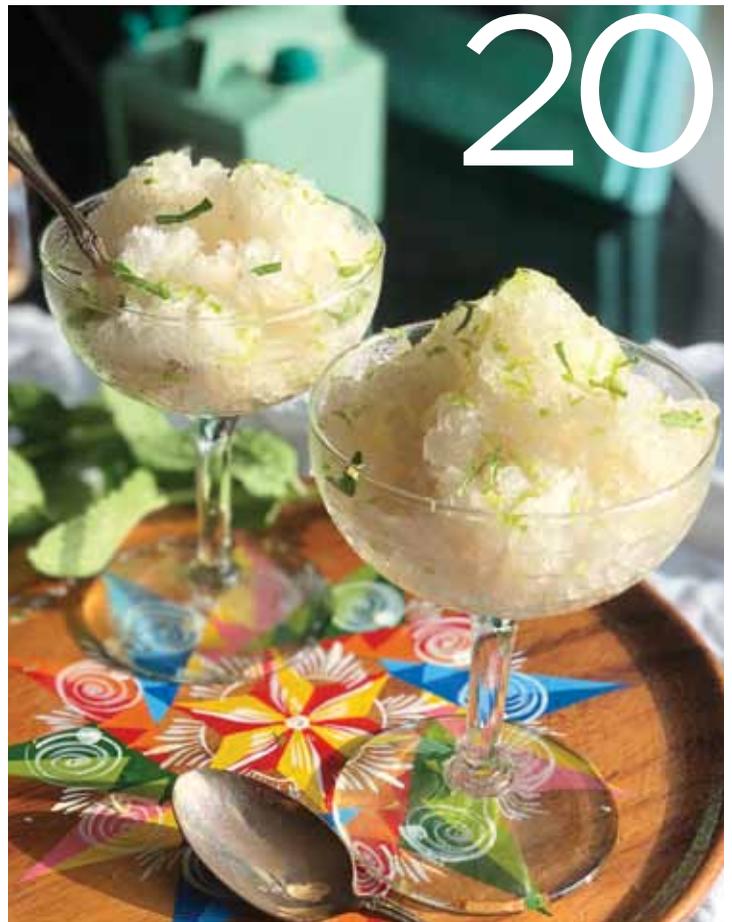
20 **RECIPE**  
Prosecco and lime  
granita

30 **PROFILE**  
Shantal Huckaby

38 **GOODWILL**  
Tri Kappa

### IN EVERY ISSUE

- 42 WEDDING
- 44 OUR SIDE OF TOWN
- 46 THE BIG PICTURE



20



42

# COLUMBUS

May 25, 2022

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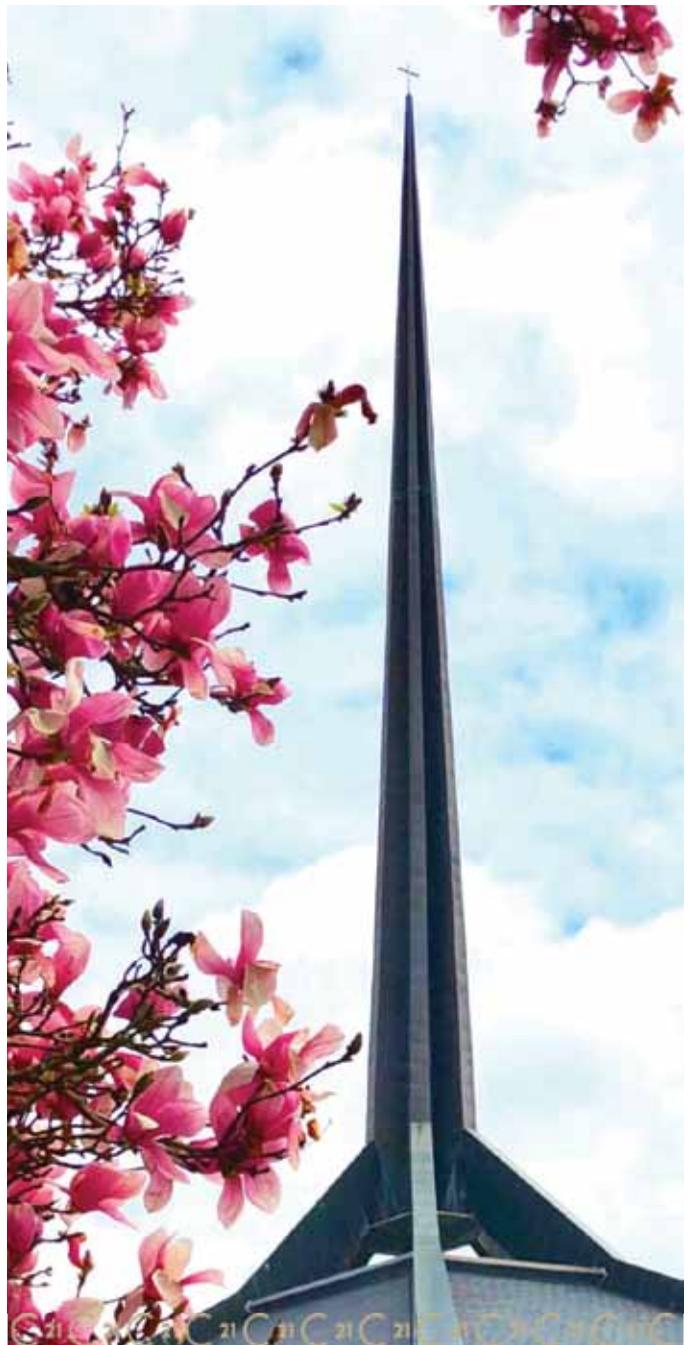
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## Hello!

Summer is approaching, and with summer comes vacation!

When summer comes around we are all ready for a much needed break, to soak in the sun and have some fun with friends and family.

I will soon be on my own long vacation. Though maternity leave will likely leave me sleep deprived, it will be a wonderful time to spend with my friends and family.

For me, packing is the hardest part of vacation. I find myself in a frenzy over how many outfits I need, how many pairs of shoes to bring and if I should pack for unexpected weather. I'm awfully forgetful on a good day, so I'm always paranoid I'm going to forget something important like a phone charger, toothbrush or hair brush.

Preparing for my hospital stay is no different. At my baby shower this weekend my aunt asked me if I had my bag packed yet. It made me suddenly realize he could come at any time and I am not prepared.

While lying in bed trying to get some much needed shut-eye, my mind went spiraling into a panic over what I need for my overnight stay. I've never had to stay at a hospital overnight and this is my first child, so I have no idea what to expect or what to plan for.

I did the worst thing possible — I turned to Google. I ended up finding list after list of suggestions on what to bring for myself, the baby and my husband. I read mom blogs that had suggestions on what they thought was most useful to have or what they wish they had brought with them. Apparently, it's suggested to pack snacks for your husband? I never would have thought to pack things for him. I'm too focused on how much pain I'll be in the whole time.

Three hours later, I finally decided I should stop worrying about this now and try to get some sleep. There's always tomorrow to worry, right? Here I am now, sleep deprived and still worrying with no clue on what I plan to pack. I've asked a friend who recently had a baby for some advice, so hopefully I can calm myself down enough to get this bag packed in time.

While you kick back and relax this summer, read about delicious burgers you can eat around town, local home builders, Shantal Huckaby's work as a nurse and Tri Kappa's dedication to philanthropy.

I hope you don't stress over your suitcases as much as me and enjoy your summer.



*Keely*  
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In each issue of Columbus, we ask people for their opinions on a variety of topics. This month's question:

## What is your favorite vacation memory?



It is a vacation I recently took with my dad and his girlfriend. He owns race horses and they had their first race at Tampa Downs in Tampa, Florida about two months ago. So I got to go and see my dad's horses race for the first time in Tampa and it was really fun.

— Baili Ewing



Going to Marco Island Florida and being there when the turtles were laying their eggs. Everybody had to turn their lights off at night for the turtles. We were told that the turtle hatchlings followed the moonlight that reflected on the ocean water and when the lights were on in the condos they would get confused and follow the lights to the buildings and they would not survive.

— Brenda and Sam Adams



Being on top of a camel at the Great Pyramid of Egypt during a wonderful trip I took with my husband. We did a cruise and got off the cruise ship and took an excursion down along the Suez Canal until we got to Cairo. We went to the pyramids and we had lunch in style on the Nile. It started at the Four Seasons Hotel and it was on a barge and the barge was painted like something out of your art history book, it had all the gold and turquoise, it was so memorable.

— Ellen DeDomenic



Going to Seattle to visit a friend with my entire family and ending up meeting a new friend and getting to go on a very large yacht for an evening. It was unbelievable and it truly gave me a love of the water, one that our entire family shares to this day.

— Ashton Wischmeier



Snorkeling in the Florida Keys. It was relaxing and beautiful, I spent time with the family, it was great!

— John Sadtler



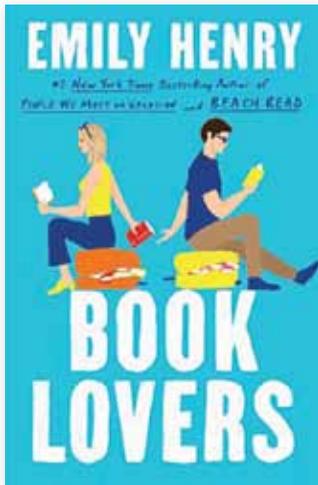
It was the last time my entire family was able to take a vacation together before the kids went off to college and started their own lives. I still remember that vacation very fondly. We went to Fort Walton Beach, Florida, and stayed right on the beach. We kind of relaxed the entire week, it was pretty cool.

— Marc Rape



I lived in Colorado for five years and we would vacation up in the mountains. My cousin had an Airstream trailer that we took to the hotspots and camped in the beautiful Rocky Mountains. That was my favorite vacation.

— Rinesha and Theodore Martinez

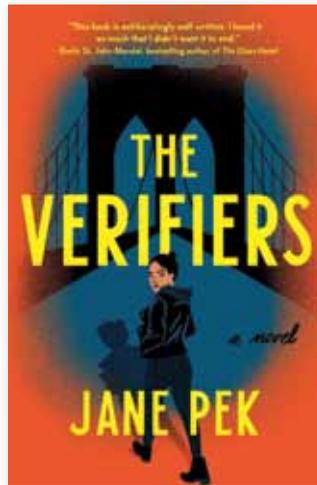


### “Book Lovers”

By Emily Henry

Sadly, advance reader copies — our beloved pre-pub peeks at upcoming titles — are hard to come by these days due to supply issues. None of us has read Emily Henry’s newest novel, but we are all dying to get our hands on it. “Book Lovers” is sure to be a customer favorite. (I mean, the title alone is enough to make me move it to the top of my TBR list!) Nora Stephen’s life is books — she’s read them all — and she is NOT that type of heroine. Not the plucky one, not the laidback dream girl, and especially not the sweetheart. In fact, the only people for whom Nora IS a heroine are her clients. She is a cutthroat literary agent who will stop at nothing to secure a sweet book deal ...

— Nanne Cutler

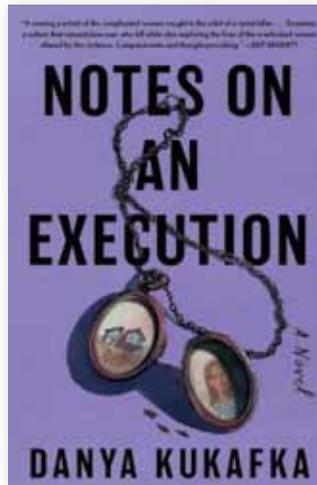


### “The Verifiers”

By Jane Pek

This is the story of Claudia, a verifier at a dating detective agency, whose work is unbeknownst to her traditionally minded Asian family. As a lifelong reader of mysteries, she thinks she has found the perfect job. However, she finds herself caught up in a mystery surrounding a new client and tries to solve it just as her literary heroes would do. This book also provides interesting insight into the world of online dating and how technology shapes our lives.

— April Ginnings

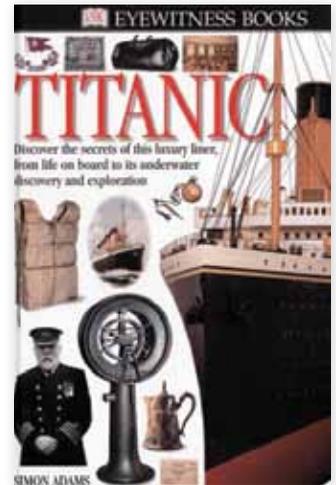


### “Notes on an Execution”

By Danya Kukafka

I love true crime, I love thrillers and I love dark mysteries. With the title of Danya Kukafka’s novel alone, my interest was piqued. And then the book starts: “12 Hours.” As in, 12 hours until execution. Serial killer Ansel Packer counts down the final hours of his life, alternating throughout the book with the “why,” as told by three women who were instrumental in his life and conviction. Oh, yeah. This book was my jam. While not a true crime, it easily could have been. There are far too many similar and disturbing tales every day in the media. But a thriller? Yeah. A dark mystery? OH, YEAH. This story was haunting and compelling and utterly readable (although — spoiler alert — animal lovers might find a few scenes too upsetting to continue). If dark thrillers are also your jam, you are going to love this book.

— Angie Revell

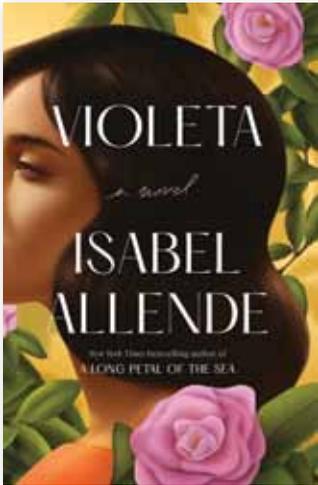


### DK “Eyewitness” Series

By DK Publishing

Want a glimpse into my geeky childhood? Look no further than the “Eyewitness” series for children by DK Publishing. With topics like the Titanic, Ancient Egypt and Islam, it’s a flashback to rainy days with the World Book Encyclopedia. DK is known for their visually stunning layouts peppered with memorable facts and characters. These are available in paperback with a \$9.99 price tag. Sure, one can “go to the computer” for these topics ... but trust me, these are books one wants to hold and save. I’ll be recommending this series heavily come the holidays ... heck, start now and build the whole collection!

— Polly Verbanic



### “Violeta”

By Isabel Allende

In the last issue, I said I was eagerly anticipating this book. Now, I've read it! A master storyteller, Isabel Allende makes you feel like Violeta is telling you her life story over a cup of tea. She speaks in the form of a letter to someone she loves above all others, recounting devastating heartbreak and passionate affairs, times of both poverty and wealth, terrible loss, and immense joy. Her story begins in a pandemic and ends in one. A sweeping recount of 100 years of life, love and war.

— Kate Stinebring

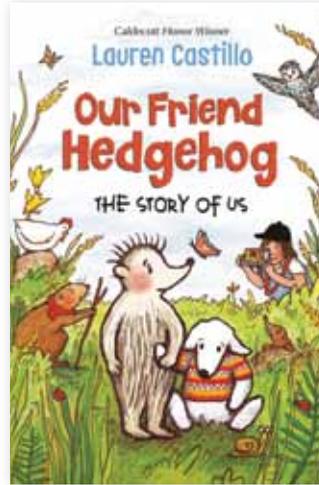


### “Hotel Portofino”

By J. P. O'Connell

This is a book on my “to be read” list — you've got one, right? — that is moving to the top of the pile. I was intrigued as soon as I saw “For fans of ‘Downton Abbey’ and ‘The Crown’” on the back cover. Presented by our good friends at Blackstone Publishing, “Hotel Portofino” is headed to PBS. Bella Ainsworth and her husband are tired of England after the first Great War. They purchase a villa in Portofino, Italy, where they spent their honeymoon, and turn it into a high-class hotel. This is the beautiful Italian Riviera in the roaring 20's. Sounds like fun, doesn't it? The book is always better, so I'm determined to read it before it premieres.

— Kelli Stricklin

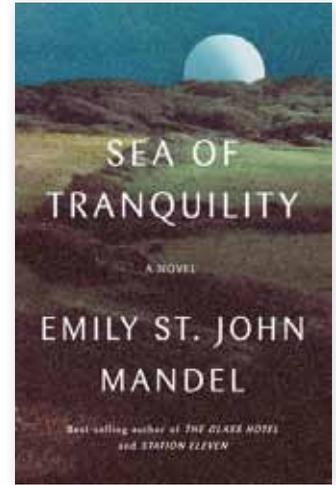


### “Our Friend Hedgehog: The Story of Us”

By Lauren Castillo

Summer nights are the perfect time to read this sweet children's book with a little one on your lap. It's got all the makings of a classic to stand along A.A. Milne's “Winnie the Pooh:” an interesting cast of characters; a bit of adventure; gentle lessons about cooperation, friendship and courage; a hopeful ending; and gorgeous illustrations. We can — and do — read this story again and again without tiring of it. I'm looking forward to the second book, “Our Friend Hedgehog: A Place to Call Home,” which comes out in mid-October.

— Beth Stroh



### “Sea of Tranquility”

By Emily St. John Mandel

There has been a tremendous amount of buzz surrounding this book and author, so I stepped out of my comfort zone to see what it was all about. I'm so glad I did! This was an amazing, very well-written science fiction/mystery that I could not put down. It left me pondering life, time and space, and the possibility of living on the moon. I marked so many pages to go back and read again! Meant to be a stand-alone, I learned there are many references to her two previous books, “Station Eleven” and “The Glass Hotel,” so I will be adding those to my library as well.

— Theresa Wilson





# CULINARY CLASSIC

BY BARNEY QUICK //  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JANA JONES

The hamburger qualifies as the great American sandwich if any two slices of bread with food between them does. While the simple, classic version isn't likely to ever disappear, it lends itself to customization. Several Columbus establishments have created signature burgers that reflect the flair and imagination of their owners and kitchen staff. Let's stop in at a few and see what's sizzling.



Rohde's Diner 1644 Orinoco Avenue | (812) 372-1890

Rohde's Diner has drawn a crowd of regulars since it opened in October 2018. The breakfast enthusiasts have their favorites, as do lunch patrons.

The diner's Wisconsin burger is a hit. Proprietor Sarah Rohde esti-

mates they sell upwards of twenty per week.

The foundation is a quarter-pound beef patty. It's topped with pulled pork, bacon and cheese. Some order the deluxe version, with lettuce, tomato, pickle and onion.

What's the significance of the name?

"My husband has family in Wisconsin," says Rhode.

Is this something they eat?

"Not really. He just thought it would work."

Zaharakos needs no introduction to locals or even most tourists who take a break from their modernist architecture sightseeing with any number of old-fashioned ice cream treats. It's been a staple of the downtown dining scene since the early twentieth century, when three brothers from Sparta launched the tradition that includes a marble-and-onyx counter, a soda fountain and the Welte Orchestrion.

One aspect of this tradition has a beginning that is shrouded in mystery. The Cheese-Brr-Grr, which is a variation of their classic GOM Sandwich topped with American cheese.

If you're not from Columbus, you may need some edification regarding "gom." It's akin to sloppy Joe filling. Spices such as chili powder and garlic powder are added to a pan of oil, diced onion and crumbled ground beef. Brown sugar and molasses add the signature stickiness and sweetness. Old-time residents were familiar with the term from their childhoods. Every Columbus mom made gom. The etymology is murky, though. Theories include that it came from the German adjective "gommy," as well as its having been coined by one of the Greek founders.

In any event, it's an unforgettable sandwich experience and the perfect prelude to a banana split, sundae or float.





## Dale Moore's Corner Store 854 Cottage Avenue | (812) 657-3005

This establishment is owned by a father-and-son team, both of whom are named Dale Moore, so one can't go wrong addressing either that way.

There is a retail area that sells the sundry items one would find in a convenience store, but the big attraction is the food that the elder Dale, who also goes by Roger, puts out in the cafe area Monday through Saturday. And one of the most popular items is the burger and fries special.

The default way that the burger is dressed is with lettuce, tomato and pickle, although according to

the younger Dale, who also answers to Christian, "We'll actually put just about anything anybody wants on a burger. Some like to top it with our homemade coney sauce."

They even offer a chuck roast burger, topped with — you guessed it — chuck roast and smoked gouda.

The two Dales opened the store and cafe at the beginning of 2021. Since then, they've built a clientele of regulars, including some who come by twice a day.

Prior to embarking on this enterprise, Christian had been in the Marine Corps and worked

as an EMT on the west side of Indianapolis.

Roger, now 60, began cooking at Sap's Coffee House, which had been located at 12th and Washington, at age 14. Over the decades, his experience has ranged from working for the Lemley catering operation, Chef James Gregory, Claire Gregory and their daughter Bianca Gregory Snyder. Roger was executive chef for a while at the Left Banke, an upscale downtown restaurant that existed from 1979 to 1992.

Christian's stepmom and grandmother work in the kitchen as well.

This longtime Columbus institution is in its third location. Originally situated on Fourth Street in the heart of downtown, it was later located on State Street. It will be in its current location, the space evolving from its identity as Fair Oaks Mall into NexusPark, through 2021, and then move to the old Shorty's Lunch property near Sixth and Union Streets.

The basic hamburger has always

been its trademark sandwich, and the grilled onion the trademark component of how it's dressed. Current grill cook Matt Hendren has respected this when he's added his creations to the burger lineup.

Thus, his Big Lucas starts with that. It also sports two patties, a middle bun, 2 slices of American cheese, shredded lettuce, diced onion, pickle slices and a special

mayonnaise-based sauce.

He's also come up with what he calls the Western, which is adorned with pepper jack cheese, an onion ring, jalapeño slices and barbecue sauce.

When the shop relocates to the Shorty's building, it will offer a breaded tenderloin based on the Shorty's approach, but with a Lucas Brothers spin.





GRAB THIS  
BY TWINKLE  
VANWINKLE  
*Granita*

Cool down after dinner or on a summery afternoon with the sweetness of this prosecco and lime granita. Serve with fresh mint and chase the heat away.

- 2 tablespoons grated fresh ginger
- 3 mint leaves, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- 3 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup sugar
- 3 cups prosecco
- Zest of 2 limes
- 2 tablespoons mint leaves, julienned

In a small saucepan, heat water, sugar, salt, ginger and mint just until the sugar dissolves, stirring for about 5 to 7 minutes. Remove from heat and pour in prosecco and lime juice. Pour liquid into a wide flat pan, such as a cake pan or a large Pyrex casserole dish. Cover well with plastic wrap. Place the pan in the freezer, making sure the pan is flat and stable. Let freeze for at least 5 to 6 hours, until the liquid has turned to ice and creates chunky flakes when scored with a fork. Stir and score the ice about every hour. Once the granita mixture has a consistent flaky texture, serve in a chilled glass, garnishing with fresh lime zest and mint.

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# BUILDERS BEHIND Dream Homes



Jodie and Fred Cusack with MAC General Contractors

## Local companies specialize in building custom houses

**BY GLENDA WINDERS //  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANGELA JACKSON**

*It's no small thing to construct a new building in a city whose name is synonymous with architecture. However, homes of distinction and beauty are going up every day under the skilled direction of local custom builders. We asked a few of them to talk about their process — how they work with their clients, what rewards they reap as builders and what sets their companies apart from one another. Here's what they had to say:*



## Columbus Custom Builders

812-343-9559 | [thecolumbuscustombuilders.com](http://thecolumbuscustombuilders.com)

Drew and Greg Kiel

Columbus Custom Builders is also a family business that started with grandfather Charles Kiel and now is operated by son Greg and his son, Drew. Among the three generations they have more than 75 years of experience in Columbus alone. They credit their success to the relationships they've built throughout the community.

"We're building a family within the community, as well," said project manager Thayer Hood, who is almost related since Drew's wife's brother is godfather to his son. "We're not just building one house and moving on to the next one. We're creating lasting relationships with homeowners and creating an environment that is open to them and allows them to ask questions and be a part of the process as much as they want."

While CCB used to do renovations and additions, now they concentrate on custom homes. But they don't have a minimum price. They'll build at whatever price point the client has in mind.

"We're willing to build houses of any

scale," he said. "We invite people to come in, and we'll sit down with them and talk."

He said they have a variety of clients — from those who haven't even yet bought land and have no idea what they're doing to those who come in with completed plans and a list of subcontractors they want to use.

"We can start with the client from square one," he said. "If they don't have a plan we can do the drawings in-house for free. That's part of our process."

He said their goal is to build a strong foundation of trust with clients that allows the company to interact with them throughout the process. They go over the plans with the customer until they are exactly right, using lots of graphics and listing everything that needs to be ordered so the clients are never surprised. Hood's job allows him to interact with clients, whether it's about making selections, questioning the bill, wondering about the timeline or anything else.

"We understand where the customer is coming from," he said, so this allows the customer to have the opportunity to really open up to us with questions. We believe if we communicate with our customers and are honest and transparent, everything else falls into line. Trust is everything."

Hien and Nick Bennett are clients who have benefitted from that philosophy.

"It was a blessing that we came across Columbus Custom Builders," Hien said. "They are very personable, and they work hard to help get you all you desire in a home. They will continue to work with you until you are fully satisfied."

Their ethic also extends to their relationships with subcontractors.

"We do so much work with these guys, and we try to treat them like family," Hood said. "It's because of them that we can finish jobs in a timely manner. We're able to do all we do because of them and the supportive community.

# MAC General Contractors

812-314-7831 | macpropertygroup.com

Fred and Jodie Cusack, owners of MAC General Contractors, believe so strongly in having good relationships with their clients that they have what Jodie calls “meet and greets” with potential customers before committing to building their homes.

“The builder and the homeowner are kind of joined at the hip for at least a couple of years,” Fred said. “It starts with the planning process and goes through the warranty period. We want to make sure everybody clicks and it’s a good fit. Building a home is a partnership. You have to look at each other with mutual respect and dignity and treat each other with trust. We don’t build for everyone.”

One of the features they feel sets their business apart from others is that in addition to the standard one-year warranty they offer a 10-year extended warranty that provides clients with a secure sign-in where they can document their issues and be connected with the subcontractor needed to resolve them. Another is the Co-Construct software they use to track all of the communications exchanged with the homeowner as they work together on planning, estimating, figuring out the budget and implementing the construction process.

“Everybody loses emails and text messages,” Fred said, “but this program facilitates and keeps track of everybody’s communications back and forth.”

MAC does new construction, additions and renovations. They work on several projects at once with Fred “making everything happen,” according to Jodie. She works as bookkeeper and designer, Ryan Newland is their on-site superintendent and a crew

of in-house employees and valued subcontractors round out their team.

“We want to give the highest level of service and professionalism,” Fred said, “and when we are all on the same page — us, the owners and the subcontractors — we all feel valued and everyone can do their best work.”

The Cusacks started a trend in Columbus with their crisp, black-and-white modern-farmhouse design, and Sheena Seeger lives in one of those homes.

“MAC came highly recommended by several friends,” she said, “and we knew after meeting with Fred and Jodie that they were our builder of choice. Their team was fantastic to work with from design through build, with timely commu-

nication and budget tracking through the Co-Construct app. Their entire team and subcontractors were professional and easy to work with, and we couldn’t be happier with the final result. We thank them for our beautiful home.”

Fred said one of the greatest rewards in his profession is driving past a finished home and feeling pride and a sense of accomplishment.

“A lot of people do very powerful jobs and very meaningful work,” he said, “but they might work on a project for five years and never see it finished. What we do in a relatively short amount of time brings a lot of good feelings. Putting a family into a home that we’ve built is definitely a joy of ours.”



Jodie and Fred Cusack

## Stidham Construction

812-343-1086



Columbus native Tom Stidham comes by his building talents naturally: His grandfather, Doc Stillinger, was a popular Columbus builder in the 1940s. Tom's whole career has been in construction, and eight years ago he and his wife, Jennifer, started Stidham Construction.

Their niche is new construction of luxury homes that usually run in the neighborhood of 10,000 square feet, many for wealthy and influential clients who don't want to have their names disclosed. The Stidhams' values, however, are similar to those of the other builders.

"Every day they both work to make sure the customer is the top priority and to ensure that the homeowners' vision becomes a reality," said Ashley Baugher, their office manager. "They are detail-oriented from the beginning of the process to the end. They know they're not just building a house — they're building a home where memories will be made."

Tom added, "They may not remember the builder, but for generations to come the family will be able to enjoy the space."

He said they usually meet with clients several times before they actually become clients to begin building a relationship.

"We liken it to a marriage," he said. "You date and build a solid foundation with mutual trust and respect. You're together quite a bit — several hours a day, sometimes for years."

And like the other builders, they give credit for their success to the people with whom they work, including architects and subcontractors. They use the same group of subs consistently to ensure high quality.

"The whole basis of our company is that we work as a team," he said, "and our employees have high skill levels. That's how we best facilitate taking care of our customers."

Tom Stidham



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*Banister Construction*

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Tom Banister, who learned construction from two builder uncles and started his own business in 1984, now works alongside son Chase as well as other family members and skilled employees. The word that comes up frequently in his conversations is “service,” regardless of what a particular client needs.

Knowledgeable clients often come to him with plans already in mind, and he is happy to enter the picture at the point where they need him. Others might require his help from the beginning with site analysis and development, design and working plans all the way to specifications for the project.

“We just fall into place and help as much as we can,” he said. “We like to think we provide a total custom experience for our clients. We are very hands-on in our approach and we like to interject as much knowledge and information as we can, but we’re also led by the clients. If they don’t have much time and want us to take the lead, we can provide that service, as well.”

Another word both he and Chase use often is “team” — as in his own four to six employees and the subcontractors with whom they work regularly. While the subs

are working on their specialties, the Banister group supports them in any way they can.

“We live by the philosophy that we’re picking up the slack in the rope wherever that is,” Chase said. “The people our clients see coming in and out every day are truly a team.”

Chase said he was lucky enough to be encouraged to put on a tool belt when he was in high school, with his first job being to sweep his dad’s job sites at the end of the day. Today in addition to his many other duties his father credits him with keeping the company up to date by texting with clients who prefer that form of communication and connecting with the public on social media.

While the company occasionally does some renovations and additions, Banister said it’s new construction that they “gear up and get excited about,” so that’s where they try to keep their focus.

“We try to provide custom products and services for our clients to make the experience an exciting and fun venture, as it should be,” he said. “We want to give them what they dream their finished residence will be.”

And apparently their formula is working. Former client Michelle Critzer said she and her husband, Greg, are delighted with the French country house he built for them.

“Tom Banister is an out-of-the-box thinker,” she said. “He never gave us no as an answer. To this day he continues to take care of our home if any issue arises. That gives us peace of mind and shows he takes pride in his work.”

Chase also clearly admires his father. “My dad is truly a master carpenter and artist,” he said, “not only in the finished product but in walking alongside people in their home building experience. This is his legacy. The rest of us just get to help.”

In taking the company into the future, they are looking to grow the team with people “who want to get out there and get after it, who are coachable and want to work in a team environment,” Chase said. He said it is an honor for him to step into the teaching role now to help builders hone their skills.

“After all,” he said, “once upon a time I was the kid pushing the broom around the job site.” ©

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# *Unsung Hero*

Local nurse stays dedicated amid tough times

BY GLENDA WINDERS // PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANGELA JACKSON





S

Shantal Huckaby can't help the tears that well up in her eyes when she talks about her work as a nurse in the intensive care unit at Columbus Regional Health during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. And they spill right over and run down her cheeks when she recalls specific patients. She often thinks of one in particular who was close to death but had decided to go onto a ventilator as a last-ditch effort.

"Right before we were getting ready to intubate him he looked at me and said, 'I'm so scared.' That was hard. I held his hand and prayed with him, and then he talked to his family for the last time. It was difficult. He subsequently passed, but he has stuck with me."

She said that "hands down" the hardest part of her job has been losing people she had grown to care about, but other things

have been difficult, too, like putting on all of the equipment before she could even start a shift — PAPRs (motorized power air-purifying respirators), N95 masks, face shields, gowns and gloves. Some days she was no more than through the door when she learned that a patient from the emergency room was ready to be transported to the unit or someone was being transferred from the COVID unit because nurses there had maxed out on the oxygen they could administer. Often several people required attention at once, such as when patients who weren't becoming sufficiently oxygenated had to be turned onto their bellies for 14 hours and then again to their backs for the next eight.

"That required a lot of us to work together," Huckaby said. "We would go from room to room and get them all done. I can't speak enough about the teamwork that I

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saw. ICU nurses can really come together and work as a unit, and that was really remarkable to see.”

She said the nurses helped one another in other ways, too.

“With all of the death and negative things we saw we were able to just hold each other and support each other, and if one of us needed to step away because they couldn’t handle it at the time we said, ‘Take the time you need and we’ll do the work.’ Seeing that was inspiring.”

With elective surgeries halted, nurses from the surgical services unit came to the ICU to help.

“Whether it was helping us clean somebody up, clean our

equipment, give medications, wherever they could, they would jump in and help us,” Huckaby said. “It was teamwork, not just at the unit level but at an interdisciplinary level.”

Something else she praises about her co-workers is that whenever a COVID patient was going onto a ventilator the nurses stopped whatever else they were doing to call the families because they knew the chances of a positive outcome were slim.

Rohni Lange, a fellow nurse who was Huckaby’s preceptor when she first moved to the ICU, agrees.

“COVID was a devastating time in the ICU,” she said.

“With deaths every day and sometimes multiple times a day, we nurses had to be there, not only for our patients, but for each other. We needed each other to lean on. We were the patients’ family. We were the ones in the room when they were dying. We held their hands as they took their last breaths. That takes a toll on a person. Our team of ICU nurses got each other through that because we were the only ones who knew how it felt to be in that situation. We vented to each other, we cried with each other, and we just listened to one another.”

She added that Huckaby was a standout during that time.

“Shantal is extremely

hardworking and passionate about her patients,” Lange said. “She always advocates for them and their wishes, and she’s always willing to learn something new or share her knowledge with others. The ICU is about teamwork, and Shantal is willing to jump in and help whenever someone needs her. Most of the time they don’t even have to ask. She does the little things for her patients that truly make a difference in their stay.”

Colleagues and patients alike have praised Huckaby for her positive attitude, but she doesn’t know any other way to be.

“When I go into work I try to leave all of my personal life behind,” she said. “I’m there to do my job and provide the best

care that I can. I ask myself how I would want my family to be treated. I would want somebody to listen to them and advocate for them. I use that as my driving force for treating patients with respect.”

For her efforts she has won a Florence Nightingale Award given for exceptional nursing skills and some “Shining Stars” when grateful patients made a donation to the hospital in her honor.

Since graduating from nursing school at the University of Illinois Chicago, Huckaby’s entire nursing career has been at CRH. She moved to Columbus to be with her now-wife, Ashley, who works in health and safety at Cummins Inc. The two were introduced by mutual friends in Chicago and

“With all of the death and negative things we saw we were able to just hold each other and support each other, and if one of us needed to step away because they couldn’t handle it at the time we said, ‘Take the time you need and we’ll do the work.’ Seeing that was inspiring.”

— Shantal Huckaby

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Shantal, Ashton and Ashley Huckaby

married in 2014. Now they are the parents of Ashton, age 3.

Huckaby first spent two years in the medical-surgical unit, then moved to endoscopy, where she was a procedural nurse for the next five. In September 2020, with the pandemic raging, she decided the ICU was where she needed to be.

“That really turned my world upside down,” she said. “A lot of people thought I was crazy for jumping into that, but it has been one of the best experiences I’ve had. One of the hardest parts has been that a lot of our COVID patients who were critically ill weren’t able to have their families at their sides. We did a lot of video calls and held a lot of hands, but at the same time it was so rewarding to be able to be there with those patients, to comfort them and tell them we were going to be there with them, we were going to fight for them when they couldn’t fight for themselves anymore.”

Nancy Verwers, the ICU manager, said Huckaby “absolutely soared” after she made the move.

“All of Shantal’s interactions with patients and their families are the utmost in professional nursing standards,” she said. “She is a lifelong learner, so she loves to be challenged and learn new things. She’s a great nurse.”

In fact, challenges have been a part of Huckaby’s life from the very beginning. She was born in Chetumal, Quintana Roo, Mexico, and she and her parents immigrated to the United States when she was in third grade and could speak only Spanish. Within a year she was able to move

from bilingual classes to those in English, and today she is fluent in both languages. She credits her mother, a certified nursing assistant who has always worked in nursing homes, with being her role model.

“She inspired me to go into health care because of the emotional attachment and the bonds she created with her patients,” Huckaby said. “My goal is to help somebody who is in a vulnerable part of their life and make it just a little bit better, whether it’s through actual nursing practice or making them feel comfortable and safe when they are in a pretty scary place.”

With the pandemic easing, she’s ready to begin yet another challenge. She has just started a doctor of nursing program at Marian University in Indianapolis with the goal of becoming a nurse anesthetist. She’ll be a full-time student, so she is

stepping away from full-time nursing, but she says she’ll pick up shifts when she is needed, hopefully at CRH. She says while she’s keeping an open mind about her future, one of the possibilities is coming back to CRH, where the anesthesiology program is growing and hiring CRNAs.

“I’m loyal to a fault,” she said. “I love the feel of a small community hospital where I know the nurses, the physicians, the respiratory therapists, the dieticians, the housekeepers. I’ve worked with some of these people for years, and I have enjoyed developing those relationships and feeling like this is my home.”

Huckaby likes spending the little free time she has with her family. She and Ashley are part of a softball league at Lincoln Park every summer and they play in a co-ed volleyball league at the armory year-round. They live near the People Trail, so

that’s where they walk the dogs they have rescued, a St. Bernard and collie mix named Tripp and a miniature pinscher mix named Lexi. Keeping Ashton outside and busy is also a priority. She also enjoys reading and said all three of them “love, love, love” to travel, with their biggest trip so far to Mumbai for a friend’s wedding. She laughingly said Ashton’s favorite part is buying snacks at the airport.

But then she grew more serious.

“One of the biggest reasons I agreed to do this interview was that I really wanted to point out that I am so proud of all of the other nurses I’ve worked with,” she said. “It has been a privilege to learn from them. The amount of teamwork that goes on in the ICU warrants recognition, but a lot of it goes unseen. Nobody does it for the attention, but they all deserve it.” ☺

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Members pose for a photo at a Walk to end Alzheimer's event.

## WOMEN KEEP *Working Together*

Tri Kappa, since 1906, has provided opportunities for friendship and community involvement

**BY REBECCA BERFANGER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CARLA CLARK  
AND SUBMITTED BY TRI KAPPA**

For more than a century, the Columbus chapter of Tri Kappa has continuously been promoting a mission of charity, culture and education within the community.

Like many organizations, they've encountered a few struggles over the last few years in terms of engagement of members while having many virtual meetings, but they continue to promote and support other local charities.

Now meeting in-person again, their work includes supporting a Fun Run with the Columbus Running Club at Mill Race Park, a breakfast with Santa, the Walk to End Alzheimer's and local literacy programs. Plus, they provide scholarships to local women attending Indiana colleges and universities.

The first chapter of the organization was founded in Indianapolis in 1901 as a sorority of students attending Girls' Classical School. The idea was for those members to go to their home communities to start local chapters. By 1906, Columbus had its own chapter. Today there are 142 active chapters, 94 associate chapters, and 8,000 members around the state in this Hoosier-only organization.

The Columbus chapter has about 15 active members and is looking to expand their outreach, says clinical and neuropsychologist Dr. E. Ann Miller, the chapter's president.

"I think [the founders] would find some nice familiarity in our trueness to the mission statement," she says. Tri Kappa in 2022 is "also operated as a philanthropic organization that runs in a similar way to a sorority, with the rituals and initiation. ... I think they would be proud we've stayed true to the mission. Who starts an organization and thinks it will still be going and growing 100 years later?"

Dr. Miller first joined the organization in 2012. What drew her in was a past experience in a sorority and a desire to help the community in a significant way.

Past-President Laura Daily, business department coordinator and

business teacher at Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation, joined the Columbus chapter in 2011 from the invitation of a friend.

"I was looking for opportunities to give back to the community and to meet others with similar interests and goals," she says. "Serving as president was an awesome opportunity to meet and work with others across the state. It also gave me an appreciation of how important and necessary our work is to our community."

Vice President Michelle Findley, a solo attorney who practices elder law and estate planning, learned about Tri Kappa from her mom, who was a member of the Plainfield, then Avon, Tri Kappa chapters throughout Findley's life.

"I helped establish the Avon chapter while I was in high school and joined as soon as I could become a collegiate

member," she says. "When we moved to Columbus in 2012, joining the Columbus Tri Kappa chapter was the first place that I met other women in our community."

All three women have worked on various projects. Dr. Miller highlighted her involvement with the Cares and Prayers Subcommittee.

"There is a very nice fellowship among the women. We feel very supported when someone has something come up in their life: a death or illness in the family, the need for a call or text or a meal brought to the house," she says.

Dr. Miller also mentions the organization's work to support children in the community, including an opportunity to have breakfast with Santa — with proceeds benefiting the Columbus non-profit Rise Up, providing support to adults in recovery



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Dr. E. Ann Miller, Tri Kappa president

“There is a very nice fellowship among the women. We feel very supported when someone has something come up in their life: a death or illness in the family, the need for a call or text or a meal brought to the house.”

— Dr. E. Ann Miller

to re-enter the community; vision screenings for preschoolers; and donations of books and volunteer hours to promote literacy.

The statewide organization of Tri Kappa has continuously supported Riley Hospital in Indianapolis throughout the hospital’s 100-year history. According to the statewide organization’s website, Tri Kappa has donated more than \$1 million and thousands of dolls and blankets in that time, thanks to the work of the local chapters including the one in Columbus.

Tri Kappa also supports older youths with scholarships to Indiana-area academic, vocational, and fine arts programs. They also have an emergency fund to help college students cover tuition, books, rent and other essentials.

Dr. Miller adds that there is flexibility in the types of projects and amount of support they provide, particularly if a member has a special interest or wants to partner with a specific organization. For instance, her grandmother had Alzheimer’s, so she has appreciated Tri Kappa’s involvement with Walk to End Alzheimer’s.

Daily has been a team captain for the local Walk to End Alzheimer’s, supported by other members of Tri Kappa, and shares how Tri Kappa has helped other local causes.

“During my membership, I have coordinated our annual pecan sale, which is a fundraiser to benefit our scholarships that are awarded each spring,” she says. “I have volunteered with many Tri Kappa committees and events,

like Breakfast with Santa, Literacy Fair, Preschool Fun Run and many other projects that serve children and adults in our community.”

Dr. Miller adds that they are open to partnerships with other non-profit organizations throughout the community.

Tri Kappa frequently donates volunteer hours to various events and charities; hands out water and snacks at charity runs, such as the Fun Run at Mill Race Park; and helps raise funds, including scholarships and support for the Columbus Philharmonic.

Ultimately, the women say, they are hoping to expand the organization to include women from all walks of life.

“One unique thing about Tri Kappa is it allows members to connect with women that



Michelle Finley, Tri Kappa vice president

are of different generations and individuals you would not otherwise run into, expanding the full sense of community in Columbus,” says Findley.

As for the types of members they are currently seeking, Findley says they are seeking women with, “Just an interest in getting to know other women in the community and an interest in volunteering towards the betterment of the community.”

It is also a manageable commitment, says Dr. Miller.

“We meet once a month and 10 months out of the year,” Daily says. “We also incorporate socials and outings so we have an opportunity to have fun, learn and grow together.”

To learn more, Daily says, “Readers can follow our chapter Facebook page to learn more about



Tri Kappa members made blankets for children at Riley Hospital for Children.

our activities in the community. The Columbus Tau chapter welcomes women who are interested in the values of Tri Kappa (charity, culture, education). Those interested can message us by email or through

our Facebook page.”

Miller also shared her own phone number for anyone who is interested, 812-603-7108, and suggested sending an email to columbustau@trikappa.org. ©

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# Delaney Sunbury & Aaron Zollman

*Ceremony at Saint Bartholomew Catholic Church, reception at Factory 12 Loft // June 12, 2021*

Delaney Sunbury and Aaron Zollman aren't from Columbus, but here they found the perfect place to celebrate the next step in their love story.

Delaney was raised in Seymour, and Aaron in Bedford, but both competed in local track meets. Though they had little interaction in high school and went to different colleges, in 2017 Aaron sent a reply to one of Delaney's Instagram posts and the rest, she said, is history.

In 2020, the couple spent a date night at local restaurants E Sushi and Upland Columbus Pump House where they spent hours talking about life and the future. On the drive back to Seymour, Aaron kept asking about if he were to propose the next day, week or month. When they pulled into her driveway, Aaron said he had to grab something from his car then got down on one knee and asked Delaney to marry him right there in her driveway.

"Little did I know he had the ring for months and was just waiting for the perfect moment," she said.

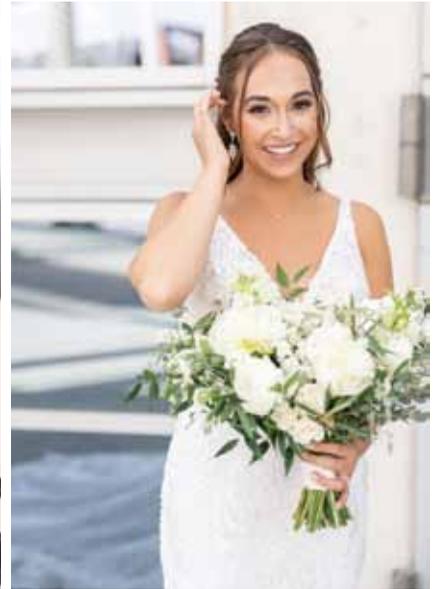
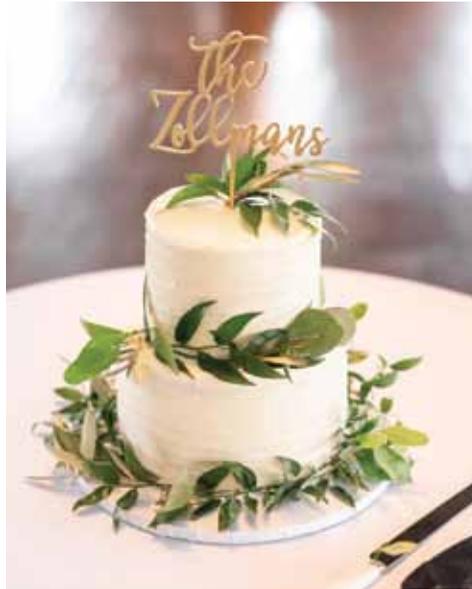
On the wedding day, Delaney said she was so nervous she could barely eat.

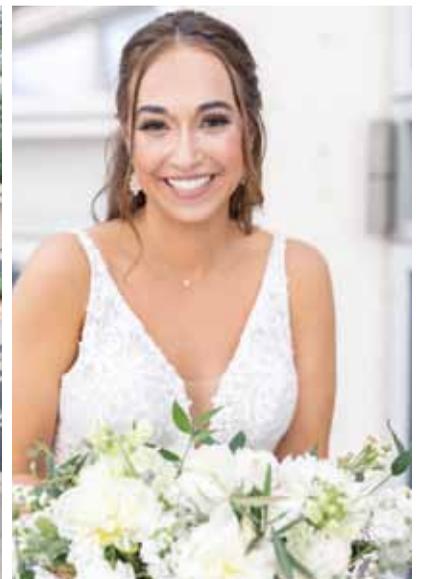
"I think I just wanted everything to go perfectly and it honestly did," she said. "Luckily we decided to do a first look before the ceremony and the second I saw Aaron I felt so much better." They chatted and took photos, which Delaney said put her at ease. "I even got my appetite back and had some popcorn before heading down the aisle!"

Their theme was classic and timeless with white flowers, greenery, a black and white color scheme, and pops of color with dusty rose bridesmaids' dresses and pink dinner napkins. They had plated meals, cupcakes, a fun variety of desserts and a small cake that the couple cut.

Aaron and his family built a wooden photo backdrop and polaroid cameras were provided for guests to take photos for the guest book. Family was involved throughout as Delaney's cousins were flower girls, the couple set up a table to honor Aaron's dad and Delaney's grandpa that had passed away the year before, and Delaney's father delivered a special speech and pre-dinner prayer.

The rest of the day went by quickly for the couple. The next morning they left for their honeymoon in the Dominican Republic for a week of snorkeling, exploring, and relaxing by the pools and beach.





# Harlem Wizards Bartholomew Consolidated School Foundation

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1. Emerson Fields, held up by Wizards players, makes a basket as the BCSF Stars team looks on.
2. Debbie Marr just can't reach the ball held by John "Big J" Smith.
3. Dwayne "Swoop" Simpson helps Lucas Blankenship spin the ball on his finger tip.
4. Fields, held up by the players, is the focus of a skit in which he is the pretend son of Simpson.
5. Benjamin Grayson, pushed by Simpson leads the laps around the court.
6. Ke'Sean Higgins, at left, prepares to catch his ball after it was autographed by Jimmy "Live Action" Bosque.
7. Jill Garris tries to guard James "Roadrunner" Tyndal.
8. Dr. Laura Hack brings D.J. Sims to the court.
9. Jerone Wood does a cartwheel when he is introduced.
10. Michael Norris gets some tips on guarding.
11. Kids tussle for the ball as Harlem Wizards make baskets.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CARLA CLARK







# Summer reflections

The round pond reflects the covered bridge at Mill Race Park in June 2021.

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