



the *Carroler*



March 6
See Page 3
for more info

Photo by Jared Joens

Notice of Board Meetings

Monday, February 9, 2026

CRD Meeting: 6:30 p.m.

CCA Meeting: 7 p.m.

Carrollwood Rec Center • 3515 McFarland Road

Residents welcome to attend.

Carrollwood Civic Association
Carrollwood Recreation District
3515 McFarland Road
Tampa, Florida 33618
www.originalcarrollwood.com
www.originalcarrollwoodCRD.com

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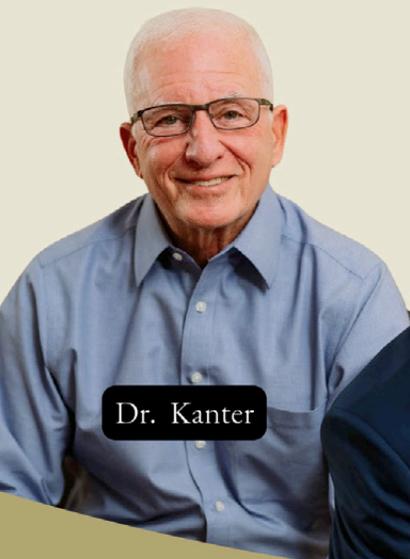


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Dr. Tindell



Dr. Friedman



Dr. Pross

White Sands Beach!

LUAAU PARTY



March 6

6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

(Adult Only Event)

Food:
Pig Roast
& some sides

Break out your brightest Hawaiian shirt and join us for an island inspired evening at White Sands Beach! Enjoy a festive night under the palms with a delicious pig roast with sides, and plenty of tropical fun.

Come ready to relax, mingle, and soak in the aloha spirit!

CCA News



Kristin Nail



John Schinka



Josh Shaffer



Corey McKeown



Jerrod Mills



Max McKinley



Joey Ferraro



Bryan Huls



Jared Jones



Luke Haydel



Neill Boyd



Raquel Pullaro



Ethan Pliskow

By John Schinka, CCA President

Happy New Year to all our Original Carrollwood neighbors! Your CCA Board kicked off the year with a productive January meeting. The Board confirmed its officer positions for this year, and we are excited to welcome Kristin Nail as our incoming President. Several residents were present to share their comments and concerns – we appreciate folks taking time from their schedules to meet with us. We continue to work on our long-term projects, which include our efforts to replenish the canopy of trees in our neighborhood through a county grant and to protect Lake Carroll as the drought and low water levels persist. Jerrod Mills updated the Board on our spring social calendar, including our upcoming Easter event at Original Carrollwood Park. See our list of upcoming events further on in *the Caroler*!



Welcome Newcomer



Please contact Kristin Nail, President to receive a welcome packet.

kristinnail@originalcarrollwood.com
813.205.0541

As we close the chapter on another great holiday season, we send our thanks to the Boy Scouts and volunteers who helped us deliver on a timeless OC tradition – our Christmas luminarias. It was wonderful to see so many neighbors come together in fellowship over the holiday season.

If you're looking for more information, be sure to check out our website at www.originalcarrollwood.com and send us an email to get added to our mailing list. You can also sign up for text updates to get CCA event details and news in real time. 



Luminaria on the streets of Original Carrollwood December 2026.
Photos by resident Lawrence Davis

Stay up-to-date with the Crime Watch/Events

crimewatch@originalcarrollwood.com |  Original Carrollwood Civic Association
www.facebook.com/groups/CarrollwoodCivic | Text UPDATES to (813) 640-4655 to receive text alerts



Mark Snellgrove



Dr. Anna Brown



Mark Georgiades



Kristy Taylor



Jared Brown



Matt Lavisky



Dan Seeley



Jack Griffie



Kevin Shidler



by Nicole Barolo

ONE FOB CONTROLS ALL LOCATIONS White Sands Beach • OC Tennis Courts • Scotty Cooper Park



TENNIS COURTS AND SCOTTY COOPER PARK ON THE FOB SYSTEM

- Electronic Access Fobs open the gates. Keys no longer work.
- Bathrooms still use the original metal key.
- Do not prop gates open

THE GOAL OF THE ELECTRONIC ACCESS FOB SYSTEM:

- To make access to our shared amenities modern, convenient, and secure.
- One Fob controls all locations – White Sands Beach, OC Tennis Courts, and Scotty Cooper Park. In the future, Original Carrollwood Park and the Dog Park will also be on the Fob system.
- Original Carrollwood tax funds were used to cover this initiative.



HOW TO USE YOUR FOB:

- **At Electronic Keypads** (White Sands Beach Vehicle Gate and Pedestrian Gates at OC Tennis Courts and Scotty Cooper Park): Hold Fob where indicated to the sensor at the bottom of the screen until you hear “Access Granted” and it opens.
- **At White Sands Beach Pedestrian Gate:** Hold Fob where indicated on the side of the gate until you hear a “click” of the gate unlocking; then push/pull it open.

FOB SALES CONTINUE:

The CRD continues to offer Fobs for purchase. See Janet at the OC Rec Center.

M-F, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Fobs are \$30 each, with a limit of 2 per family.

Cash, check, or credit card (with additional processing fee) are accepted. Fobs are activated immediately upon payment

Do not share your Fob. Unauthorized use of Fobs is prohibited.

GUARD SCHEDULE FOR WINTER SEASON:
A guard is on duty Friday, Saturday, and Sundays, noon to dusk.

FOB HOURS:

Your Fob will work during specific hours only.

- At OC Tennis Courts, the gate will work 7 a.m. – 10 p.m.
- At White Sands Beach and Scotty Cooper Park, gates are programmed to open from dawn to dusk. FYI - Sunrise and sunset times constantly fluctuate during the year due in part to Earth’s tilt and the changing of the clocks for daylight saving time.

COMMUNITY CONTACT INFORMATION

Carrollwood Civic Association
www.originalcarrollwood.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Kristin Nail 813.205.0541
 KristinNail@originalcarrollwood.com

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 JohnSchinka@originalcarrollwood.com

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 corey@originalcarrollwood.com

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 JaredJones@originalcarrollwood.com

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Lake Carroll Bryan Huls 813.930.0044
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Construction & Dock Permitting Joey Ferraro 813.355.2062
 JoeyFerraro@originalcarrollwood.com

Social & Events Jerrod Mills 727.243.0188
 jerrod mills@originalcarrollwood.com

Standards Enforcement Ethan Pliskow 813.205.2410
 ethanpliskow@originalcarrollwood.com

Yard-of-the-Month Raquel Pullaro 813.732.2252
 raquel@originalcarrollwood.com

Members-at-Large Luke Haydel 813.482.8111
 lukehaydel@originalcarrollwood.com



Original Carrollwood
 Civic Association

www.facebook.com/groups/CarrollwoodCivic

Carrollwood Recreation District
www.originalcarrollwoodCRD.com

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

President Mark Snellgrove 813.846.0424
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Treasurer Mark Georgiades 813.240.5554
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Secretary Kristy Taylor 813.503.8165
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OC Park Matt Lavisky 813.675.5292
 MattLavisky@originalcarrollwoodcrd.com

Grounds Dan Seeley 813.293.3558
 DanSeeley@originalcarrollwoodCRD.com

Rec Center/Tennis Courts Dr. Anna Brown 813.504.3713
 AnnaBrown@originalcarrollwoodCRD.com

Scotty Cooper Park Jack Griffie 813.503.4552
 JGriffie@originalcarrollwoodCRD.com

White Sands Beach Kevin Shidler 813.931.1662
 KShidler@originalcarrollwoodCRD.com

Carrollwood Recreation Center

3515 McFarland Road; Tampa, FL 33618
 813.932.1257 • Fax: 813.935.9057
 office@originalcarrollwoodCRD.com

Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office
 Non-emergency • 813-247-8200



CAROLER AD SIZE & RATES

SIZE	SPECS	RATE PER ISSUE	
		REGULAR	PRINT
Full page	7.5" w x 10" h	\$225	\$425
1/2 page	7.5" w x 4.875" h	\$140	\$235
1/4 page	3.625" w x 4.875" h	\$75	\$145
1/8 page	3.625" w x 2.375" h	\$45	\$80

PREMIUM PLACEMENT:

Inside Front or Back Cover, Page 3	\$275	\$475
Back Cover	\$275	\$550

Classifieds: \$20/month for 25 words

Annual Print Subscriptions to the Caroler

To receive a printed copy of the Caroler mailed directly to your mailbox every month, click or scan below to pay online, or mail your \$96 check made payable to RoxC LLC with information below, to: Roxanne Clapp, Caroler Editor, 2816 Overlook View Rd, Walland, TN 37886

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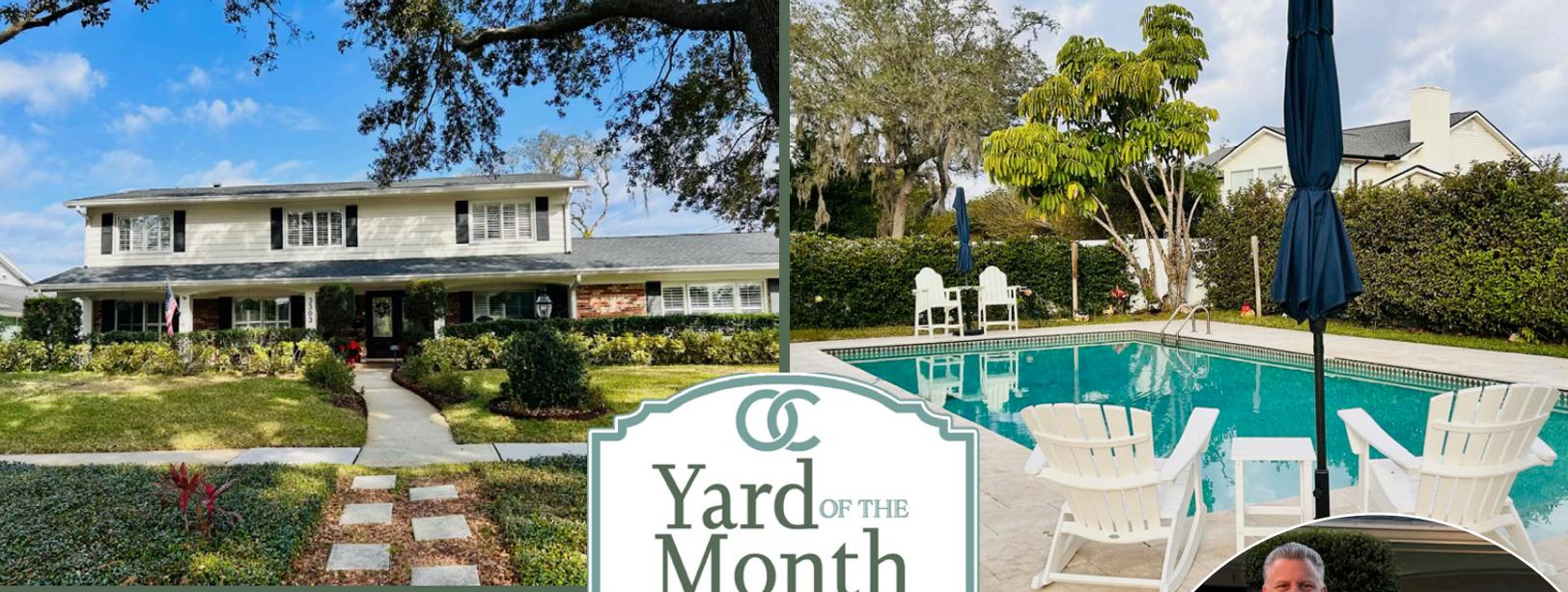
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BEFORE & AFTER. Left: Work begins on the wall in 2022. Center and right: current trellis.

Alex, Lorena, Kabil, Camila

THE ROGER-ANAYA FAMILY • 3303 LATANIA DRIVE

Q | When did you move to Original Carrollwood and what have you enjoyed most about living here?

A | We moved to Original Carrollwood in April 2021. What we've enjoyed most is the sense of community—great schools close to home, peaceful daily walks, and above all, the kind and friendly neighbors who have truly made us feel blessed to live here. ❤️

Q | What do you love most about your home and yard? Why?

A | What we love most about our home is the yard. Tending to it has become my happy place—better than therapy lol!. After long, busy days, working in the yard brings peace, a connection to nature, and a sense of grounding that fills my heart with calm and joy.

Q | When thinking of all the time you have spent in your yard, do you have a favorite memory?

A | Sunday mornings, sitting on our porch with a cup of coffee in our rocking chairs while watching our kids play in the front yard has become our favorite and most cherished memory. ☕️❤️

Q | Any fun facts, hobbies or words of wisdom you would like to share with your neighbors?

A | I love gardening—fresh air, happy plants, and a daily dose of vitamin D make it the perfect hobby! ❤️🌿☀️



Email your nomination to: YardoftheMonth@OriginalCarrollwood.com

Include: Address of nominated yard • Reason for nomination • Your name, phone number, & email address • If possible, please include a photo of the yard with your nomination. Thank you! Nominations can also be made at the Community Center, at Board Meetings or by visiting our Community website: www.OriginalCarrollwood.com

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Social events



April 4, 2026
Original Carrollwood Park!

ANNUAL O.C. EASTER EGG HUNT

Hop on over for a fun-filled morning at our Annual Easter Egg citing Hunt! We'll have donuts, coffee, water, and free specialty coffee drinks courtesy of the Buddy Brew Coffee Truck. Be sure to dress to impress—prizes will be awarded for Best Bonnet, Handsome Hair, and Festive Family. Each age group will also have a special Golden Egg prize.

Bring your camera for photos and enjoy a fresh latte while the kids hunt!

Egg hunt schedule:

- Ages 0-3 → 10 a.m.
- Ages 4-6 → 10:10 a.m.
- Ages 7-13 → 10:20 a.m.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We'd love your help in making this event a success!

- All volunteers earn **service hours**.
- **Bunny costume volunteer** receives \$30 + service hours.
- Volunteers must arrive by **8 a.m. on Saturday**.
- Email events@originalcarrollwood.com to sign up for volunteering

We also need adult volunteers for **Friday afternoon/evening setup**.

If you're available, please email events@originalcarrollwood.com.

Thank you, CCA Social Committee



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upcoming Social events



 Original Carrollwood
Civic Association

As we head into the spring season, we're excited to bring our neighbors together for another round of fun, connection, and great times right here in Original Carrollwood. We have a full lineup of social events planned, and we encourage you to invite any new neighbors to join in the fun.

More details will be shared as each event approaches.

If you have questions or need additional information about any of our social events, feel free to reach out at events@originalcarrollwood.com.

Warm regards,
CCA Social Committee

MARCH 6, 2026 | 6-8 P.M.
Luau (adult-only party)
White Sands Beach

MARCH 28, 2026
Community Yard Sale

APRIL 4, 2026
Easter Egg Hunt
Original Carrollwood Park

APRIL 25, 2026
Toddler Playground Play Date
Scotty Cooper Park

MAY 25, 2026
Memorial Day Flag Walk and
Ceremony
Ends at White Sands Beach

We ask that you do not share our social events information publicly or post on other social media sites. We offer these events for our residents and close family/friends.

Tennis & Pickleball Online Court Reservations:



Download "YourCourts" app, or access
www.YourCourts.com online

(Facility name = Carrollwood Recreation District)

Secure your request no earlier than 48 hours in advance of play. You can view the court schedule either on YourCourts or on the bulletin board on the side of the Rec Center.

Help Maintain Lake Carroll Make a Donation

Residents! Help keep Lake Carroll clean and safe. Financial contributions are needed from everyone. Funds are used to offset expenses for vigorous water sampling and testing, and other lake maintenance and monitoring needs. Contributors are greatly appreciated and will be acknowledged in the *Caroler*.

LAKE FUND DONATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Amount: _____

Make funds payable to: Carrollwood Civic Association;
3515 McFarland Rd.; Tampa, FL 33618. Please include
this form OR donate through PayPal on the OC website:
www.originalcarrollwood.com

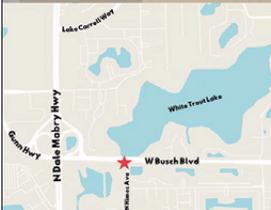
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"Kudos to the four Carrollwood residents who took part in the annual Christmas Boat Parade. Since its inception, I have had guests for dinner and for cheering Merry Christmas to the boaters.

The parade was a little short this year, but the boaters were appreciated. Thanks neighbors!!
~Nilla Leto



ORIGINAL CARROLLWOOD
CHARM ON EVERY CORNER



Has Something Changed In Your Home

A New Baby? A Newcomer to OC?
Dropped a Land Line? Marriage?
New Email Address?

OC DIRECTORY UPDATES MADE QUARTERLY

Keep current for access to White Sands Beach! The guard service will be given a new directory quarterly and all passes issued by the business office will expire. The quarterly updates will not be mailed out, but only utilized between the Business Office and the guard service.

UPDATE YOUR DIRECTORY INFO!

First/Last Name(s) _____
 Children's (optional) _____
 Address _____
 Phones _____
 Emails _____
 Owner or Renter? _____

Please email your updated information to Directory@OriginalCarrollwood.com or drop off or mail to the Rec Center, 3515 McFarland Road, Tampa, FL 33618

CALLING ALL NEIGHBORS!

We are looking to add some new and exciting content to the *Caroler* in the upcoming months. We have a few ideas for articles.

We would love your help to contribute to some of these!



2. REMARKABLE RENOVATIONS —

Many homes in our neighborhood have gone through amazing transformations and facelifts. If you would like to share the work you've done on your home (exterior curb appeal or backyard renovations), send before/after photos and a small blurb about the work you've done to improve the appearance of your home.

Please e-mail all submissions to Kristin Nail kristinnail@originalcarrollwood.com

1. YOUNG NEIGHBOR AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS —

We would love to highlight some kids in the neighborhood who have earned awards or proud of something they have achieved. For example: Winning a soccer tournament, making a travel baseball team, district speech competition winner, learning how to ride a bike for the first time, etc. No achievement is too small! Send in a photo and blurb about your child and we will put it in a future issue.

3. NEWCOMER SPOTLIGHT —

If you have recently moved into the neighborhood (within the last year or so), we would love to get to know you! Email Kristin Nail at kristinnail@originalcarrollwood.com and she will send you some short/easy interview questions for a spotlight article.

Thank you! Look forward to seeing more of you in the *Caroler*.

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Chuck Kim (OC homeowner). 813-352-1382.

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Email: Caroler@roxc.graphics



STAY CONNECTED!

MAKE SURE YOU ARE RECEIVING ALL THE NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

EMAIL:

If you are a new resident or have not been receiving the Crime Watch/Events and Neighborhood emails, please contact: crimewatch@originalcarrollwood.com to get signed up. The emails contain Crime Watch notifications, the Caroler newsletter, social event information, and other neighborhood news.



TEXT:

Receive text message alerts about OC Events and OC Crime Watch Information: To subscribe, text UPDATES to (813) 640-4655 or visit oclinks.cc/texts



FACEBOOK:

You can also join our Facebook page for updates on neighborhood news and social events. This page is the same as the emails so you will not miss anything if you are not on Facebook.

You can search for Original Carrollwood Civic Association on Facebook or visit this link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CarrollwoodCivic>

NEW RESIDENTS:

New residents, please contact Kristin Nail: kristinnail@originalcarrollwood.com or cca@originalcarrollwood.com

Keepin' it local!

Amy Kurella LE, HC, LEE

Holistic Esthetician, Health
Coach, Esthetics Educator

Holistic Skin Care Tampa

Hello Neighbors,

I am so excited to be a part of this segment for *the Caroler*. Let me introduce myself, my name is Amy Kurella. My husband and I moved to OC about three years ago. We just love the strong sense of community and tradition that goes along with this very special neighborhood. Everyone we have met is so nice and genuine, that you feel as if you are living in Pleasantville. I personally love that we have decent sized lots as well. I am a gardener and enjoy growing our own veggies, as well as planting for the birds and the bees. I am super excited with what I have going on now. I grew loofa and am in the midst of harvesting the sponges and making some honey- based soap with dried lavender and loofa from my garden! I mean where else can you do that in such a central location.

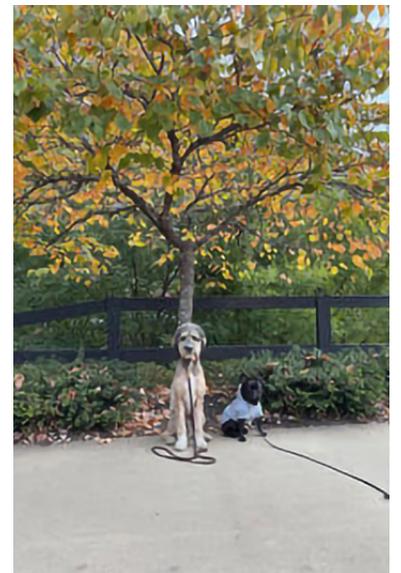
The location we have is impeccable, we have a quaint neighborhood with access to all in 15 minutes or less! My business, a holistic skin care practice is right around the corner too. About eight years ago, I made a leap and a big change in my career from having an employee benefits insurance agency to owning and operating a boutique skin care practice. A health scare and my aging skin were the catalyst that inspired me into this industry. My children were all becoming adults and I took a look at what makes me feel complete. One aspect of my person is a nurturer. I love taking care of people and making them feel good. I also love being able to help people feel like the best version of themselves. All of this along with the health scare we had and me looking for options that would allow me to feel better about my skin are what led to Holistic Skin Care Tampa. My space is a place that focuses on the individual. I take an inside-out approach to helping you achieve your skin goals. Your skin is the largest organ and I think we sometimes forget about treating it as such. It is also a detox organ, so sometimes what you are seeing is a detox. It makes my heart so happy to help people love what they see when they look in the mirror. Their confidence and overall person grows right in front of me. I feel very lucky to have this opportunity.

If you see me walking around, please say hi! My husband and I are always out early morning with our two pups, Sunny and Murphy. If you would like to learn more about how I can help you with your skin goals, please reach out. My website is a good place to start (Holisticskincaretampa.com), or just give me a call 813-493-7839.

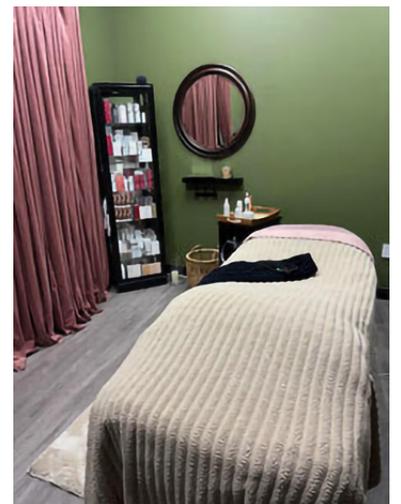
Happy New Year, wishing you
good health and prosperity
in 2026!



Amy Kurella



Sunny and Murphy



Holistic Skin Care Tampa

Know of a great OC Resident-owned business and want to share it with the neighborhood? Do YOU have a business or work at one you want all the neighbors to know about? Email [Caroler@roxc-graphics](mailto:Caroler@roxc-graphics.com) or call 813-503-4156.

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this & that



OC REAL ESTATE

By Clay Brown
 Managing Broker/Market President
 Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices
 Florida Properties Group. 813-786-4982



Recent headlines about limiting large institutional investors from purchasing single family homes have sparked a lot of discussion. At first glance, the idea sounds simple. Reduce competition from big players and make it easier for individuals to buy homes. As with most housing policy conversations, though, the reality is more complex.

The proposal most often discussed focuses on restricting future purchases by large institutional investors, not forcing existing owners to sell the homes they already hold. The intent is to reduce upward pressure on prices and inventory competition for individual buyers. That goal

resonates with many people, particularly in markets where affordability has become a concern.

What matters most in evaluating this idea is scale. Nationally, the largest institutional buyers represent a relatively small percentage of total single family home purchases. Estimates typically place them at only a 3% of overall transactions. In contrast, the majority of investor-owned homes are held by smaller operators, often through LLCs, and frequently in the range of 10 to 40 properties. These owners are usually local or regional, and many view real estate as a long-term business rather than a short-term trade.

This distinction is important. A narrowly defined policy aimed at very large institutions may have a modest (at best) effect on the broader market. A policy written too broadly could unintentionally impact smaller investors who provide rental housing, renovate aging homes, and reinvest capital locally. Limiting that activity could reduce rental supply and slow reinvestment in older housing stock.

There is also a broader philosophical question underlying

the conversation. Should housing function as an investment, or should it be an opportunity for all? In practice, most housing markets depend on a mix of both. Owner occupants, small investors, and long-term landlords all play roles in maintaining supply and stability. Removing one group without understanding the ripple effects can create unintended consequences.

At the local level, markets like Carrollwood tend to be influenced more by owner occupancy, neighborhood demand, and limited inventory than by national investment trends. Policy discussions can shape future conditions, but they rarely override the fundamentals that drive local pricing and activity.

The key takeaway is not to react to headlines in isolation. Good decisions are made by understanding how national conversations intersect with local realities. "Always in motion is the future." Clarity comes from paying attention to what is actually happening on the ground.

If you ever want to talk through how broader policy discussions might connect to your home or neighborhood, I'm always happy to walk through the details.

OC Listings as of the Caroler deadline

Compliments of Clay Brown, Realtor®

A=Active; P=Pending; S=Sold in the last 30 days

Status	Address	Htd Sq Ft	Price
S	10408 Butia Place	2,405	\$528,000
A	10408 Reclinata Ln	2,849	\$650,000
A	10604 Carrollbrook Ln	1,602	\$279,000
P	10502 Lake Carroll Way	1,753	\$519,000
A	10524 Orange Grove Dr	1,668	\$549,000
S	11719 Phoenix Circle	1,839	\$950,000
A	11724 Phoenix Circle	1,839	\$649,900
P	10901 Juniperus Pl	2,750	\$799,000
S	3311 Lacewood Rd	1,804	\$550,000

Hillsborough County Public Schools Non-Student Days

FEBRUARY 2026

Friday, February 13, 2026 - Florida State Fair

Monday, February 16, 2026 - Presidents' Day

Monday, March 2, 2026 - Strawberry Festival

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Puzzles OF THE Month



Find the hidden peacock within the pages of this issue of *the Caroler*!

SUBMIT ANSWERS BEFORE FEBRUARY 10

Email Caroler@roxc.graphics

All who reply will have their name posted in the next issue of *the Caroler*!

ANSWERS FOR LAST MONTH

Happy New Year!

Location of the hidden peacock in the previous issue:
Page 14

Chamberlain High Represented at Upcoming Taste of Carrollwood

by Nancy Leach

Chamberlain High School will be well represented at the upcoming Taste of Carrollwood on Sunday, March 1, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Carrollwood Village Park. Be sure to stop by the Chamberlain booth to meet teachers, students, and alumni who are proud to share what's happening at your neighborhood high school.

Visitors can learn more about Chamberlain's new Technical Innovation and Medicine Magnet Program, launching this fall, and ask questions directly of the educators and students involved. Alumni will also be on hand to reminisce, reconnect, and show their Chief pride.

Whether you're a prospective family, a former Chief, or simply curious about the school that's been part of the Carrollwood community for decades, come visit the Chamberlain High School booth and learn more about the exciting future ahead.

TOC
TASTE OF CARROLLWOOD



February OC Activity Bingo

OC families, how many Bingos can you score! Enjoy!



HAVE A PICNIC IN OC PARK	WRITE A VALENTINE	PLAY PICKLEBALL/TENNIS AT OC	TAKE A PICTURE WITH A MURAL IN TAMPA	HIKE LETTUCE LAKE PARK NATURE TRAIL
WATCH THE PLANETARY ALIGNMENT 2026	PUT A NEIGHBORS TRASH CANS OUT/IN	WALK TO GET COFFEE AT A LOCAL SPOT	RAKE THE LEAVES	ATTEND A SUPER BOWL PARTY
GO FISHING AT LAKE CARROLL	WALK CARROLLWOOD VILLAGE PARK TRAIL	FREE	PLAY SOCCER AT OC PARK	ENJOY A SUNRISE AT WHITE SANDS
COOK HEART SHAPE PIZZA/COOKIES	VISIT JIMMIE KEEL LIBRARY	VISIT TECO MANATEE VIEWING CENTER	PICK/EAT A STRAWBERRY	SLIDE DOWN AT SCOTTY COOPER PARK
HELP A NEIGHBOR WITH A PROJECT	HAVE LUNCH WITH A FRIEND	COOK A MEAL AS A FAMILY	PLAY A BOARD GAME	EXPLORE HILLSBOROUGH RIVER STATE PARK



Ray, Amanda, Raymond and Augustine

The Polo Family

Can you tell us a little about your family?

We're both Tampa natives and actually met in preschool at Villa Madonna—fun fact, we were in the same class until second grade. I went on to Plant and Auburn, while Ray attended Jesuit and Florida State. Now we're raising two little boys, Raymond (3) and Augustine (almost 2). We attend St. Paul's and enjoy cheering on the Bucs on Sundays. We're incredibly grateful for the neighbors we've met since moving here and truly can't imagine living anywhere else.

How long have you lived in the neighborhood? Just over a year.

What brought you to Original Carrollwood? Growing up in Tampa, we always heard how special it was to be raised in Original Carrollwood. The strong sense of community, family-friendly events, parks, and amenities made it the perfect place for us to put down roots and raise our family.

Where do you typically spend time around the neighborhood? We love walking to Scotty Cooper Park—meeting friends on the playground or standing on the pier watching the fish and turtles swim by.

On This Month in the Caroler Archives — 2016

The Spirit of Giving

by Shari Johannes, OC Resident



Sometimes our children remind us about the purity of heart and kindness that we, as adults, should strive to achieve and demonstrate. This past Christmas, my daughter, Madelyn Johannes, reminded me. Maddie expressed to me that she really wanted to do something to raise money for underprivileged people or children who suffer from an illness like cancer. She had asked me so many times in the past about helping others that I thought I needed to finally step up and help her develop a plan.

Maddie had begged me numerous times to set up a lemonade stand on our street in the past, so I suggested that during the holiday season she set up a hot chocolate stand. Because our street had been noted for its extensive Christmas lights, I knew that we would have a lot of traffic on our street and the potential for her to raise some money. I also convinced her to focus on a single cause, Metropolitan Ministries, rather than dividing her efforts.



Maddie serving hot chocolate

Maddie was thrilled with the idea of the hot chocolate stand and she enlisted the help of her friend and neighbor, Ava Brantley. Maddie and Ava set up their hot chocolate stand on three separate nights during the week before Christmas, ending on Christmas Eve. We had so much fun the first night, watching them interact with walkers and people in cars that stopped by. But we did not expect them to raise much money. We were pleasantly surprised when we counted their funds and learned that they had raised close to \$150. The second and third nights were even busier than the first, and because it was no longer cold outside, the girls added lemonade to their menu. Thanks to the generosity



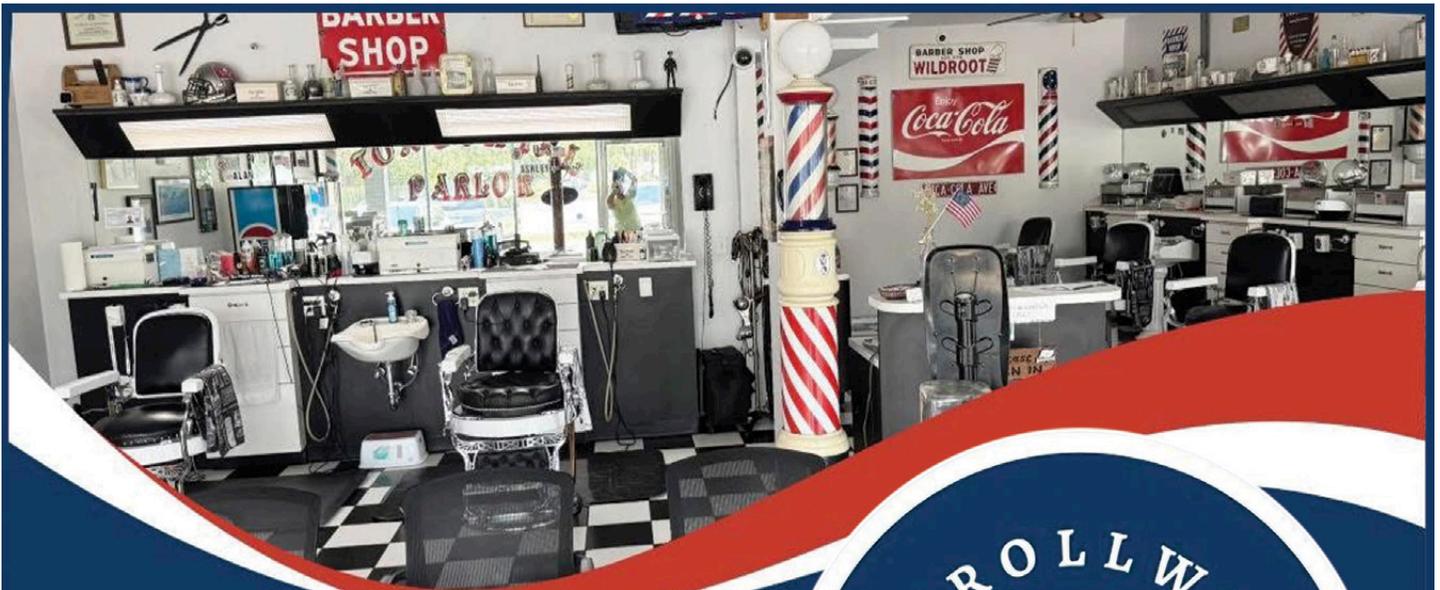
Ava, Maddie & Alma

of our Carrollwood neighbors, by the end of the third night, Maddie and Ava had raised nearly \$500 in total.

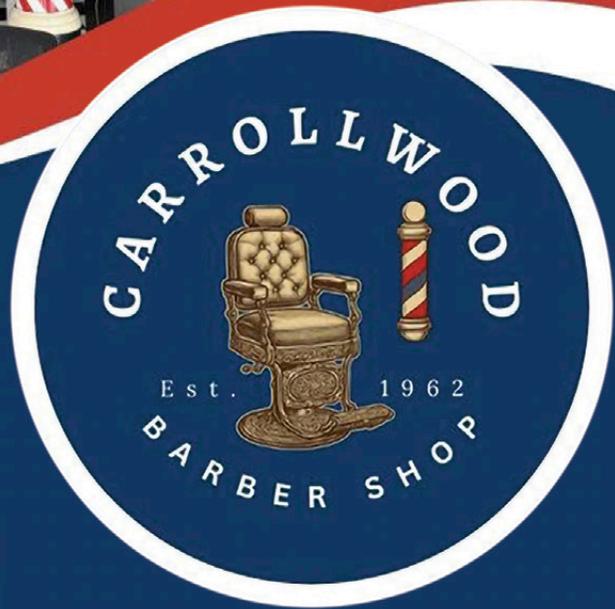
I was so proud to call Metropolitan Ministries to tell them about the funds the girls had raised, I had a hard time holding back tears when I told the receptionist their story. I wanted the girls to have a better understanding about what they had done and who they had helped, so I took Maddie and Ava, in person, to hand over the monies they had raised. Alma Royster, Senior Manager of Donor Relations, graciously gave us a tour of the Metropolitan Ministries facility. Alma told us about the history of Metropolitan Ministries, how it developed from the united efforts of thirteen churches in Tampa that wanted to help the community, and about the many services that it provides to people in our community today. The girls were very proud that they had raised money to contribute to those services. They have vowed to volunteer at Metropolitan Ministries during the 2016 holiday season and they have vowed to set up their hot chocolate stand again too. Thanks to all of you who stopped by, donated, and gave the girls and their families such a wonderful experience. 🙏



Maddie, Ava & Alma in front of Metropolitan Ministries sign



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