


 B A B C O C K R A N C H
TELEGRAPH

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Babcock Ranch ushers in 2018 with major milestones

BY **NANCI THEORET**

ntheoret@babcockranchtelegraph.com

The landscape of Babcock Ranch has changed considerably since its public unveiling during Founder's Fest in March 2017. Sparkling lakes await a morning or afternoon on the water, model homes and private residences are now open and occupied, construction is winding down on the final building in the inaugural phase of Founder's Square, and the first self-driving electric shuttle is making its rounds. More than a decade in the making, the town is exceeding expectations pledged back in 2005 when Kitson & Partners first unveiled its vision for the nation's first solar-powered hometown.

"The thing that I am most proud of at Babcock Ranch is — if you go back in and look at all the initiatives we laid out and the promises that we made — we have not only kept the promises, we have gone above and beyond," said Syd Kitson, chairman and CEO of Kitson & Partners.

Created with the goal of doing right by the environment — with sustainability and conservation at its core — Babcock Ranch represents the future, proving Mr. Kitson's vision of smart growth and preservation working hand in hand. Being built on land previously used for ranch and mining operations, the company's development rights included deeding the adjoining 73,000-acre Babcock Ranch Preserve to the state.

Half of the town's 18,000-acre footprint will also be preserved as green spaces — providing residents with unprecedented opportunities to connect with nature.

"To us, that marriage of preservation and development is very important and it is the way we should be approaching new homes and new communities going forward into the future," Mr. Kitson said.

The town is making international headlines and its newest models are attracting potential residents from across the country. Babcock's first homeowners Richard and Robin Kinley made the move on Jan. 4 and have been joined by several new neighbors since.

The town now has seven builders with the recent addition of national homebuilders Pulte and Lennar which are offering a combined 26 floor plans appealing to all ages — from young families to empty nesters. They're expanding into new neighborhoods — Parkside and

SEE **MILESTONES, A26** ▶

INSIDE: A look at progress on the Health & Wellness Center. **A13**

Staying HEALTHY on the RANCH

Wellness and specialized care come into focus

BY **NANCI THEORET**

ntheoret@babcockranchtelegraph.com

BABCOCK RANCH IS BRINGING BACK THE family doctor — yet another way the solar-powered sustainable community recreates the ambience of a traditional hometown. Lee Health's board of directors approved a five-year lease that will bring primary care physicians, rehabilitation, and health and wellness services to the town's 26,400-square-foot center currently under construction in Founder's Square.

The hospital system will occupy 21,000 square feet of the Babcock Health and Wellness Center and staff medical offices with doctors in its residency program and from Lee Physician Group.

SEE **HEALTHY, A13** ▶



Around town

Self-driving electric shuttle making the rounds at Babcock Ranch.

A6 ▶



Social shots

The Hatchery opens for business.

A34-35 ▶



Eat it up

Babcock transforms farm-to-table into Ranch-to-table.

A10 ▶



BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH

Publisher

Pason Gaddis
pgaddis@floridaweekly.com

Editor

Jeffrey Cull
jcull@floridaweekly.com

Editorial Advisor

Megan Garner
mgarner@kitsonpartners.com

Presentation Editor

Eric Raddatz
eraddatz@floridaweekly.com

Contributing Writers

Evan Williams, Nanci Theoret,
Laura Tichy-Smith

Photographer

Vandy Major

Graphic Designers

Chris Andruskiewicz
Hannah Kruse, Alisa Bowman
Paul Heinrich, Scott Sleeper

Circulation Manager

Maggie Humphrey
maggie@floridaweekly.com

Account Executives

Angela Schivinski
angela@floridaweekly.com

Gail Dingee

gdingee@floridaweekly.com

Michele Foley

mfoley@floridaweekly.com

Rob Patterson

rpatterson@floridaweekly.com

Business Office Manager

Kelli Carico

Published by

Florida Media Group LLC
4300 Ford Street, Suite 105
Fort Myers, Florida 33916
Phone: 239.333.2135

Babcock Ranch in the news

BY LAURA TICHY-SMITH

Babcock Ranch Telegraph Correspondent

It's not surprising that a development projected to house 50,000 people would draw news coverage by nearby local media outlets. However, for such a development to draw national and international media attention requires the place be unique, and unique describes Babcock Ranch, America's first solar town.

"From the beginning, back when we started this in 2005, what we're doing is newsworthy," said Lisa Hall of Hall+Media Strategies, media contact for Babcock Ranch. "We put together this complex deal that achieved the preservation of 73,000 acres that went into a permanent preserve with the state, and that even got an article in *The New York Times* back then. When we first announced the idea of being a solar-powered city, that was covered by *Time* magazine."

Ms. Hall counts over 100 stories about Babcock Ranch in the national and international press. Coverage has been done, or translated and picked up, by media outlets in several European countries. The Chinese media has also taken an interest. Recently, Syd Kitson, CEO of Kitson & Partners, was invited by *The Washington Post* to participate in their live panel discussion "A World in Balance – Solutions for Sustainability."

"There's been coverage all along, but now that the first residents have moved in, the media interest has gotten even more intense," she said. "We had a crew in November from German public television — the largest public broadcaster in Europe — and they were doing a feature on us that was going to air in conjunction with the latest climate conference, which was being hosted in Germany."

Coverage by specialized media outlets about individual aspects of Babcock's sustainable ini-



BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH

BBC reporter Luis Fajardo from the media organization's Miami bureau visited Babcock Ranch in December.

tiatives has caught the attention of other media outlets interested in telling broader stories.

"When we made our big announcement about our driverless vehicles at a conference on public transit in Atlanta, the magazine *Fast Company*, which had written about us a couple of years ago, came and did a follow-up article that got a lot of distribution online," Ms. Hall said. "About five minutes after it hit, I got a call from the 'CBS This Morning' wanting to send a crew to cover the first residents moving in."

Ms. Hall said the way Babcock is applying sustainable technologies as an entire community has captured international attention.

"The push back on green for so many years was that it's not economical or competitive and that people won't pay more to be green," Ms. Hall said, "and Babcock Ranch is showing that, if you build it into the infrastructure, it is possible to be cost competitive and green. That's how we can bring green into the mainstream. The story is sustainability — the whole world is working on these issues. Everyone is talking about smart cities, but Babcock Ranch is the only place that is actually doing all of these things people are talking about."

Ms. Hall said that a reporter from *La Monde*, the biggest daily newspaper in Paris, spent three days at Babcock Ranch in January, and the BBC sent a reporter over from Miami in December.

"I find it interesting that we've gotten more articles internationally than we have nationally," she said. "The rest of the world has a lot more passion and interest in sustainability, and they are ahead

of us in recognizing that we need to implement these things."

All of Babcock's media attention keeps Ms. Hall busy.

"What we're doing is newsworthy so I have never had a problem getting people to want to cover it," she said. "It's newsworthy to people all around the world — so I have the fun job of working with these reporters from everywhere." 📍



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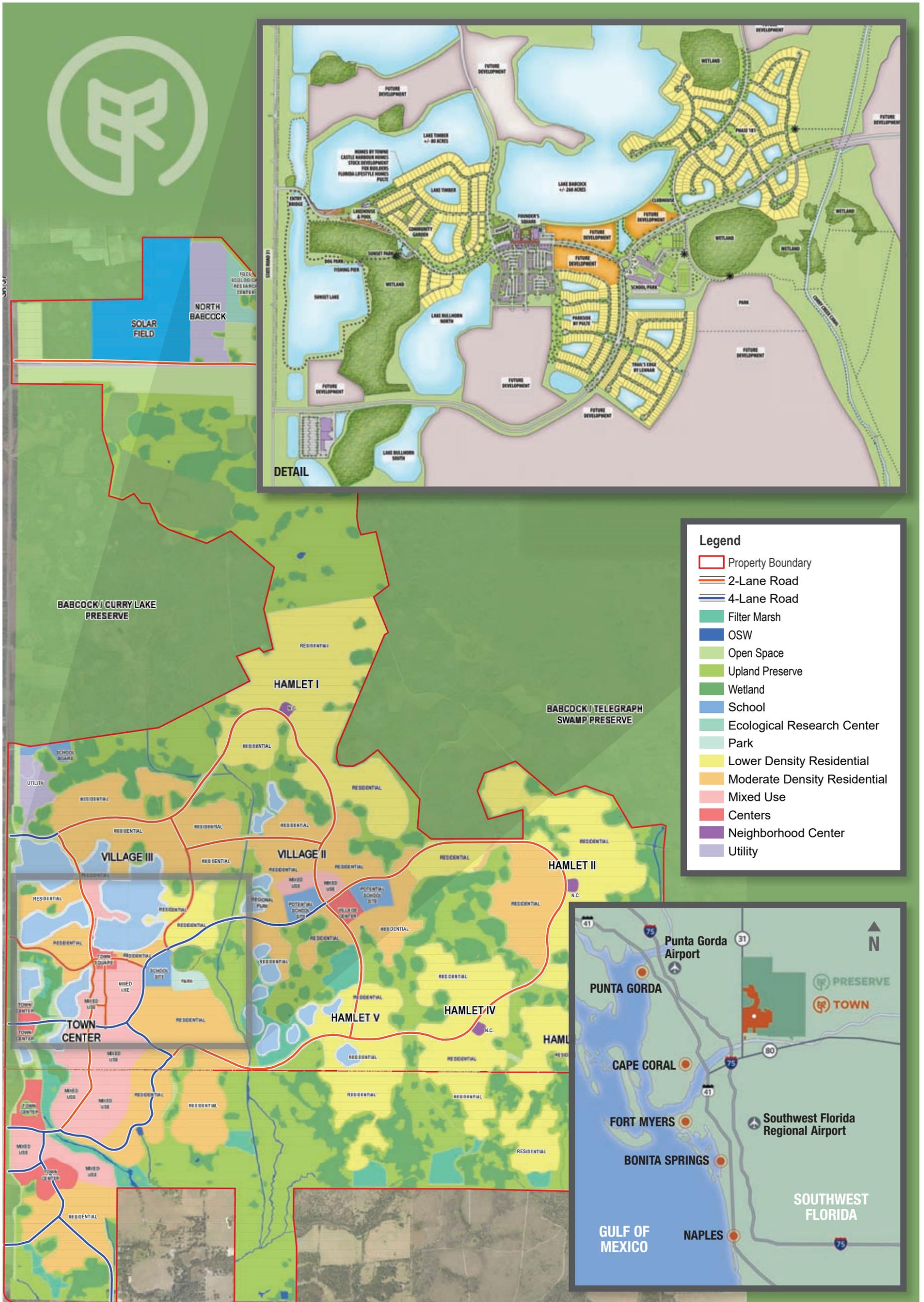
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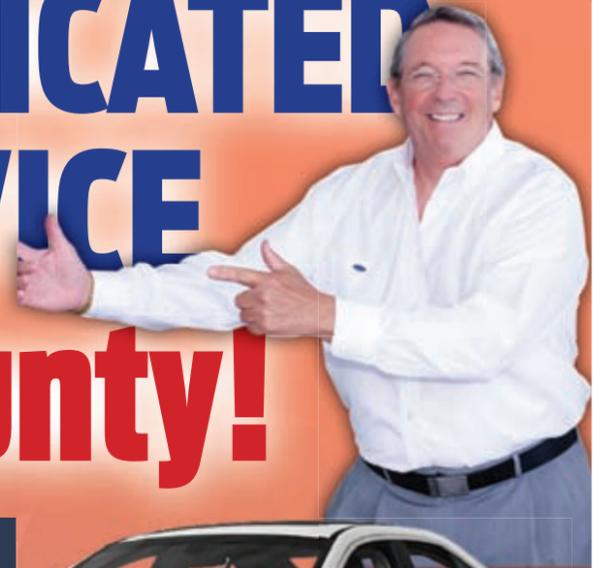
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Self-driving electric shuttle demonstration rides debut at Babcock Ranch

BY Nanci Theoret

ntheoret@babcockranchtelegraph.com

The creators of Babcock Ranch envision a life without traditional transportation and the recent introduction of the community's first autonomous shuttle is a giant step toward independence from household cars. The self-driving electric shuttle accommodates six to eight passengers and is currently offering demonstration rides from Founder's Square most weekends.

The self-driving shuttle service is operated by Babcock Ranch Transportation Services, a joint venture between Kitson & Partners and Transdev, a global leader in mobility and autonomous operations serving more than 200 other cities across the country.

"We want our residents and visitors to get a real sense of how they will move around at Babcock Ranch," said Natalee Burns, whose role as project coordinator involves overseeing the town's mobility initiatives. "You can walk, bike, or hop on an electric self-driving vehicle. Driving a car is another option, not but necessarily the most convenient."

The self-driving shuttle demonstration is the first phase of Babcock Ranch's long-term mobility plan that will integrate smaller self-driving vehicles and shared vehicle services operated by BRTS, according to Ms. Burns.

"As the shuttle service advances, we will integrate more stops and eventually offer an On Demand service to give our residents and visitors the ability to hail a self-driving shuttle from their current location and ride to their desired destination at Babcock Ranch," she said. "We will continue to improve on our OnDemand service and integrate two- to four-passenger self-driving vehicles to create an even more dynamic mobility system."

Additions to the fleet will be based on population and demand, she said.

Eventually the town will offer human and



A driverless vehicle shuttles passengers around Babcock Ranch most weekends.

VANDY MAJOR / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH

self-driving hourly and daily car rentals to residents and visitors to use around Babcock Ranch or to take offsite.

"Our ultimate goal and hope is that our system of shared electric autonomous vehicles is compelling enough and convenient that our residents feel they only need to

own one vehicle," Ms. Burns said. "Then eventually they can rely on the system to meet all their mobility needs and feel they no longer need to own a vehicle at all. This not only reduces the cost of their transportation but there are two less vehicles on the road. With a shared system, the vehicles will

be able to drop their rider off at the door of their destination and drive away to pick somebody else up. It will reduce the amount of parking needed in commercial spaces. At Babcock Ranch, we hope that these parking lots can be converted back to parks and greenways." 



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Slater's Goods & Provisions named after legendary cattleman

BY EVAN WILLIAMS

ewilliams@babcockranchtelegraph.com

The bygone days of Babcock Ranch are not entirely bygone at Slater's Goods & Provisions, a grocery store, market and café that celebrated a grand opening in downtown Jan. 5.

It is named in honor of the late Bolmon "Bo" Slater, a cattleman who worked for the original Babcock family on the old Crescent B ranch and other family properties for more than 50 years.



SLATER

The grandson of a slave, Mr. Slater was born in Plains, Ga. He was employed by Fred Babcock starting in 1952 until he died in 2009 at age 92. Over the years Mr. Slater eventually became ranch manager and friends with

Mr. Babcock.

Occasionally they would sit under a slash pine and enjoy a libation together, which is where Mr. Slater developed a taste for Absolut



A farm-fresh, organic menu is always available at Slater's.



BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH Slater's Goods & Provisions is a market and café as well as a marketplace for folks to grab organic ingredients for cooking at home.

lut Vodka, as he recalled in interviews with Jo Morrison, author of "Babcock Ranch and Tales of Bygone Days."

Long-time Babcock Ranch hand Charlie Johnson, 72, remembered his own friendship with Mr. Slater, who was roughly his father's age. Although their age, the color of their skin, and their backgrounds were opposites — Mr. Johnson's own father as a young man had been a member of the Ku Klux Klan — they became fishing buddies.

"We got along real good," Mr. Johnson said.



"Bo was good to me, I thought the world of him. Me and my wife'd be getting into it, that's about the time we'd go fishing."

There were ponds behind the old ranch headquarters where they would catch bass, catfish and "whatever was there."

"It was just a tremendous place to be out in the woods, to fish and hunt and see the wildlife," Mr. Johnson said. "I love that, still do."

While Mr. Slater could be a quiet man, he could also "talk your head off" once he got to know you.

He could do just about any job on the ranch, such as building fence, Mr. Johnson said. But he was especially gifted in diagnosing cattle with an illness or injury.

"Bo could look at 'em and tell what the problem was and that was the difference," he said. "He'd been around cattle all his life, I suppose."

Mr. Slater's life as a cowman started at age 11 when he came to Florida with a white cattle trader named Judge Hixson. As a young man he was part of a crew that rode from ranch to ranch treating cows for pests such as ticks.

Later, he raised six children with his wife, Evelyn.

A 2009 *Florida Weekly* obituary of Mr. Slater read, "His skills were legendary — not only on horseback and with ornery cows, but with creatures and with men. It was said he could milk rattlesnakes, sit astride bull alligators or preach the gospel so powerfully it brought men to tears.

"He'd seen the days when mosquitoes were so thick they could clog the nostrils of a cow and suffocate it. One technique to avoid them, he later recounted, involved soaking gunnysacks in used motor oil and carrying them draped over a horse to fend off the blood-suckers."

After he died, Mr. Slater's ashes were scattered by an old tree at the north end of the ranch, Mr. Johnson said.

"The tree's dead now," he said. "It was an old pine. It's down to what we call lighter wood, hard pine."

Now, Slater's Goods & Provisions is an



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Slater's is a community marketplace designed to become a vibrant, bustling intersection of food, drink, business and socializing in Founder's Square.

homage to his history and legend. The store includes a range of basic supplies, liquor and wine, and a "chow line" with grab-and-go meals, as well as artisan organic products and fresh produce from Babcock's garden, all connected to a coffee and ice cream shop called

Square Scoops.

"It's really modeled after more of a hometown country market," said Tom McGregor, Kitson & Partners food and beverage director. "It's meant to fit the Babcock Ranch feel, a kind of old-time marketplace." 



Kitson & Partners CEO Syd Kitson (center) enjoys a laugh at the opening of Slater's Goods & Provisions at Babcock Ranch in January.



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Babcock's first residents, the Kinleys, settle in

BY EVAN WILLIAMS

ewilliams@babcockranchtelegraph.com

The town of Babcock Ranch is planning to be home to some 50,000 people, eventually, but for the first weeks of the new year, its official population numbered just two.

The town's first residents, Richard and Robin Kinley, moved down from Acworth, Ga., a suburb of Atlanta. Both just entering their 60s and partially retired, Mr. Kinley worked for a medical technology company called Medtronic and Ms. Kinley is a former high school French teacher and a quilter.

On Wednesday, Jan. 3 they spent their first night in their new house, which is located on Lake Kinley — named for them — about a 10-minute walk from downtown Babcock.

"Our first night we basically had two beds and that was it and then moved in a fair amount of our stuff the next day," Mr. Kinley said.

By the end of the third week in January, they were still waiting for some furniture to arrive, and getting settled in.

"We couldn't wait any longer. We wanted to heat up the pool and take a dip this afternoon," Mr. Kinley said.

And he had begun to set up the "smart features" in house, a Homes by Towne design.

"This is the first house I can tell Alexa 'change the temperature to 62 and the temperature changes or 'arm the security system' or whatever," he said.

And, while they have no neighbors yet, many are on the way.

"One of our neighbors closed on her house last Friday and they're moving in Thursday," he said. "We're excited about that."

Even as the only residents, it doesn't feel unusual living there, Mr. Kinley said. "It just feels like home. We go out for walks in the evening, it's just a beautiful show up in the



BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH
Richard and Robin Kinley with Kitson & Partners CEO Syd Kitson on the day the couple moved to Babcock Ranch.



sky. We haven't lived anywhere in a long time where we are able to see the stars so clearly. And there's security here that goes around every 30 minutes.

"It kind of hit me two days ago walking over to the restaurant just how happy I was, happy to be here. We've met so many of our future neighbors.

They come through quite often to check on the progress of their homes and all. Maybe

five other families already, we've already met." The downtown area nearby is already

growing with children at the Babcock Neighborhood School, whose students gave them a welcome serenade a few days after they arrived, and they've discovered some of the new businesses there as well.

"We've eaten dinner there a couple times over at the Table & Tap," Mr. Kinley said. "Slater's (Goods & Provisions) is open, and the ice cream shop, which is going to kill my diet, I think. The ice cream is delicious. It's kind of like that rich premium ice cream. It's really tasty..."

"Since Robin and I are the only residents, the people at the restaurant already know our names, so there are advantages to being the first."

To offset the ice cream, he's looking forward to the fitness center opening up downtown in the next few months, as well as to going bass fishing and getting out on the trails.

"That's on my to do list this week."

A number of factors drew them to Babcock. Mr. Kinley first heard about the town through an article in a tech blog nearly a decade ago. With the Kinleys' enthusiasm for sustainable technologies, the idea of living in a place powered by solar technology and designed to be environmentally friendly was appealing. At the same time, Ms. Kinley wanted to live closer to her parents in Florida. She was familiar with the state, having spent part of her childhood in Pembroke Pines. Mr. Kinley

"We couldn't wait any longer. We wanted to heat up the pool and take a dip this afternoon."

— Richard Kinley, Babcock Ranch's first resident

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grew up in Ocean View, Del., on the seashore and was interested in once again living close to beaches.

As they wait for their new neighbors to arrive, the Kinleys have also been exploring

the up-and-coming town by bike.

“We’ve been riding our bikes a lot,” he said. “There’s bike lanes everywhere so that’s a lot of fun to do that. The weather continues to be beautiful.”



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“We are excited to be the health and wellness partner at Babcock Ranch ... We have been entrusted with providing the care for residents of a brand-new community, which is a truly unique opportunity.

— Dr. Larry Antonucci, president and CEO of Lee Health



BABCOCK RANCH RENDERING

An artist's rendering of the new Babcock Ranch Health and Wellness Center

HEALTHY

From page 1

All services — including health and wellness memberships — will be available not only to Babcock Ranch residents but also the surrounding communities.

“We are excited to be the health and wellness partner at Babcock Ranch,” said Dr. Larry Antonucci, president and CEO of Lee Health. “We have been entrusted with providing the care for residents of a brand-new community, which is a truly unique opportunity. As Babcock Ranch grows, we will continue to meet the health care needs of the community, just as we have done for more than a century in other Southwest Florida communities.”



ANTONUCCI

Newly minted doctors with the hospital's residency program through Florida State University College of Medicine are looking forward to the opportunity, said Gary Goforth, who oversees the program. Many are already talking about living in the 18,000-acre town and eventually opening a private practice to serve the needs of current — and future — generations.



GOFORTH

“This is an exciting opportunity for Lee Health, our residency program and residents of Babcock Ranch,” said Dr. Goforth. “Our three-year residency program trains family physicians, and our second- and third-year residents will offer the full range of services for patients of all ages — from OB prenatal



VANDY MAJOR / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH

Contractors are busy finishing the Babcock Ranch Health and Wellness Center that spans the entire east side of Founder's Square and is the final building in the lakefront downtown district's inaugural phase.

care, well-child and pediatric care to adults.”

The residency program at Lee Health, started in 2014 and recently accredited for eight first-, second-, and third-year physicians, is in the process of selecting new residents from 1,700 applicants. Dr. Goforth expects to have 21 available when Lee Health launches primary care and medical specialty services at Babcock Ranch this summer. Occupational and speech therapy services will be added as needed.

As soon as the center opens in April, the health system will provide health and wellness services including individual and group exercise, Pilates, massage, mind and body programs, as well as physical therapy. Members also will enjoy state-of-the-art, energy-efficient cardio and strength-training equipment, a multi-use half basketball court, and a six-lane saltwater pool for competitive swimming and member exercise classes.

“This opportunity supports Lee Health's strategic priorities to advance community

health by providing prevention and wellness services in a new growth sector of Southwest Florida that currently has limited access to care close to home,” said Dave Cato, chief of outpatient services. “These services will also be available to residents in the area surrounding Babcock Ranch.”

The two-story Babcock Ranch Health and Wellness Center spans the entire east side of Founder's Square and is the final building in the lakefront downtown district's inaugural phase.

Providing onsite health care is part of Babcock Ranch's emphasis on community health and wellness, an extension of a master plan that encourages walking and biking, clean energy and a mindful connection with nature. The town will offer 50 miles of planned biking and hiking paths, interconnected lakes for paddling enthusiasts, and an expanded calendar of exercise classes.

“This is an opportunity for a lifestyle medicine practice,” said Dr. Goforth. “Babcock

Ranch is really organized around that thought with its trails, a restaurant serving healthy foods and the idea of giving people a place to live and to live healthy. Having the residency program at Babcock Ranch is a good match.”

The Lee Health clinic will offer six exam rooms with two assigned to each doctor. The residents are overseen by faculty and a nurse practitioner.

“We will have other practices as the community grows,” said Dr. Goforth. “This is a great opportunity for our residents to get involved in a new community. We've had lots of volunteers for Babcock and its beautiful facility and venue. Our physicians and faculty are excited to see patients.”



Babcock transforms farm-to-table into Ranch-to-table

BY LAURA TICHY-SMITH

Babcock Ranch Telegraph Correspondent

“Farm-to-table” has become a culinary buzzword of late, but the movement has been around for a while. The food outlets of Babcock Ranch — Table and Tap, Slater’s Market Café, Babcock Neighborhood School and the soon-to-open juice bar at the new wellness center — are fortunate to have access to an onsite kitchen garden that is overseen by Ken Ryan of Herban Gardens. Mr. Ryan was a trailblazer in the farm-to-table movement in the Boston area more than 30 years ago. He is serving as a consultant for the gardens of Babcock Ranch.

“I would harvest and take things right in to the chefs, but I didn’t take orders because working with Mother Nature you never quite know what you’re going to have until the day you harvest it,” Mr. Ryan said. “I would just fill up the delivery van with whatever I had and drive around to 20 different restaurants twice a week.”

Now he is saved the trip of driving around from chef to chef because he oversees the growing of produce right on Babcock Ranch and at his Herban Gardens location in nearby North Fort Myers.

“We are growing a variety of micro greens for Table and Tap, and the guests are really enjoying them,” Mr. Ryan said. “They are so fresh because we cut them and bring them over within an hour of them being harvested, so they are super fresh and really bright, not only in color but in flavor.”

Richard Howze, executive chef for Babcock’s culinary operations, said that the ranch is fortunate to have access to Mr. Ryan’s expertise. Mr. Ryan won the Innovative Farmer Award in 2014 from the University of Florida IFAS county extension service.



VANDY MAJOR / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH
Richard Howze, executive chef for Babcock’s food operations, oversees the Ranch-to-table program.

“He maintains all of our community gardens at the moment, which we also use in the restaurants,” Mr. Howze said. “He grows organic greens for us that we use to embellish the Babcock Ranch salad, and that comes straight out of the garden. We have a bunch of things planted over there — a variety of cucumbers, Everglades tomatoes, some heirloom grape tomatoes, some black cherry tomatoes, Cuban oregano, breakfast radish, watercress — so we produce quite a bit out of there.”

Babcock not only has a kitchen garden, which will eventually encompass five acres, to supply its various culinary outlets, but it



will also have community gardens for the residents. All of these are being planned and overseen by Mr. Ryan.

“I’ve done drawings for these gardens,” he said. “They are giving me carte blanche to do whatever I feel is the right thing to do. They installed a rain barrel at my request to catch the water coming off the shed roof. I told them they really needed to be catching this rainwater, and they’ve listened to me.”

The new juice bar will incorporate produce, microgreens and herbs grown onsite in the gardens that Mr. Ryan oversees. Ingredients will include items such as lemon verbena, basil and wheatgrass in blended juice drinks, centrifuged juice drinks, and some detox shots and elixirs.

“It will be all organic and healthy, incorporating the produce we grow here in abundance this time of year and readily available to us locally,” Mr. Howze said. “I don’t think there’s a concrete opening date yet, but I’m thinking it will be in March. The wellness center is up, but it needs to be finished on the inside. The swimming pool and a few things still need to happen, but at the pace that they build out here these days” he trailed off into a laugh.

From his perspective as a chef, Mr. Howze said he found the fruition of the project amazing because it provides opportunities to make changes in the food system.

“It’s a partnership to keep things fresh, green, organic and grown locally here on the property,” he said. “It’s a major enhancement that a lot of places don’t have, so we’re striving to fully realize the farm-to-table initiative and just making it happen.”

Mr. Ryan chuckled about the fact that the fresh, local, organic food movement he helped to pioneer is finally catching on — right as he is retiring from full-time farming.

“The thing we need to impress upon people moving into Babcock is not that this is a good thing to do but that it is the right thing to do,” he said.

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MODEL HOMES AT BABCOCK RANCH

Homes for sale in Babcock Ranch

Homes in Babcock Ranch offer a sustainable way of life. From each home's architectural style to its native landscaping and Florida Green Building Coalition Certification, living at Babcock Ranch is a choice that helps the environment for years to come. Register at BabcockRanch.com to receive news and updates. The information center is open seven days a week, and the Town Ambassadors are happy to assist you.

Woodlea Hall Information Center

Woodlea Hall is Babcock Ranch's information center. Here, you can learn anything about Babcock Ranch. Pick up brochures, maps or enjoy a presentation led by one of the Town Ambassadors. Visit babcockranch.com for more information.

Model homes

Model homes are open daily for viewing in the Lake Timber neighborhood of Babcock Ranch. View some of what is available through the selections below. Homes at Lake Timber begin in the upper \$300s. Pulte Homes is now building single-family homes in the Parkside neighborhood and Lennar is building twin villas and single-family homes in the Trail's Edge neighborhood with homes starting in the low \$200s.



VANDY MAJOR / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH
The Discovery Center (above) is the focal point for obtaining information about Babcock Ranch. It's located in Woodlea Hall (left) in the town's downtown district.

CASTLE HARBOUR HOMES



CASTLE HARBOUR HOMES / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH

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FLORIDA LIFESTYLE HOMES / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH



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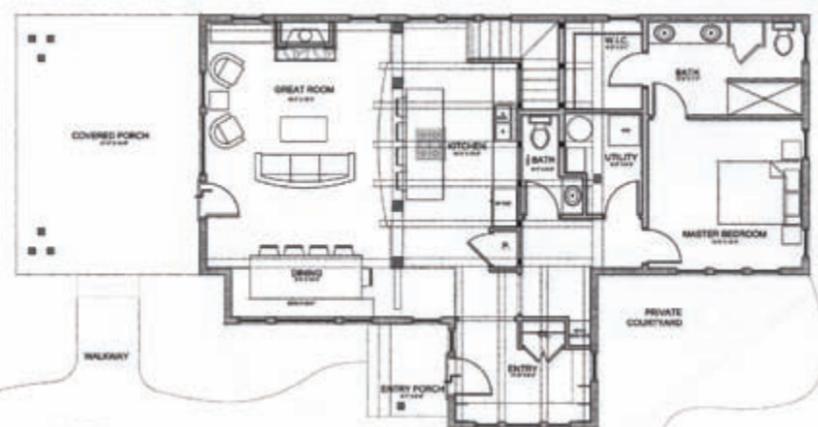


FOX PREMIER BUILDERS



The Cabin

FOX PREMIER BUILDERS / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH



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HOMES BY TOWNE / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH

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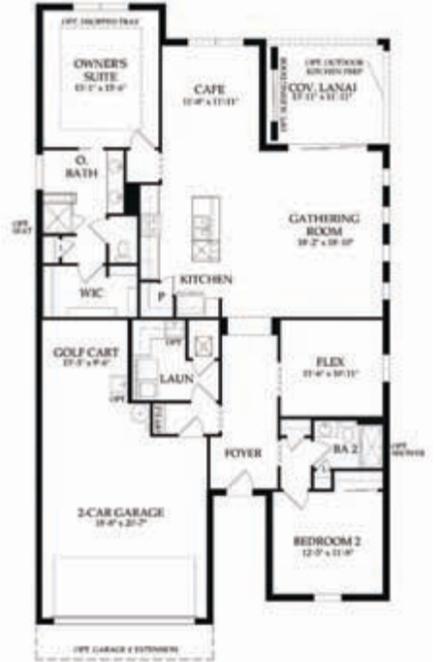
LENNAR / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH
The Majestica, above, and The Alexander.



PULTE



PULTE / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH



The Summerwood



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STOCK CLASSIC HOMES



STOCK / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH

The Destin



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The natural way: Babcock Ranch designed to conserve and save precious water resources

BY **NANCI THEORET**

ntheoret@babcockranchtelegraph.com

At Babcock Ranch, water runs through it. It's evident in the obvious — lakes spanning 30 to 300 acres — and the less visible such as water-saving utilities and reclamation that recapture and repurpose 90 percent of the town's water. In designing Babcock Ranch, Kitson & Partners created a model of conservation and sustainability, restoring the historic water flow through its 18,000 acres and transforming existing mining lakes into a series of interconnected lakes for recreation and scenic backdrops to many homes and amenities. With water such a precious commodity in Southwest Florida, the town serves as a role model for future development, always mindful of how water flows through the property during dry spells and heavy rains.

"The master plan was designed by taking advantage of the natural systems and drainage flow ways that have been weathering storms for years," explained John Broderick, senior vice president of land development for Kitson & Partners. "We worked with several agencies on different water models that took into account the massive amount of water that can flow onto the property, how to retain it longer, and then get it back off. It's not just about being more resilient here, but being good neighbors. We are making regional drainage



BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH

Water-saving utilities recapture and repurpose 90 percent of the town's water.



improvements to help alleviate some of the historic flooding issues for other property owners along State Road 31."

Babcock Ranch's system of lakes and storm water management was permitted through the South Florida Water Management District.

Kitson & Partners enhanced existing wetlands, built weirs to rehydrate wetlands, and introduced a nomenclature of rain gardens, gray water, reclaimed and reused water.

Its \$15.5 million water filtration and waste water plants represent state-of-the-art technology that draws water from the 110-foot deep Sandstone Aquifer, producing potable water from six nanofiltration membranes and capable of handling the growing town's future needs and anticipated population of 50,000, 19,500 homes and apartments, and six million square feet of commercial space. The first phase of the water plant can deliver up to 250,000 gallons of drinking water daily.

Chemical and biological systems convert the waste water — also known as gray water — into reclaimed water which is stored in an old 112-acre mining lake with depth of 30 feet. The reclaimed water is used for landscaping and irrigation throughout Babcock Ranch, where mandates for water-conserving appliances and toilets, minimal water-guzzling grass and drought-tolerant native plants

reduce water use.

Ashley Thomson, an assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering at Florida Gulf Coast University, is an expert on the development of water and wastewater bio-filtration techniques for developing countries. For her dissertation, Dr. Thomson focused on those technologies during a year in Haiti and Vietnam. Her current research delves into sustainable water and wastewater treatment design, biotechnology, microbial engineering, community development, water reuse, nutrient and energy recovery — all components of Babcock Ranch's water management and reclamation plans.

"The best technology uses biological, physical and chemical processes before discharging it back into a body of water," she said. "Reusing water for irrigation purposes is a great idea." Although she's not personally familiar with Babcock's systems, she said many cities are adapting the technology.

Gray water, Dr. Thomson explained, is water from a home that has been used in

"The master plan was designed by taking advantage of the natural systems and drainage flow ways that have been weathering storms for years."
—John Broderick, senior vice president of land development for Kitson & Partners.

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VANDY MAJOR / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH
Community gardens capture rainwater for use irrigating plants.

showers, sinks, dishwashers and washing machines. Reclaimed water is the treated and ready-to-reuse waste water, which can also be used to replenish wetlands and ground-water tables. At Babcock all of the gray water is treated and discharged into the retention lakes.

The initial phase of the sewer treatment plant handles 200,000 gallons of waste water

daily. Designed in five incremental phases, the facility will eventually hit capacity at 6 million gallons of drinking water a day and treat 4.5 million gallons of waste water daily some 20 to 25 years down the line.

The town's design is a return to nature with the restoration of historic flow ways throughout and an extensive land management plan. Previous use for agricultural and mining operations diverted the natural water flow. Excavating dirt onsite reduces traffic and heavy equipment on SR 31.

Mr. Broderick said reclamation of mining lakes and the introduction of rain gardens planted with native vegetation to filter and recycle storm water runoff improve water quality before it flows off the property toward the Caloosahatchee River.

"The rain gardens work like scrubber marshes here to clean the water a bit more before it even gets into a lake," he said. "By grading and stabilizing the banks of the mining lakes, we're drastically reducing erosion to improve water quality and create much better habitat for fish and wildlife. It is really a win-win situation with benefits for man and wildlife alike."

The town's first two lakes — Timber and Babcock — are now interconnected which helps balance the storm water on the property, he said.

A comprehensive storm water management plan reduces the impact of flooding after a heavy summer storm and was put to the test during Hurricane Irma. Native plants also help to control storm runoff and flooding, said Mr. Broderick. "They are also best equipped to stand up to the natural conditions of the area which include not only storms — but fire."

Homes are also designed with floods in mind. "The minimum for every single finished floor is one foot above a 100-year flood," he said. "It gives you that sense of assurance." 🏠

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Babcock's charter school system is growing quickly

BY EVAN WILLIAMS

ewilliams@babcockranchtelegraph.com

With the first kindergarten through eighth grade Babcock Neighborhood School filled to capacity, Kitson & Partners in January broke ground on a second, larger school building that will open in August.

This new phase of construction, now under way, will include 25 classrooms, more than three times the eight classrooms included in the original building. The new building will be about two-thirds full when approximately 320 students begin school there at the start of the fall semester.

The next phase of construction, scheduled to happen over the next two years, will add another school building with 16 to 20 additional K-8 classrooms. Depending on how soon families move into Babcock, this may happen sooner rather than later, said Kitson's educational consultant Christy Noe, president and CEO of Collaborative Educational Network.

"Ultimately the enrollment we're projecting is about 866, so that would be 43 classrooms that we need."

Depending on the grade level that's 18 to 22 kids per class.

"We grew more quickly than we thought and that was before any residents were moving into Babcock," Ms. Noe said. "We are anticipating that growth by being proactive in making additional space for those kids."

"What we want to make sure is people who are looking at houses in Babcock Ranch, that they know we have space for them (in the school)."

Meanwhile, the original building will be used temporarily for a pre-kindergarten program and extracurricular activities, then as Babcock's first high school for the 2019-2020 school year.

Finally, Kitson & Partners is planning to



BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH
Babcock Ranch is building its second school in a year to handle an additional 320 students in the Babcock Neighborhood School system.

the plan, the need for additional K-8 classrooms came more quickly than expected for Babcock's charter school, which opened just a year ago.

"When we opened it filled up and it filled up quickly," Mr. Kitson said. "Now that we realize there's that kind of demand not just for Babcock residents but for surrounding residents, we're opening the new school."

Babcock's schools are charters that are open to any public school children, though Charlotte and Babcock Ranch kids will be first in line to attend. As the town grows in the decades to come, eventually to an expected 50,000 residents, more new school buildings can be expected.

"First of all, we want Babcock to be multi-generational and in order for it to be multi-generational you need to have great schools,"

break ground on a permanent high school that will open in 2020. And the original building will once again be used for elementary school students as well as potentially a private day care center.

Eventually, the schools will all be grouped around a quad including a community park and athletic fields in the downtown area.

"Being able to have the K-12 students all together is one of the visions Syd Kitson (CEO of Kitson & Partners) had," Ms. Noe said.

Mr. Kitson said that while building a high school in time for this year's graduating eighth grade class to attend has always been part of



The original Babcock Neighborhood School opened in August 2017.

Mr. Kitson said. "Number two is, we're creating a real hometown and it can't be a hometown without schools. It's part of the fabric of any community so it was extremely important for us to start that early."

Eight additional teachers will be hired to staff the new charter school, which will also include a combination cafeteria-auditorium. The energy-efficient building is also being designed to accommodate Babcock's "project-based, green-STEAM" approach to education, explained Jennifer L. Languell, one of the school's board members, a green-building expert, and owner and president of Trifecta Construction Solutions.

STEAM stands for science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math. Project-based learning means that students often work in groups with each other and community professionals on a wide range of activities that support a standard curriculum. They are encouraged to engage with each other and Babcock Ranch's business community downtown in Founder's Square, and its larger landscape, history and culture.

To facilitate that, for example, the classes are designed to be big, collaborative workrooms with plenty of natural light. Within some of the rooms will be a separate "fishbowl," a conference space separated by glass.

"It's the functionality of the inside spaces that really drives the design," Ms. Languell said. ☺



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— Syd Kitson, chairman and CEO of Kitson & Partners

MILESTONES

From page 1

Trail's Edge — southeast of the Founder's Square downtown district.

Offering twin villas starting in the \$190,000s, Lennar's 14 floor plans in Trail's Edge also includes executive and manor homes, among them the NexGen Washingtonia, designed with separate first-floor living quarters with an attached one-car garage, private bedroom and bath, living room and kitchenette.

"Lennar is honored and privileged to be part of the Babcock Ranch community," said Christina Traver, vice president of marketing for Lennar's Southwest Florida division. "Our initiatives and the town's align in key areas, from our Everything's Included homes, to green technology and solar/gas features, and our focus on lifestyle-driven communities. The value that the EI concept brings to Babcock Ranch can expand the buyer profile for all generations."

Pulte is building homes with alley-loaded garages in Lake Timber and will offer eight active adult and family floor plans in Parkside.

Pulte's homes start in the mid-\$200,000s. "We're offering affordable products for a variety of buyers," said Marc Taglieri, general sales manager for the PulteGroup's Southwest Florida division.

Thirty model and spec homes are currently open or under construction, each featuring architecture inspired by Southwest Florida's past. Homes at Babcock Ranch emphasize front-porch living and include twin villas, cottages, single-family and custom designs.

The town now offers 56 floor plans with two to six bedrooms, 1,400 to 4,761 square feet of living space and one- and two-story homes, including designs by Castle Harbour Homes, Florida Lifestyle Homes, Fox Premier Builders, Homes by Towne and Stock Classic Homes.

Babcock Ranch's inaugural neighborhood, Lake Timber is nestled among three large lakes and offers the resident-only Lake House, a 2,400-square foot waterfront clubhouse featuring rustic exposed timbers, stone clad accents and multiple pitched rooflines. Unveiled in November, the building offers a large multipurpose gathering room, an inside-outside stone fireplace, a kitchen and bar, two flat-screen TVs and a gaming area with a billiards table and card tables.

Outside, it has wraparound decks, a pool, playground, grill and a dock for kayak, canoes and sailboats.



BABCOCK RANCH

The Lakehouse at Babcock Ranch is a neighborhood clubhouse perched on the edge of Lake Timber.



Syd Kitson with Babcock Ranch's first homeowners Richard and Robin Kinley.

"Big things are happening at Babcock Ranch," said Megan Garner, director of marketing. "Slater's market and café is now open, we have a final decision with Lee Health for our wellness center and just introduced a new 12-passenger electric Duffy boat for tours on the water. We also have spec homes available and move-in ready homes built by Homes by Towne that are great looking and very popular."

Since Founder's Fest attracted nearly 20,000 visitors just 11 months ago, much of Babcock Ranch's initial phase has come to fruition. Founder's Square, created as the heart of the community's know-your-neighbors lifestyle, now offers the Table &

Tap restaurant, Slater's Goods and Provisions with farm-fresh produce and other necessities, Square Scoops Coffee & Creamery, and Curry Creek Outfitters with kayak and bike rentals. The Babcock Neighborhood School welcomed its first kindergarten and sixth-grade students in August. With a waiting list of more than 100, Kitson & Partners is ramping up early construction of its central education campus. The full-size kindergarten through eighth-grade charter school will open in August with the high school opening the following year.

"Schools are the heart and soul of every great hometown," Mr. Kitson said. "When people come to Babcock Ranch they don't have to hope that great schools are something that will happen sometime in the future — the school is here right now, today."

The same is true of the town's amenities. The Health and Wellness Center, occupying the entire east side of the lakefront downtown district, represents the final building in Founder's Square's first phase.

Kitson & Partners will host Babcock's official grand opening March 10.



Kitson & Partners will host Babcock Ranch: A Hometown Grand Opening on March 10.

Babcock Ranch by the numbers:

- 7: number of homebuilders
- 56: number of twin villas, cottage, single-family, executive, manor and custom floor plans
- 30: number of model and spec homes now open or under construction
- 50: miles of planned biking and hiking trails
- 300: acres is Babcock's largest lake
- 18,000: acres is the town's footprint
- 50: percent of Babcock Ranch that is set aside for greenways, parks and lakes
- 19,500: planned residential units
- 50,000: future residents
- 6 million: square feet of planned commercial development
- 73,000: acres of the adjoining state-owned Babcock Ranch Preserve
- 440: acres is the FPL Babcock Ranch Solar Energy Center
- 300,000: number of solar panels
- 74.5: megawatts of solar capacity in the solar field
- 250,000: gallons of water produced by the town's water plant
- 6 million: gallons of daily water capacity at buildout
- 90: percent of gray water reclaimed for irrigation
- 200,000: gallons of waste water treated daily
- 4.5 million: gallons of daily waste water capacity at buildout

Meet Jeff and Arlene Smith, Lennar's First Homebuyers

BY LAURA TICHY-SMITH

Babcock Ranch Telegraph Correspondent

Jeff and Arlene Smith's discovery of Punta Gorda for a vacation home reads somewhat like a fairy tale. Florida's east coast was too busy, Naples was a little too ritzy but Burnt Store Marina was just right.

"We only knew the east coast of Florida through family and friends," said Mrs. Smith. "We decided to look on the west coast so I booked three different trips, starting south in Naples and working our way up to Destin."

Burnt Store Marina kept popping up during her internet investigations. "We said let's take a ride, found it and that was it," she said. "We fell in love with the community and bought our house that day. We canceled the rest of the trip."

The couple, originally from the Northeast, enjoyed their part-time Punta Gorda



Arlene and Jeff Smith

home for 14 years and made a permanent move two years ago.

Happenstance and frequent news articles also factored in the Smiths' decision to

build a home in Babcock Ranch.

"We've been watching Babcock Ranch for the last nine months," Mrs. Smith said. "We first learned about it last spring and I kept reading about it. We got interested and decided to take a ride."

During their first visit, none of the new town's model homes were open. Nor was its restaurant or the Lake House clubhouse in the Lake Timber neighborhood. But it made a good first impression. "We really liked the whole idea of Babcock Ranch and the feel," she said.

When the town announced the addition of Lennar to its building program, Mrs. Smith started contacting the national builder in the summer. The couple wanted a certain location and they didn't want to wait. They became Lennar's first homebuyers with the purchase of a maintenance-free twin villa in the Trail's Edge neighborhood. Construction is expected to start this spring

and the Smiths will rent out their villa, with plans to eventually relocate.

"It's a great investment and we expect demand for rentals from people working there," Mrs. Smith said. "It was a great opportunity. I just took my cousins to Babcock and they purchased a home in the Lennar neighborhood."

The Smiths attended Babcock Ranch's holiday tree lighting and visit every Sunday for brunch at the Table & Tap restaurant. "We have our favorite server and enjoy seeing her every week," Mrs. Smith said. "She always knows what we want."

"I really like the community feel," she added. "It's amazing to see what's happened in the past year and we're looking forward to being there. I'd rather live somewhere you don't pull out of your neighborhood and immediately pull into bumper-to-bumper traffic. I could be a town ambassador because I talk it up to everyone."



BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH

The areas selected for Babcock Ranch comprise land that had already been disturbed for agriculture or mining. The rest, about 90 percent, is a state preserve.

Sustainable Babcock

BY LAURA TICHY-SMITH

Babcock Ranch Telegraph Correspondent

The way that Babcock Ranch is bringing together many different sustainability strategies received a showcase in November in the form of an educational broadcast streamed to 150 classrooms in 63 countries. Dr. Jennifer Languell, a consultant from Trifecta Construction Solutions and a star of the Discovery Channel's "Discovery Project Earth" series, spoke to the school children from atop The Hatchery in Founders Square. Dr. Languell said she told the fifth and sixth graders sustainability requires not only the environment but community and economics as well.

"Most people, when they hear green or sustainable, think environment," she said, "but it has to be financially viable in order to be sustainable. If you don't have the balance with societal impact and economics, you don't have sustainable. Babcock really does focus on that societal component because it's very geared towards community. You get this feeling when you're there that it's different."

Of the original 91,000-acre ranch, Kitson & Partners sold 73,000 acres to the state and Lee County for a preserve and is only developing half of the remaining 18,000 acres. The developers held public charrettes, asking environmental

agencies and the public for help with identifying the most environmentally sensitive features of the land. The areas selected for development primarily comprise land that had already been disturbed for agriculture or mining.

"Our footprint is a little less than 10 percent of the original ranch, and that really does speak volumes when you look at it that way," said John Broderick, senior vice president of development with Kitson & Partners. "It's not common to find a developer who is willing to put 50 percent of its land into conservation easements."

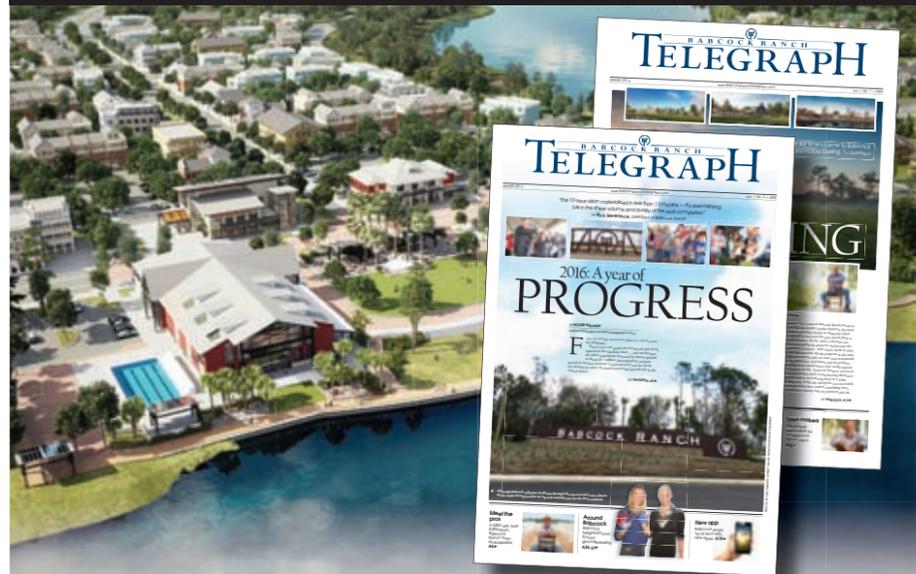
Mr. Broderick explained that the developers are combining innovative strategies for storm water management, solar power generation, energy-efficient buildings, relocation of trees, and transportation that encourages walking, biking and riding public autonomous shuttles in order to create a town that sustains the integrity of the environment.

"It's not that Babcock is going crazy and doing all of this stuff," Dr. Languell said. "It's just that they're doing so many components where other people have done just one piece, and Babcock is doing it in a very methodical way so that they make informed decisions moving forward. If we are not successful, that would tell people that sustainability is not successful, and that's not what we want to have happen. We want this to work." ☺



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BABCOCK RANCH EVENTS

For more information, visit babcock-ranch.com/events.

Yoga

Thursday Feb. 2 – Lakehouse - 10:30 a.m.
 Saturday Feb. 4 – Founder's Square - 10:30 a.m.
 Thursday Feb. 8 - Lakehouse - 10:30 a.m.
 Saturday Feb. 10 - Lakehouse - 10:30 a.m.

Music at Table & Tap

Saturdays from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. and Sundays 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
 At the Band Shell
 Cost: Free

Kids Soccer Camp

Each Saturday through Feb. 28
 At the Community Field
 Cost: \$40

Doggie Dash 5K

Saturday, Feb. 17, 8 – 9:30 a.m.
 Registration begins at 7:30 a.m.
 At Founder's Square
 Cost: \$20 (race fee)

Second Annual Bark in the Park

Saturday, Feb. 17, 9:30 a.m. – noon
 At Founder's Square
 Cost: Free

Babcock Ranch: A Hometown Grand Opening

Saturday, March 10, noon – 8 p.m.
 At Founder's Square
 Details: TBA



Saturdays and Sundays

■ **Music at Table & Tap.** Enjoy great music and great food Saturdays 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. and Sundays 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
 — www.babcockranch.com/events

■ **Run solo or with a four-legged friend at the Doggie Dash 5K,** Saturday, Feb. 17, 8 – 9:30 a.m. at Founder's Square. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m.
 — www.babcockranch.com/events



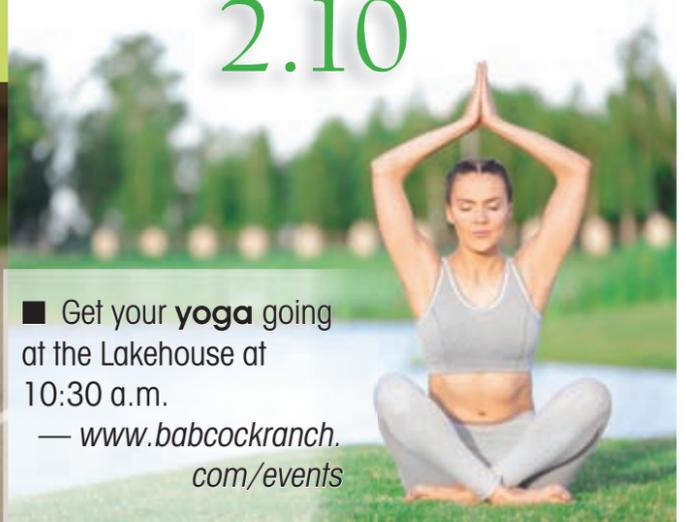
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■ **Let's celebrate! Babcock Ranch: A Hometown Grand Opening at Founder's Square, Saturday, March 10, noon – 8 p.m.**



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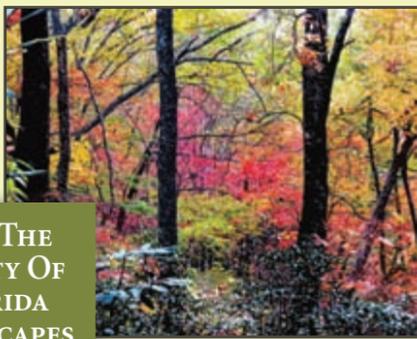
■ **Get your yoga going at the Lakehouse at 10:30 a.m.**
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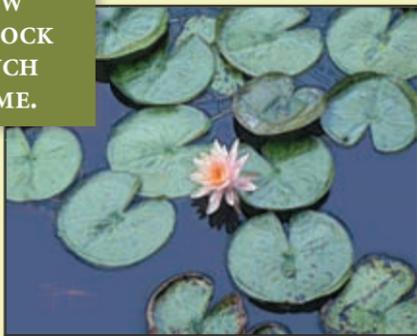


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BABCOCK RANCH EVENTS

Lee Health Essential Oils

Tuesday, March 13, noon – 1:30 p.m.
At the Lakehouse
Cost: \$35

Lee Health Aging in Reverse

Thursday, March 15, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.
At the Lakehouse
Cost: TBA

Lee Health Yoga Certification

Saturday and Sunday, March 17 and 18, all day
At the Lakehouse
Cost: TBA



Lee Health presents Train the Brain

Tuesday, March 20, 11 a.m. – noon
At The Hatchery
Cost: Free

BNS Spring Concert and family movie night

Saturday, March 31, 5 p.m.
At Founder's Square
Cost: Free

Easter Eggstravaganza event

Saturday, March 31, time TBA
At model homes and town
Cost: Free

Easter Service – LIFT Church

Sunday, April 1, 10:30 a.m.
At the Band Shell
Cost: Free

Lee Health Hypnotherapy

Thursday, April 12, noon – 2 p.m.
At the Lakehouse
Cost: \$35

The Alva School concert and family movie night

Friday, March 16, 5 p.m.
At Founder's Square
Cost: Free

Lee Health Book Club

Monday, March 19, 9 – 11 a.m.
At The Hatchery
Cost: Free (Book fee only)

Lee Health presents Plant-based Food Meet-up

Tuesday, March 20, 6 – 7:30 p.m.
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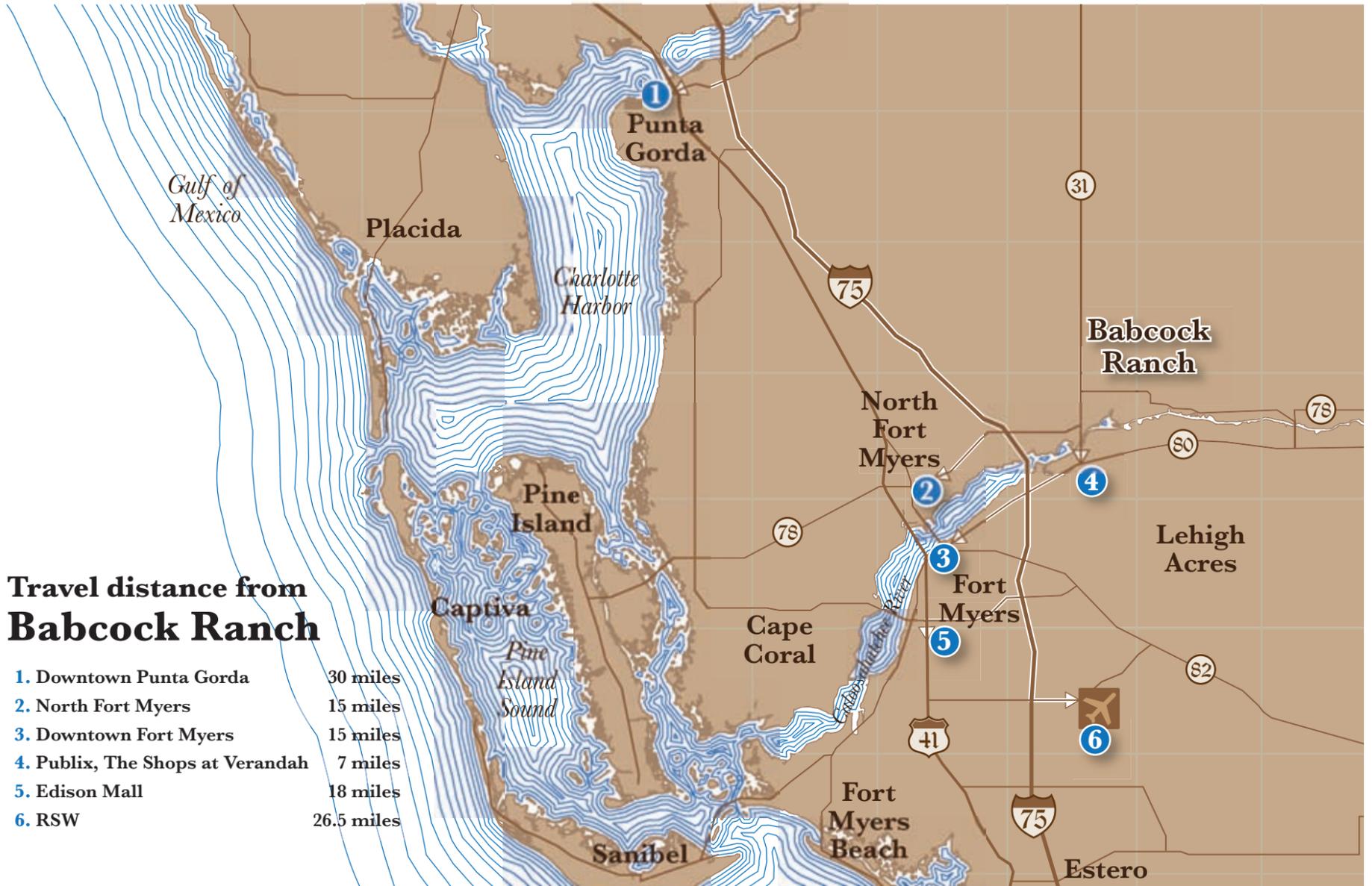
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Fourth graders plant culture of acceptance

BY LAURA TICHY-SMITH

Babcock Ranch Telegraph Correspondent

Founding a new school presents many challenges, but it also provides some interesting opportunities. If you recall your own school days and the special traditions associated with your institution, somebody had to create all of those school songs, chants and cheers. In short, someone had to create the school's culture.

The Babcock Neighborhood School uses a project-based learning system to transfer academic knowledge to projects that help the community in some way. Kari Lewter, a fourth-grade teacher at BNS, is leading her class in a culture-building project for the new school. The children are attempting to build an inclusive culture by planting an acceptance garden at the school.

"I started the year off with a book titled 'Out of My Mind' by Sharon Draper," Ms. Lewter said. "I like to start the year off with this book because it has a little girl who has cerebral palsy. She has a brilliant mind but she can't communicate that to anybody, so it gives you a first-person view of her struggles and what she has to go through."

After her class read the book, Ms. Lewter then challenged her students with a project-based learning question: As the trailblazing group of students at a new school, how could they create a school environment that was accepting of all students, including all of their diverse traits? The students brainstormed ideas that ranged from flags to posters to tie-dye T-shirts to a garden. They settled upon the garden as their best option since anyone in the Babcock community could visit it. Then the students had to write a proposal to the school principal that included not just what the garden would look like but how they would get the supplies, who would plant it



The students in Kari Lewter's fourth-grade class at Babcock Neighborhood School decided to plant a garden to help create a school environment that was accepting of all students, including all of their diverse traits.

VANDY MAJOR / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH

"Project based learning is supposed to have something that is tangible that is a result ... We want them to critically think and apply what they're learning." — Shannon Treece, Principal

and who would maintain it.

"Project based learning is supposed to have something that is tangible that is a result," said Principal Shannon Treece. "We want learning to be very hands on and engaging for students. We want them to critically think and apply what they're learning, so it's not just information that they are learning to take a test but it's information that is meaningful in

some way in the community."

The fourth-graders acceptance garden fit the criteria, so Ms. Treece approved it. The school was granted a section of land in front of it for the project. Ms. Lewter said the children have started learning about low-maintenance plants and drawing blueprints for the garden. Then they will draft donation request letters to seek the supplies. She said

she anticipated that the garden could be open as early as February.

"The book gave them the background knowledge they needed, and then they created a solution to something that's a problem with schools all over the country right now, with kids who aren't feeling accepted," she said. "They were able to come up with a way on their own." ☺



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Babcock Neighborhood School cooks up a win

BY LAURA TICHY-SMITH

Babcock Ranch Telegraph Correspondent

The students at the Babcock Neighborhood School have been learning to cook up some pretty interesting things. Student entrepreneurs are in the research stage of recipes for beauty products, such as lip balm and soaps, that eventually may be sold at Slater's Goods and Provisions. They recently brought one project to fruition when they built a solar cooker that allowed them to win first place at the DEP/IMAG Solar Cook-off in December. The school's team won \$500 by cooking a chicken teriyaki stir fry with only the rays of the sun.

"Elementary, middle and high school teams work on all kinds of engineering challenges during the STEM Tour," said Lori McLain, the fourth through sixth grades science and engineering teacher at BNS. "We have fifth and sixth grade STEM teams at our school, and at the solar cook-off, our team beat teams that included elementary, middle and even high school teams."

The cook-off was sponsored by the IMAG History & Science Center and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The event was a stop on the seventh annual STEM Tour presented by the STEM Team of SWFL, which is part of the Chamber of Southwest Florida.

Ms. McLain said that the rules for the contest required the students to build their own cookers and then prepare a dish of their own choosing cooked to safe food temperatures within a two-hour timeframe. They also had to prepare a booklet with recipes, materials, material costs, sustainability of the cooker and other information about solar cooking.

The event fit well with BNS' instructional mode, which is project-based learning.



VANDY MAJOR / BABCOCK RANCH TELEGRAPH

BNS students are using science to create products they can sell in Babcock's shops.

students and making the learning environment meaningful."

The students chose to build a cooker based around a Fresnel glass, a lens with concentric rings that concentrates solar rays, because it heats quickly and can overcome hazy conditions that can impede other solar cookers. The lens focused the sun's rays onto a copper plate topped with a cast iron skillet with a lidded glass casserole dish in it

"The essence of the work that we're doing, the charter here," said BNS principal Shannon Treece, "is all about engaging

to cause convection and conduction to cook the chicken. One of their teammates had already been researching solar cookers and had the lens. Choosing a cooker type was easy for the team, Ms. McLain said. Choosing a recipe to cook was the hard part.

"It was more like an argument," Ms. McLain said. "I have to remind myself that they're sixth graders. One of them was set on having a salmon meal, but the others said no, they didn't want to cook fish, so that was going back and forth. It was probably the toughest part because the guy who wanted the fish was a holdout, but then we got a message from the group organizing the event that some of the judges were allergic to fish."

She said the students did all of the research and shared the responsibilities of preparing for the event. Some attended to cutting up and marinating the chicken while others came up with bamboo booth decorations and even carry-out boxes with chopsticks to fit the recipe theme.

"They really wanted to make Babcock Ranch stand out," Ms. McLain said. "They said people were expecting, since we come from the solar town, that we should be able to cook with solar energy, and we wanted to show them we could." ☺

"The essence of the work that we're doing, the charter here is all about engaging students."

— Shannon Treece,
BNS principal

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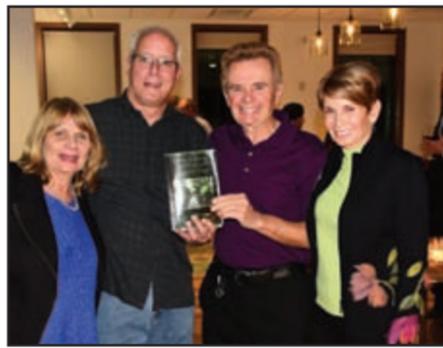
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