

Go East, Y'all!

BY SUE ANGER

Dr. Watson Inn

PHOTO CREDIT: FLOWERS PLANTATION

REAL ESTATE

GROWING INTO THE FUTURE™

Travel east on US Hwy 70 out of Raleigh for ten minutes and you'll land in Garner, population 27,800. The North Carolina Railroad put Garner on the map in 1849 when the town was selected as a stop between Goldsboro and Charlotte. Today, Garner has preserved its train depot on the tracks that still run parallel to Main Street and US Hwy 70. Community roots run deep in *American Idol* winner Scott McCreery's "Water Tower Town," as residents are proud of what Garner offers: sports, arts, and recreation that's a great place to work and live. Lake Benson and White Deer Park are two highlights of the town's recreational areas and boast miles of greenway trails, playgrounds, picnic shelters, athletic fields, tennis courts, and a boathouse. In 2013, the National Civic League named Garner one of 10 All-America Cities, in part because of its strong grassroots activism. In 2010 a highway proposal threatened to split Garner in half, and thousands of residents came together in a few weeks' time to stop the "red route" from removing approximately 2,300 homes and three municipal parks, an industrial park, and an African-American church with over 1,000 members. As a result of the community coming together so effectively, the General Assembly passed a law banning the route

from being built.

www.garnernc.gov

CLAYTON:

IT'S A LOT CLOSER THAN YOU THINK

Railroad history is evident in Clayton when you drive through this town of 16,000 residents. The tracks that carried cotton, watermelons, and tobacco still lie next to Main Street and speak of the time when the town was named Stalling's Station. Today, the Clayton Center, a performance and conference center, attracts national entertainers. The Clayton Community Center offers public recreation and the Sam's Branch Greenway connects to the Mountains-to-Sea Trail along the Neuse River.

www.townofclaytonnc.org

FLOWERS PLANTATION

This award-winning community in Johnston County is minutes from Raleigh, but is still very much away from the urban bustle. Bordered by US Hwy 42, Buffalo Road and the Neuse River in Clayton, this master-planned community was the first of its kind in Johnston County and was awarded North Carolina's Community of the Year in 2013 and 2014 by the North Carolina Home Builders Association.

Steeped in history going back before the American Revolution, Dr. Josiah Ogden Watson's father moved to today's Flowers

Plantation in the mid-1700s and built the Dr. Watson Inn, which later became the Flowers' home in 1905 and a centerpiece of the entire development. Dr. Watson served in the War of 1812 and was even a close friend of both Theodosia Burr's husband, Governor Alston of South Carolina, and the future President Andrew Jackson. Moving forward a century, the current developer's father, Joshua Percy Flowers, amidst the Depression and through the Cold War, acquired more than 4,000 acres. After her father's death in 1982, Rebecca Flowers started converting the old cotton and tobacco fields into a destination community where the sidewalks are connected to all of the neighborhoods and you can easily walk or bike to pick up your weekly groceries at the nearby Harris Teeter-anchored shopping center at Flowers Crossroads. If you're craving a Carolina Packer (red) hot dog, stop by the Percy Flowers Store, a fun country store right across from the shopping center. Keeping up with the family tradition and its roots, Ms. Flowers' twin sons, Joshua Flowers Finch and Jordan White Finch, are Flowers Plantation developers and builders.

Flowers Plantation features more than 30 neighborhood developments, over 10 miles of walking trails and two elementary schools for which Ms. Flowers donated the land. When complete, the development will total nearly 7,800 lots with prices starting at \$150K to over \$600K. Wherever you are on your housing and life spectrum, Flowers Plantation has a place for you to call home. The community includes townhomes, cottages, Active Adult and 55+ Age Restricted neighborhoods. You can even rent a lake house, and other rental properties are available.

"You don't need a car here. The streets are all golf-cart friendly," says Reid Stephenson, Flowers Plantation's Chief Executive. "You can come home from work, enjoy our parks and recreation, make a convenient run to the grocery store, get your kids to school, all without leaving the community."





Flowers Plantation

The Club at Flowers Plantation houses an elite fitness center, indoor pool, spa massage services, Jacuzzi, and club café bar. Outdoor options for children and adults include the Piranha swim team, tennis, neighborhood trails, baseball, soccer, kickball, flag football, and basketball.

Living in Flowers Plantation is ideal for homeowners who want a comfortable, relaxing lifestyle that encourages neighborhood camaraderie and lifelong friendships. www.flowersplantation.com

SILVER POINTE

Silver Pointe of Highway NC-42 has 61 homes with prices starting at \$200k. It offers half-acre homesites and an easy country atmosphere that's relaxing, but is still close enough to the city.

The community is also minutes away from Lake Benson Park, White Oak Mall, and the Clayton Riverwalk along the Neuse Greenway and Sam Branch Greenway. www.jimallen.com/neighborhood/silverpointe

MEADOWS AT SUNSET RIDGE

Surrounded by farms and country off US Hwy 42, Meadows at Sunset Ridge offers 28 homes with prices starting at \$250k. Homes have a three-car garage option and lots can measure up to one acre.

www.jimallen.com/neighborhood/meadowsatsunetridge

Sue Anger is a writer and writing instructor living in Raleigh.





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