

The Exciting New World of Desktop Apps

If you have a smartphone, you have probably used apps to get the weather, music and games. Now, similar apps have come to your desktop computer.

Apple's Mac App Store has thousands of apps for your Mac OS X desktop or laptop computer. There is also a Microsoft App Store available for Windows 8 and Windows 10 computers. The Microsoft App Store will be a colorful tile on your Start Menu, labeled "Store."

Although Microsoft started using apps in Windows 8, they were a bit difficult for the average person to use. With the introduction of Windows 10, apps can be used quite easily. Windows 10 apps have the usual minimize, maximize and close icons in the upper right-hand corner. Most also have easily understandable double arrows to make the apps full screen and still allow you to get back to a smaller screen easily. If these navigation icons don't

show up in an app, you simply move your cursor to the top of the screen and they will appear.

Some apps come with Windows 10. You must be logged in to the computer with a Microsoft account to be able to download additional apps. If you don't have a Microsoft account, you can set one up quite easily. This is worthwhile because adding apps to your computer opens up a whole new world to you.

There are hundreds of thousands of apps in the Windows App Store. It is easy to peruse these as they are divided into categories. Still, it may be overwhelming, especially if you have not visited an app store before. So here are a few ideas.

If you love to follow the news from traditional sources, there is an app for you. From CNN to Fox News to USA Today, ABC and BBC, just about every news outlet has a free app. Certainly, they all have websites as well, but this gives you a viable choice. Usually the app has a more visual format that you may like. So check out the website and compare it to the app to see which one you like the best.

There are also apps that will aggregate the news for you. My favorite app in this category is Flipboard. This is a free app that lets you choose what type of news you are most interested in. It then presents that news from popular news sources in an excellent magazine style that lets you flip through the pages quickly and easily. If you have a touch screen you can use your finger to flip through the pages. If you don't have a touch screen, you can use your mouse.

If you like to listen to music while you use your computer, try the iHeart Radio app. It lets you listen to your favorite live radio stations, and you can even pick a song or artist to create your own commercial-free custom radio station. With iHeart radio, you can listen to talk radio, news, sports and music stations from all over the world.

If you like to check the weather every day, you will want to go to the Microsoft Store and download the Weather Channel app. This app presents forecasts, radar maps and weather news live

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Sandy Berger
Tech Insider

Uncommon Goods



SARA CORCE/The Pilot

Neal and Tanda Jarest's store in downtown Southern Pines boasts thousands of products from more than 100 vendors.

The Finer Things in Life At Opulence, Luxury Came the Hard Way

BY **TED M. NATT JR.**
Business Writer

At more than \$4,000 for a set, the SFERRA Giza 45 Luxe sheets won't fly off the shelves, but that's not the point for Opulence of Southern Pines.

The sheets — made in Italy from Giza 45 Egyptian cotton — are a statement about the significance of the business on North West Broad Street that Neal and Tanda Jarest have built since opening almost 20 years ago.

"We're one of 16 retailers in the world that are allowed to have these sheets," Tanda said. "Each set is numbered and comes with a certificate of authenticity. You get that customer that has to have the best. We have customers like that all over the country, and it's because people come through Southern Pines and Pinehurst."

That such a prestigious manufacturer would choose Opulence for an elite product speaks to the global success the Jarests have built. They could be anywhere, but they took an old service station-turned-restaurant

and converted it into a destination for the finest luxury bedding and other high-end goods.

"We're known for offering the best products and the best customer service," said Tanda, who went through management training while working for Kmart. She was a buyer for Liberty House in Hawaii and served as sales manager for a bedding manufacturer prior to becoming an entrepreneur.

Besides bedding, Opulence sells bed linens, towels, down duvets and pillows, fine lingerie, bamboo loungewear, slippers, soaps, lotions, shaving products, candles, silk florals, personal and home fragrances, and Duxiana beds, among other things.

"We have 160 vendors that provide us with thousands of products, but we've always stayed very focused on what we sell," Neal said. "Our sales are split evenly between our store here, our store in Cameron Village

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the Jarests have built. They could be anywhere, but they took an old service station-turned-restaurant



Looking for Something Cozy?

Try the SFERRA Giza 45 Luxe sheets — individually numbered and priced at \$4,500

Failed Foxfire Village Project To Be Auctioned Off

BY **TED M. NATT JR.**
Business Writer

A Florida developer that planned to build a 1,485-acre resort community in Foxfire Village will instead sell the property next month.

CBRE Auction Services has been retained by Stonehill Capital Group to manage the online auction on Sept. 10.

"The owner of this spectacular property is a partnership that is disappointed, and they decided the most efficient way to sell this property on a date certain is by auction," Douglas Johnson, managing director for CBRE, said in a statement earlier this month.

The Foxfire Village Council approved three ordinances concerning the proposed Stonehill Pines development in 2009 —

annexation of the land, a rezoning to Planned Unit Development (PUD), and a development agreement with Stonehill Capital Group.

The PUD allowed for a 250-room hotel and golf resort that would have included two golf courses, a 20,000-square-foot spa, a driving range, clubhouse and amphitheater. It also allowed 1,050 residential units, with up to 300 single-family homes and 300 multi-family homes, as well as a 14,000-square-foot conference center.

Stonehill Pines LLC bought the land for \$19.7 million, or about \$13,662 per acre, in 2008. Plans called for a four-phase buildout over 10 to 15 years at an estimated cost of more than \$1 billion.

Online bidding will start at \$4,000 per acre, or a minimum of \$5.9 mil-

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Mayor Pro Tem Leslie Frusco noted that the Village Council had passed three "development time-frame" extensions since 2009.

"We understand the issues with why it wasn't developed," Frusco said last week. "The economy real-

ly took a downturn right after the property was acquired by Stonehill. We've all suffered through some difficult times since then."

Foxfire Village has about 900 residents, so Frusco said village officials initially had "high hopes" that the development would double or triple the population.

"At the time that the PUD was passed, we certainly had every indication that the development was going forward," she said. "Obviously, as a council, we were disappointed that it has not been developed."

"At this point, we're all hoping that a similar type of development would take place after the land is sold. But that remains to be seen."

Johnson said the site offers a variety of development opportuni-

ties and layouts.

"It will appeal to resort and recreational developers," he said, "as well as companies or individuals that would like to farm the timber until the property is developed."

CBRE is touting the site's proximity to Pinewild Country Club and Pinehurst Resort and Country Club.

"Pinehurst is internationally recognized as one of the finest destination golf resorts in the world," said Chester Allen, a senior vice president in Raleigh. "Its centralized location near major population centers and international airports ... provide Pinehurst with a location advantage over comparable resort areas."

Contact Ted M. Natt Jr. at (910) 693-2474 or tnatt@thepilot.com.

Chamber Seeking Applicants for Leadership Program

Contributed

The Moore County Chamber of Commerce is in the process of accepting applications for the 2015 Moore County Leadership Institute (MCLI) class.

The mission of MCLI is to develop effective leaders. Chamber member business and community leaders interested in participating in the 2016 MCLI program should visit www.moorecountychamber.com or contact the Chamber to obtain the link to access the online application.

Applications will be accepted through Oct. 16.

Business owners know there is a universal need for leadership. While the Chamber may not be

able to impact world issues, it can impact those issues that occur in Moore County by developing effective local leaders. The Moore County Chamber of Commerce understood this in 1989 when the Moore County Leadership Institute was developed.

The goal is to develop a broader base of informed, committed and qualified individuals capable of providing dynamic leadership and work for positive community change in Moore County. To date, there are more than 475 MCLI graduates.

The objectives of MCLI include understanding Moore County; expanding business and personal networks; building leadership skills;

and finding a place to serve. Class participants will have the opportunity to explore various leadership topics and engage in team building exercises. In addition, they will review and discuss local issues affecting education, government, agriculture, tourism and health care.

An important element of MCLI is developing class projects that address community issues raised during the year.

"Effective leaders think about the future and what they can do to make that future brighter. The MCLI program helps participants understand the dynamics of effective leadership and decision-making," said Linda Parsons, president and CEO of the

Moore County Chamber of Commerce.

"Participants study our community infrastructure, analyze their own individual leadership styles/roles, and further develop their leadership skills. MCLI challenges emerging and existing leaders in our community to expand their professional network, develop a systemic understanding of how our community works, and examine potential solutions to the important issues that impact Moore County's future."

To be considered a candidate for MCLI, all interested parties must complete an application by Oct. 16, at 5 p.m. Applications after this date

and time will not be considered.

Completing an application does not guarantee a spot in the MCLI program. The fee to participate is \$895 and includes a two-day retreat, all meals and course materials for 12 months. There is an attendance requirement to participate.

Partial scholarships are available. All applications are reviewed by a selection committee. Interviews may be conducted. Nominees for the 2016 class will be notified in December.

To obtain an application or if you have questions regarding the MCLI program, visit www.moorecounty-chamber.com, call (910) 692-3926, or email hneal@moorecounty-chamber.com.

Store

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in Raleigh and our website. We treat every online customer like they're in one of our stores. They receive a handwritten thank-you note from whomever fulfills their order.

"We have online customers that we have not seen before who will get off

Interstate 95 just to come see us and the store."

It's a far cry from their first location next to The Country Bookshop in 1997, when Tanda was the sole employee because Neal was still in the U.S. Army.

"We didn't really have any money," he said. "We essentially borrowed \$20,000 to get started by securing a \$16,000 loan and putting \$4,000 on our credit cards. We did everything ourselves."

Added Tanda, "I had three display mattresses on the floor because I couldn't afford the frames. We also only carried white and ivory towels. Now, we have 62 colors."

By early 2002, they needed more space.

"In the early years, we plowed every single nickel back into the business," Neal said. "I wanted to buy the building we were in, but they wanted so much money. It was crazy."

While surfing the Internet during a deployment in Europe, he discovered that the 1940s-era building at 280 NW Broad St. was for sale.

"It was home to The Universal Joint, a NASCAR-themed restaurant," he said. "We made an offer in March, closed in April and moved in August after an extensive renovation."

Neal said they "sold everything" from the restaurant.

"That kind of financed our renovation," he said. "Half of the old kitchen equipment is spread around this town."

Since then, the building has undergone two other renovations, expanding the initial 2,800-square-foot footprint to its current 6,000 square feet. Opulence takes up three-fourths of that space, while the Jarests rent the remainder to Lyme of Southern Pines.

"I wanted the building to have a Mediterranean-Italian look," Neal said.

The Jarests, who have been married 21 years, opened a second store in Cary in 2004 and relocated that store to Cameron Village three years ago.

"We have worked together 100 percent since I retired in 2005," Neal said. "Tanda buys everything and focuses on the front of the house. My focus is mainly the back of the house. We work very well together. We have our lanes."

While there are managers at each retail location, Tanda spends most of her time in Cameron Village and Neal his in Southern Pines.

"Come hell or high water, those doors have always been open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. every Monday through Saturday, and still are," Tanda said. "I didn't ever think we would make it. We

did it through hard work and by staying focused."

Neal said 80 percent of customers live within 100 miles.

"When we opened, people were very loyal to local shops," he said. "They took us in. They believed we were a good asset for their town."

Tanda said the biggest challenge now is educating "the younger generation" about value.

"That's what we struggle against," she said. "They aren't willing to pay too much because they don't want their things to last forever. They just write you off."

"But if we get you in the door, and you give us a little time, you'll become a customer."

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Single Family residential Average sales price, units closed and average days on market in the Pinehurst-Southern Pines Area Multiple Listing Service.

Year	Average Closed Price	Total Sold	Days on Market
2015	\$224,841	994	192
2014	\$234,954	1,464	160
2013	\$238,276	1,355	167
2012	\$246,564	1,064	178

Moore County, Single Family, residential only, number of closings by month:

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2015	83	101	122	127	165	220						
2014	77	85	105	120	115	150	158	132	110	119	115	130
2013	82	79	99	94	139	137	157	154	114	97	99	104
2012	67	64	84	82	107	91	90	107	110	94	82	86

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