



Olympic champions join Dicks Realty to launch The Oaks of Lake City, a unique equestrian community

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Lake City Journal photo
Sarah Dicks, 6, daughter of Bradley Dicks, shares the television spotlight with Karen O'Connor at the groundbreaking.

By Karl Burkhardt

A community within a community, O'Connor Signature is a 76-acre development that will begin with an equestrian barn, a covered arena and an open arena within the Oaks of Lake City.

More than 100 people gathered in the middle of a former peanut field off S.W. Tustenuggee Avenue for the groundbreaking Friday morning.

Around the O'Connor Signature equestrian facility, Bradley Dicks is creating the Oaks of Lake City, a community of 236 homes, including 136 equestrian lots for horse-owners.

The homes and equestrian center will be linked by more than 15 miles of looped horse trails and more than 260 additional acres of common space. Equestrian recreation areas, including jumping facilities, will be placed throughout the property, along the trails.

The concept is similar to golf-course communities, where many of the homes surround the fairways. It also is similar Cannon Creek, where homes with hangars line the community runways, giving pilots instant access to their planes and to the skies.

Several things make O'Connor Signature at the Oaks unique.

This community is for horse owners and it offers them amenities not found in other developments.

It was designed by Equestrian Services LLC. of Charlottesville, Va., to use the area to best advantage for the residents.

Amenities include:

- A lesson program approved by Karen and David O'Connor that is customized for The Oaks and is taught only by certified instructors.
- Monthly instructional clinics given by some of the best clinicians from all different riding disciplines from all over the world.
- Equestrian facilities that feature all custom-designed stall fronts, stable wares and quality products to insure a top-of-the-line equestrian experience.
- Competition-quality footings and arenas.
- A custom, top-of-the-line 33-stall barn.
- Competition-quality dressage arena, hunter/jumper ring and covered round pen.

"We are creating a program to meet needs of the community at large and use the facilities to the greatest extent possible," said David Donovan of Equestrian Services. He and his wife, Jennifer, have been working on the design for about tow years.

"Bradley Dicks came to us with the land and a vision," he said. In addition to the design work, "We will manage the equestrian facility."



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Lenvile Dicks (from left), leads the groundbreaking ceremony with Andy Dicks, Suzanne Davis, Bradley Dicks, David O'Connor, Karen O'Connor, Michael Donovan, Jennifer Donovan and County Commissioner Elizabeth Porter.

Olympic champions Karen and David O'Connor designed the cross-country course, the barn and arenas. They will be involved in training the instructors and will have an annual clinic there.

"We are excited to partner with Equestrian Services and provide horse enthusiasts from all riding disciplines quality facilities so close to their homes," said David O'Connor. "The Oaks facility will follow our standards, offering a level of excellence and quality all horse owners and enthusiasts will appreciate," he said.

"This is an opportunity to match services to the environment and be accessible to the area," said Michael Donovan. It is not just for Oaks residents. Lessons and boarding, as well as other services will be available to area residents.



Lake City Journal photo
Danielle Feiner (left) and Ashley Kehoe, from the O'Connor facility in Ocala, joined the groundbreaking ceremony.

Construction is scheduled to begin in April and the equestrian facility is expected to be in operation in the fall.

Bradley Dicks is developing The Oaks of Lake City with his brother, Andy Dicks and sister, Suzanne Davis.

Sale of home sites will begin in the spring, The Oaks offers 236 one to five-acre lots set among large oak trees on 1,222 acres.

For more information, including a site plan, visit their Website oconnortheoaks.com or call Dicks Realty at 752-8585 or (800) 545-3501.

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