

Chapel Hill News REAL ESTATE

Why pay high rent?
If you have good credit and a job, there's no reason to rent. Start your home search now at allentate.com.



Selling on lots big and small

UNIVERSAL UCLUCK
James Hughes is one of a cohort of Americans who still loves owning a large plot of land, no matter how long a commute it imposes. He lives on a 13-acre parcel a full hour's drive from his office.

Smart Moves

Ellen James Martin

Some people just like the sanctuary feel of lots of land," says Hughes, a real estate expert and dean at Rutgers University.

Hughes has no intention of selling his place anytime soon. But if he did, he believes he'd face considerable difficulty finding buyers who value living on a big, high-maintenance property as much as he does.

"Country settings have lost their allure for a lot of older people. They want to live where they can walk to restaurants, movie theaters and museums. They don't want to be trapped in an auto-dependent area," Hughes says.

But just as the sellers of remotely located properties and their listing agents often find it problematic to locate buyers, so do those who own a house in a city setting with only a postage stamp-sized lot or smaller.

The reality is that many current homebuyers want the best of both worlds — the convenience of in-town living along with a patch of ground they can call their own. This makes it tough for sellers on both ends of the land-size spectrum.

Here are a few pointers:
■ Stress the best features of a city property with a tiny yard.

Maybe both the interior and exterior of your property are diminutive in size. Even so, your place could still be very saleable due to its urban setting.

Does your city home offer easy commuting access to major employment centers? Are neighborhood schools close enough that children can walk? Also, are popular shopping venues just a short distance away? If so, you and your listing agent should talk up these advantages in your marketing materials.

As Hughes says, one way to help potential buyers appreciate your location is to create a colorful map that puts your home in context with neighborhood amenities. This could be placed on an easel on display in your dining room.

You may also want to exhibit photos showing nearby parks and biking trails, which are increasingly important to fitness-minded homebuyers, as well as to those with small children.

"In city parks, there are now more and more jogging strollers in use," Hughes says.

■ Highlight your interior space if your city lot is tiny.

Mark Nash, a longtime real estate broker and author of "1001 Tips for Buying & Selling a Home," says a "surprising number of

SEE SMART, PAGE 2B

FieldStone growing in North Chatham



PHOTO BY MARILYN PERYER
The sales model home at 226 Fieldstone Lane in FieldStone (the Summerlake plan) has an open floor plan with an island kitchen.

BY SALLY KEENEY
CORRESPONDENT

FieldStone, a new-home neighborhood off Mann's Chapel Road south of Chapel Hill, has been growing over the past two years and is now filled with young families, retirees and professionals working in Chapel Hill, Research Triangle Park and as far away as Winston-Salem.

The community is a short drive to an I-40 exit, so it is easily accessible to many places of work, but none as close as Chapel Hill and Pittsboro unless it is your own home office at FieldStone.

Mark Holland works from home for Verizon. His wife, Katherine, is a stay-at-home mom. They moved to FieldStone from another North Chatham neighborhood near Perry Harrison Elementary School.

"Our girls didn't want to move from our old house off Hamlet Chapel Road," Katherine said. "But the house was too small even though the neighborhood was great."

Driving from her old neighborhood to shopping on I-5-501, Katherine saw FieldStone and liked what she saw. Mattie and Mackenzie — now 9 and 12, respective-



PHOTO BY SALLY KEENEY
Katherine and Mark Holland with daughters Mackenzie and Mattie perch on boulders under a canopy of trees in their front yard at FieldStone.

ly, were with their mom one day as she drove through FieldStone. Horizon Custom Homes Builder Jay Dunn was there, waved at the family and introduced himself.

"If you want to look at this house, you can," Jay said. "My kids moaned and didn't

want to do it," Katherine said. "But once they got inside one of the houses, they loved it. Especially when they were told they could pick their own rooms."

"The Hollands bought their house, you can," Jay said.

SEE STAGING, PAGE 2B



PHOTO BY MARILYN PERYER
The FieldStone house on lot 26, the Forestview plan, features a foyer open to a two-story great room.

Great Value on In-Town Location



106 Bollwood Drive
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
\$645,000
5 bedrooms, 4.5 baths,
4374 sq ft

Look at this price! Large custom home with elevator and complete lower level suite less than one mile from Franklin Street. Master on main level is handicap accessible. Low maintenance landscaping and exterior make this an ideal candidate for those that want to age in place. Wonderful natural light, private views and superb location!

Contact Logan Carter, Fonville Morisey Realty, 919-418-4694 or go to logancarter.com for pictures and virtual tour

Superb One Level on 11 Acres in Chatham



494 Wilkinson Creek Lane,
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
\$377,500

Look at this price! Custom built one level home with lots of storage on 11 private acres. Built in 2000, this 3BR/2BA is only minutes from UNC Chapel Hill, with hardwood floors, two fireplaces, 2 car garage. Unfinished walk-up attic for potential 4th bedroom and bath. 4 BR septic field in place. Great outbuilding and garden plot.

Directions: Take Smith Level Rd. off Damasco Cr Rd., L on Medford, R on Canoe Rd., R onto Wilkinson Cr Ln.

Contact Logan Carter, Fonville Morisey Realty, 919-418-4694 or go to www.logancarter.com for pictures and virtual tour

FIELDSTONE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1B

home through FieldStone new-home representative, Kelley Hunter, who happened to be the mother of one of Katherine's friends from high school.

"I couldn't have done it without her," Katherine said. "She listed our house near Perry Harrison, and we sold it to the first person who looked at it. We had to rent a house in Chapel Ridge for five months while our FieldStone house was being built. Jay is also amazing to work with. We have no building horror stories."

The Hollands chose the Heartstone plan and options that increased its size to 3,600 square feet with an oversized two-car garage. They worked with Dunn to make the following changes. They changed unfinished space upstairs into a finished office space for Mark. The couple also changed several doors in the main living space into windows because the family anticipated needing that space for furniture, Katherine said.

The Heartstone kitchen has a pantry at an angle. Katherine had the pantry moved to a half closet under the stairs. She had the space under the stairs pushed back as far as it could be to make the most of that space.

Katherine and Mark chose Mid-Continent kitchen cabinetry from Stock Building Supply. The Shaker-style cabinets have sturdy dish drawers to hold pots, pans and baking dishes in drawers that roll out easily, Katherine said.

Katherine says her favorite room changes depending on the time of year. Mark likes the open family room and having his own office upstairs where he has space for work and space for a drum set.

The girls go to Perry Harrison Elementary and Pollard Middle School. When they reach high school age, they can attend Chatham County Public Schools: Northwood High School or Woods Charter School.

The girls say they really like FieldStone which has great streets for bike riding. The yard is big with space for their trampoline. They are working on their fairy houses among the boulders. The rocks are great for hide-and-seek, too.

Unique topography, unique homes

"Field Stone offers very unique topography for the area which is so appealing to our clients, whatever their age," Dunn said.

The land is a mix of open fields and heavy woodlands of mature trees. Granite underneath often produces enough rock to build rock walls at the homes.

"Horizon Custom Builders has worked hard to maintain a level of quality in all of our homes that compliments this uniqueness and is second to none in the market place," Dunn said.

Dunn, who has a design degree from North Carolina State University, says he enjoys working with other design professionals to produce home plans that "allow us to give our clients a truly custom home they can proudly call their own."

Dunn is building two-story and ranch homes based on an original plan by nationally known house designer Frank Betz (www.frankbetz.com). Founded in 1976, Frank Betz Associates has received Builder Magazine's top selling designer award numerous times.

Dunn hopes to equal or better the 2012 Bronze award Horizon received for the house they built at 90 FieldStone Lane in

the Parade of Homes sponsored by the Home Builders Association of Durham Orange and Chatham Counties. This fall, Horizon will enter the house at 93 Runa Court in the Parade.

The 2014 Parade entry is an enlarged version (3,543 square feet) of the Heartstone plan (3,143 square feet). It is basically the same, though some room sizes have changed. The elevation is also different and features a front porch that runs to the corner of the house. This four bedroom, four bath house, which will be finished in early September, is available at \$534,900.

All FieldStone houses have a first-floor master bedroom and a first-floor guest room or study, as well as a covered porch and a screened porch. Additionally, each home has features unique to that house. For example, the house at 226 FieldStone (the Summerlake plan) has extra built-ins inside the house and a fire pit on a stone patio, Dunn said.

The house at 26 Clarence Lane (The Forestview plan) has a full, unfinished basement (more than 1,100 square feet) that could become a home office, an in-law suite or a great area for more family recreation, Dunn said.

Homes range in price from \$499,000 to \$539,000 and in size from 3,144 heated square feet to 3,547 heated square feet. There are two custom homes under construction now, according to Hunter, who says the community is an equal mixture of custom and spec homes.

In the first two phases of the 27-home neighborhood, there are five lots and four spec homes still available (FieldStone-Neighborhood.com and then Inventory). Fieldstone is being built by Horizon Custom Builders, Jay Dunn president (FieldStone-Neighborhood.com and click on Meet Our Builder).

The FieldStoneNeighborhood Website also has a list of the green building techniques and Energy Star approved products Horizon uses to build its energy-efficient houses. These include sealed crawl spaces and duct work and Tech Shield radiant barrier roof sheathing.

Water savings include weather-based irrigation control, dual-flush toilets, low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators, and drought-tolerant landscaping. All of the houses in FieldStone are serviced by individual septic tanks; AT&T U-verse for internet; have access to Public Service natural gas and Chatham County water.

For more information about FieldStone lots or houses, call Kelley Hunter at 919-260-1223 or Tommy Watts at 919-260-0054.

To suggest your home or neighborhood be featured in this section, contact Sally Keeney at skeeneys@yahoo.com or 919-932-0579.

SMART

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1B

family buyers can be persuaded to accept the trade-off of a very small lot if the house is loaded with bells and whistles inside." A large kitchen that flows into a high-ceilinged family room would be one such plus.

Another big draw is lots of storage space, he says, "so if you have great walk-in closets and huge kitchen cabinets, don't keep all that a secret."

Market your country home through a "broker's open."

Perhaps your property is surrounded by several acres of land in a bucolic area with flowering gardens, yet it's located far enough outside the city that it's hard to draw prospects to your distant location.

If that's the case, Nash recommends you ask your listing agent to stage one or more "brokers' opens" at the place. These are open houses to which real estate agents throughout the general area are invited. They typically feature food, entertainment or both.

"If your place looks gorgeous and gets exposed to many agents, they'll spread the word and bring interested clients by," Nash says.

Tout highway access to the country house you're selling.

The cost of gas isn't the only factor that discourages many buyers from considering a property in a country location. It's also the time a long commute can absorb.

"Dual-career couples are more time-stretched than ever. They don't want to get stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic when they could get back and forth to work a lot faster," Nash says.

But as any long-distance truck driver will tell you, not all roadways are created equal. If your property has easy access to a major highway that's not traffic-ridden, then Nash says you should make sure potential buyers know this.

"You'll never attract hard-core urbanites to a rural location. But you can ease the minds of country dreamers who would consider your place," he says.

To contact Ellen James Martin, email her at ellenjamesmartin@gmail.com.



The stone-sided exterior of the house at 26, Clarence Lane, mirrors the granite and stone on the ground throughout the FieldStone neighborhood. PHOTO BY MARILYN PERRYER

homes for sale Foothills Co. 6125	homes for sale Chatham Co. 6125	homes for sale Chatham Co. 6125
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------	------------------------------------

Pace-Smith & Doan
THE POWER OF TEAMWORK

NEW OFFERING in THE PRESERVE at JORDAN LAKE
168 BROWN BEAR CHAPEL HILL, NC 27517

OPEN TODAY, 2-4 PM

- Located in one of the Triangle's Premier Golf Communities, A Davis Love III Signature Golf Course, Nestco Bessie Jordan Lake
- Very Special Landscape Created by a Master Gardener
- Elegant Finishes and Upgrades Throughout Including Hardwood Flooring throughout First Floor & Fabulous Architectural Accents
- Well Arranged Kitchen with Top Appliances Including 4 Burner Gas Cooktop & Elevated Dishwasher...easy to unload!
- Family Room Adjoints Kitchen/Breakfast room & Boasts Handsome Fireplace
- Minutes to UNC, Downtown Chapel Hill, REU, RTP & Duke
- Great Amenities in Addition to the Golf...Swimming Pool, Tennis, Playground, Sidewalks.

A Must See! OFFERED FOR \$615,000. Main floor Master & Main Floor Study, Expansive Lower Level MLS No 1966416

FORVILLE MORSE
VIVI PACE-SMITH, BROKER, GRI CELL: 919-593-5190
CINDY A. DOAN, BROKER, GRI CELL: 919-265-4559

www.vivipacesmith.com www.cindydoan.com

click & save @
triangle.dealsaver.com

Thank
a Realtor...

for helping you find
the perfect house
in the right neighborhood!

IR Do It Right.
REALTOR® Hire a Professional.

www.irealtor.com
Supporting the Triangle Real Estate Industry for over 100 years.