

# Naples Daily News

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## REAL ESTATE

# Wilderness Country Club offers Old Florida living in the heart of Naples

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Nestled on 200 lush tropical acres with a full array of club amenities, Wilderness Country Club offers a unique lifestyle just minutes from Fifth Avenue South, Waterside Shops and Gulf of Mexico beaches.

Wilderness Country Club is a groundbreaking residential development established in 1974 that holds the honor as the very first private, gated golf course community with a mandatory membership built in Naples. Because of this, the community boasts an “Old Florida” feel with mature trees and vegetation that were planted well before the club was established on the site of the former Frank family ranch.

Wilderness Country Club also is one of the lowest density communities in Southwest Florida, featuring just 300 condominiums situated around an 18-hole Arthur Hills designed golf course that was totally refurbished in 2003. The community was carefully designed as a planned unit development (PUD) where all telephone and electric utility lines are buried, which further enhances the “Old Florida” appearance.

Each member has their own golf cart with no trail fees. Golf amenities include a practice area where golfers of all skill levels can work on their game with a driving range, short-game area and putting green, plus a full-service Golf Shop managed by Head Golf Professional Sara Dickson offering in-season clinics and private lessons taught by a Master Professional of the Professional Golfers’ Association of America.

Wilderness Country Club also is recognized for its vibrant tennis and POP Tennis program with lessons and matches led by a U.S. Professional Tennis Association Certified Elite Professional. Five heated swimming pools are conveniently interspersed throughout the community which promote social interactions of all residents of Wilderness Country Club as they are not segregated by neighborhood.

The clubhouse is a hub of social activity for members and guests. It is here that new members discover how friendly and social the tight knit community is. Many weddings and other large family celebrations have also been hosted over the years. In season, clubhouse activities include organized Bridge, Gin and Mahjong. On Sunday afternoons, there is coordinated, casual bocce and croquet, followed by a social gathering at the clubhouse.

Residents also take advantage of Frank Park, a private five-acre site dedicated to the pioneering Frank family. The park includes numerous specimen trees and shrubs from all over the world. Many of the trees are now labeled so that visitors can learn their common and Latin names as well as place of origin.

Other features of Frank Park include four Har-Tru bocce courts and a regulation-size croquet court where members can enjoy spirited competition. Also, within the property is a dedicated Dog Park area where members and their four-legged friends can participate in daily “Yappy Hour” social gatherings.

Near the edge of Frank Park, overlooking one of the 12 ponds surrounding the golf course, is a butterfly garden with a variety of flowering plants designed to attract the beautiful, brightly-colored butterflies.

Wilderness Country Club has been designated as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary where a wide variety of birds and wildlife abound. Numerous specimen plants, shrubs and trees dot the property and more than 80 species of birds, including Bald Eagles, Ospreys, White Ibis, Anhingas, Great Blue Herons, Red Shouldered Hawks, Barred Owls and Swallow Tail Kites, have been documented on the site.

The lush surroundings at Wilderness Country Club provide the ideal location for The Conservancy of Southwest Florida to use as a safe place to return rehabilitated animals, such as turtles, hawks and owls, to their native environment. Since 2014, Wilderness Country Club has also collaborated with The Conservancy on the not-for-profit organization’s Upper Gordon River Wildlife Corridor project.

Wilderness Country Club is located on the east side of Goodlette-Frank Road, just north of Golden Gate Parkway. It has been member-owned and controlled from its inception. For more information or to view available properties for sale, call 239-261-6060 or visit the real estate page at [www.wildernesscc.com](http://www.wildernesscc.com).