

Views from **On Top of the World[®]** Communities

CONTACT: John Heagney
in Holiday, Fla.
(727) 942-2718

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Success from the back of an envelope

OCALA, FLA. – It started in 1975 with a contract on the back of an envelope for 12,972 acres in the heart of central Florida owned by the Norris Cattle Co. Today, On Top of the World Communities is one of the nation's *100 best active-adult communities*, according to *Where to Retire* magazine.

Sidney Colen, a pioneer developer of amenitized retirement communities, took one look at the land known as Circle Square Ranch in mid-December of 1975, and scribbled a contract on that famous envelope the same day. Two weeks later, the deal was finalized.

Experience had taught Colen to go after what he wanted and to create something special when he saw it. It was the way *Mr. Sidney* ... as he is called ... had operated since 1947, when he began building single-family homes in north St. Petersburg, Fla.

By 1957, he developed Florida's first community targeted for senior buyers and created the first modern condominium community – Clearview Oaks.

A decade after that, his company began building On Top of the World – its first all-inclusive active-adult community in Clearwater, Fla. The last of 4,971 homes there was

– MORE –

built in 1999 and the company still provides professional management to the community.

Colen is chairman of the board of directors of On Top of the World Communities, one of Florida's oldest construction companies. His son, Kenneth D. Colen, is company president and has overseen development and operation of On Top of the World Communities in Ocala since the earliest stages of construction in 1981.

Naturally, plans and home designs changed between then and now. Several times. What began as a concept to create a community of five- to 10-acre ranchettes, evolved into a pedestrian-oriented, master-planned community with distinctive neighborhoods of attached villas; and detached, single-family homes, some with maintenance included.

From the outset, the Colens wanted to build amenities first – before any homes – starting with a 25,000-square-foot recreation center and an 18-hole par-72 golf course. Now the community of about 4,500 homes has three major recreation centers with three swimming pools and three golf courses, plus a host of other features and new amenities.

The latest innovations at On Top of the World Communities include amenities designed for an entirely new generation of active adults. There is an expansive education program, Master the Possibilities, with its own 10,000-square-foot education facility; a cultural center attracting top-name entertainers to an 800-seat theater, which is Ocala's largest indoor venue; a state-of-the-art fitness center and spa; and a quaint town square to bring neighbors together for entertainment and fun.

What has remained constant has been, as Ken Colen puts it, “a commitment to build quality, energy-efficient homes in an outstanding, well-designed community.”

Another constant has been cattle. Circle Square Ranch continues as a working cow/calf operation with more than 900 head of cattle, managed for 30 years by E.L. Strickland, the Florida Cattlemen's Association's 2007 Outstanding Rancher of the Year.

For more information, call (352) 854-9488 or visit *OnTopoftheWorld.com*.

