Ponte Vedra Beach Neighbors

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The Witt Family's Home Court

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Photo by Ohaleo Photography - Olivia Hale

The Witt Family's Home Court

BY MEEKA COOK | PHOTOS BY OHALEO PHOTOGRAPHY - OLIVIA HALE

Danny and Devon Witt have built a life in Ponte Vedra shaped by family, sports, community and nearly three decades of shared experiences.

It all started with a tennis lesson. A lesson that turned out to be a life-changer.

When Devon Witt returned to Ponte Vedra after graduating from Florida State University in 1995, many of her high school friends had scattered. Looking for a way to reconnect socially, she decided tennis might be a good place to start.

She reached out to the Jacksonville Golf and Country Club, where she had taken lessons growing up. The director of tennis knew Devon and her family. Apparently, he had an idea of his own. Rather than teach the lesson himself, he handed it to his assistant pro, Danny Witt.

"He set up the lesson and then told me to teach the lesson because he thought we would hit it off," Danny recalls. "He was right!"

Two years later, Danny and Devon were married. And now, nearly three decades later, they have raised two children, built careers, watched their family enter new stages of life and remained deeply connected to the Ponte Vedra community they call home.

For Danny, life in Northeast Florida began early. Born in High Point, North Carolina, he moved to Jacksonville with his parents, Dan and Jean, when he was six years old. He attended St. Paul's Catholic School in Jacksonville Beach with his brothers, David and Kevin, before going on to Fletcher High School.

Sports were woven into the Witt family from the beginning. Danny played tennis at the University of North Florida, earning All-American honors while completing a degree in business marketing. Two of the teams he played on were later inducted into UNF's Athletic Hall of Fame. While still in college, he also worked for the ATP Tour in roles ranging from on-court coaching to Player Services on the business side.

For Danny, however, the lasting appeal of sports has always gone beyond competition.

After college, he managed tennis clubs, consulted and worked with young athletes before partnering with longtime friend and former top-10 ATP player Todd Martin in an academy-based program. Eventually, he created Witt Tennis, where his focus remains developing young players and helping them reach goals both large and small.

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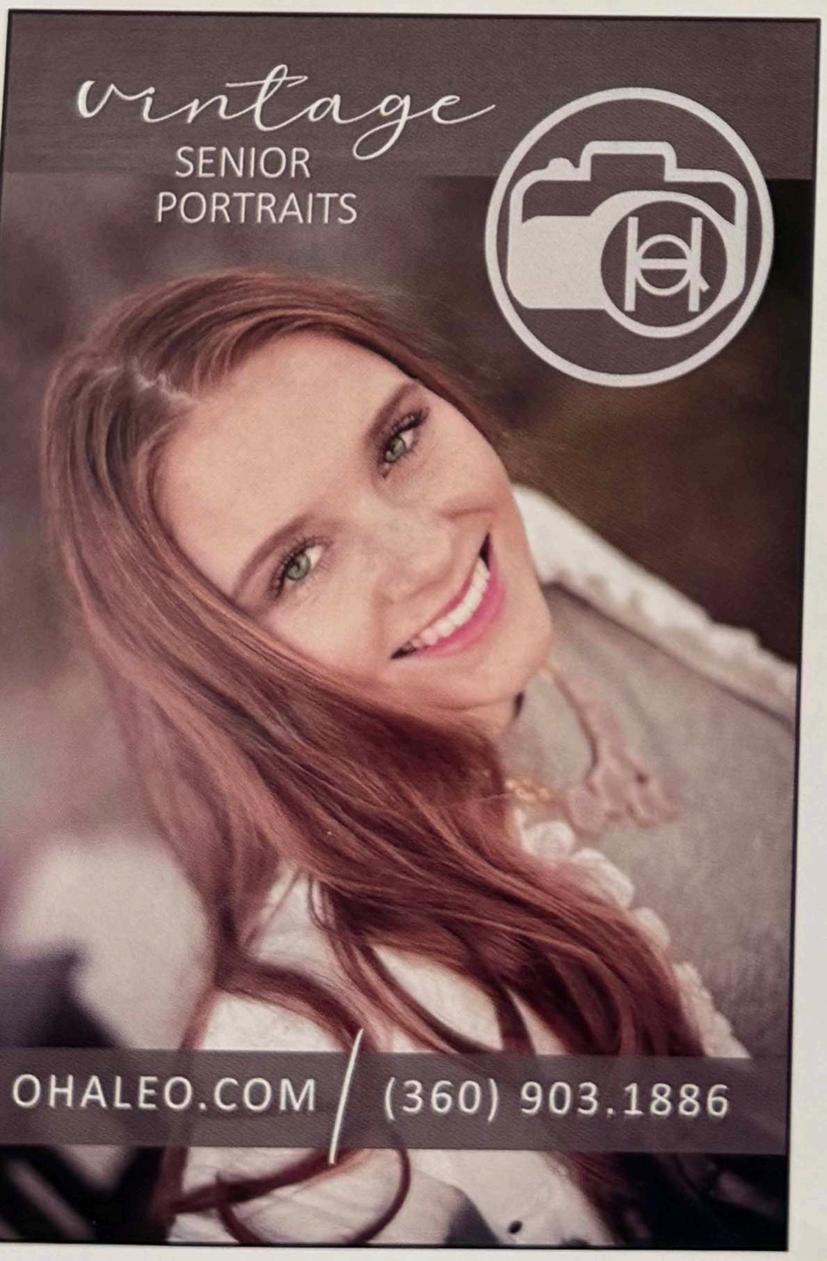

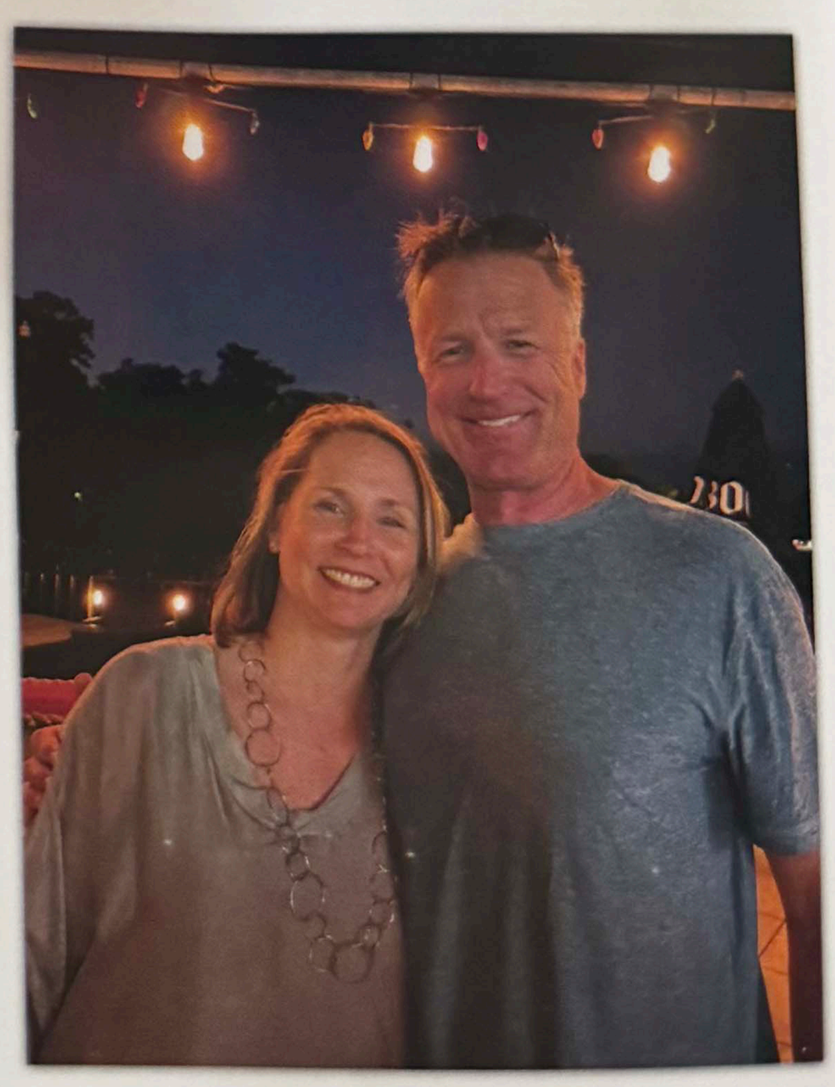

"I am really passionate about working with kids and helping them reach their potential," Danny says.

That ability to work with families comes partly from experience. Danny and Devon raised their own two children, Andrew and Ava, in Ponte Vedra, navigating the same busy school schedules, sports practices and evolving family routines as many of the parents around them.

Their son, Andrew, 25, has always been someone who likes understanding how things work, Danny says. Today, he is an automotive technician at Porsche Jacksonville and enjoys surfing the local waves.

Their daughter, Ava, 22, attended Florida State University, her mother's alma mater, where she earned a master's degree in Sport Management after playing volleyball as part of Ponte Vedra High School's program. She is currently putting that education to work with the USTA at the U.S. Open in New York City.

Devon's career has evolved alongside family life as well. After graduating from FSU with a degree in finance, she returned home and initially worked in her father's business. She later entered real estate in 2014 and today works locally while also serving as an assistant manager of her office.

Now that Andrew and Ava are grown, family life looks a little different for Danny and Devon. As Devon puts it, they have experienced many of the stages that come with raising a family in Ponte Vedra.

"Danny and I checked a lot of boxes," she says. "We've been newlyweds, we've been new parents, we've had school-aged kids, we've had kids leave the home."

Ponte Vedra has been the backdrop for much of it.

The family previously lived in Fairfield before moving about 12 years ago to Seaview Park. By then, Andrew and Ava were old enough that being closer to friends and the beach had become important.

Today, that proximity to the ocean remains one of Danny and Devon's favorite things about their neighborhood.

"Living a few blocks from the beach is pretty amazing," Danny says, "and we try to take advantage of that by walking there as much as possible."

Devon, who grew up in Ponte Vedra herself, has watched the area change significantly. Her parents, Marilyn and Jim Hoener, still live locally, and her brother, Jamie, remains nearby in the Jacksonville area. She remembers a much smaller community, when local school choices were far fewer than they are today.

Through that growth, what both Danny and Devon seem to value most is something that has little to do with buildings, roads or development: the people.

Ryan Griffin,
MD Concierge Medicine

Founded in 2015, Ryan Griffin, MD, Concierge Medicine is a membership-based, primary-care practice in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida.

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Danny describes himself as a natural networker — someone who genuinely enjoys meeting people, maintaining friendships and connecting people who might benefit from knowing one another.

"I deeply love the community I live in," he says. "I am a true believer in meeting new people while building and fostering relationships."

Those relationships extend to the places and institutions that have been part of his own life. Danny remains actively involved with the UNF tennis program and athletic department, follows FSU sports and is a longtime Jacksonville Jaguars fan and season-ticket holder.

For Danny and Devon, however, sports are not simply something to follow from the sidelines. They are also a way the family connects.

A local tennis, volleyball, baseball or softball game can make for a good day together. Andrew's enthusiasm for Formula 1 has even inspired their next family adventure: this October, Danny, Devon, Andrew and Ava plan to travel to Austin to attend an F1 race.

"We are not necessarily annual vacation people," Danny says, but this was one experience they wanted to share. "It's a passion of our son's and the rest of us love anything sports related."

At home, family life also includes Wilson, their Bengal cat. Danny grew up firmly in the dog-person camp, but when the rest of the family wanted a cat, they reached a compromise: Danny got naming rights.

Wilson, Danny reports, is "pretty entertaining."

For the Witts, home has never been defined by just one thing. It is family. It is community. It is the people they have met along the way.

And, yes, a love for sports.

Witt Tennis

BY CHRISTINA CUSH

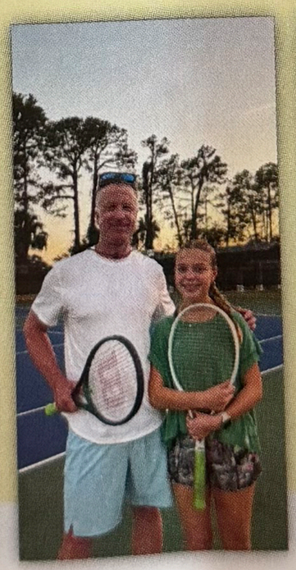
Danny Witt played tennis at UNF, earning All-American status, and, after graduating, was inducted with his teammates into the university's Athletic Hall of Fame. Currently, Danny operates Witt Tennis in Ponte Vedra and is a Racket Sports Professional Association Certified Pro. He is also High-Performance and USTA Sports Science Certified and has spent more than 25 years developing competitive tennis players across Northeast Florida.

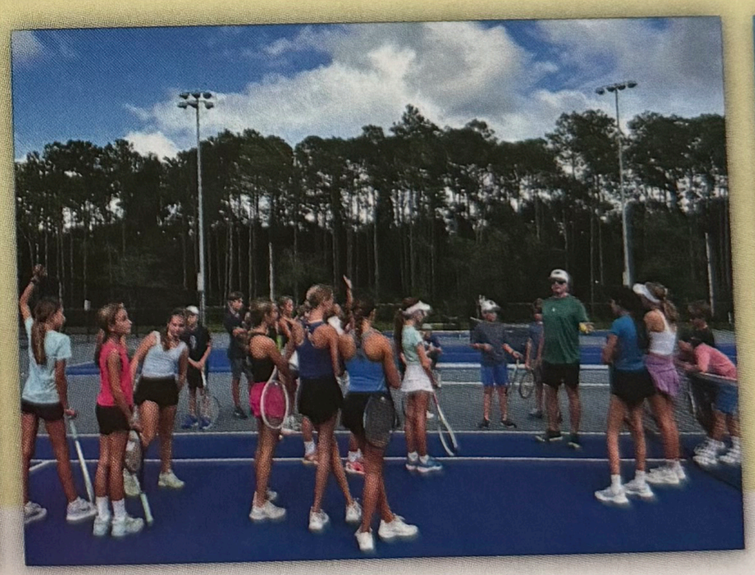
Two major influences on his player development style are the years he spent working with Todd Martin, a former top-10 ATP player, and his brother, David, an accomplished coach on the ATP and WTA tours.

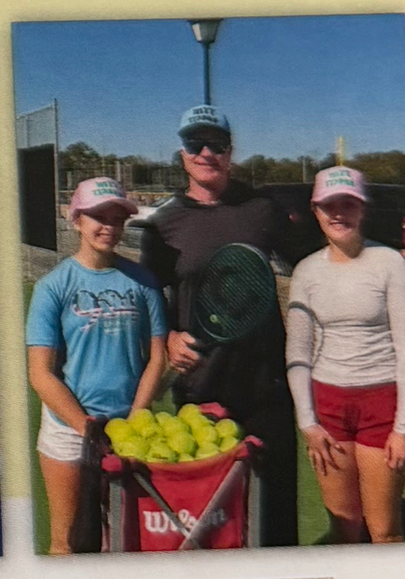
Witt Tennis is a comprehensive junior development program for kids ages 7 and up, from beginner level through NCAA varsity tennis.

"I am proud to have introduced hundreds of kids in the Jacksonville Beaches area to tennis, the sport of a lifetime," Danny says. "I've also trained dozens of student athletes to reach their goal of competing at the collegiate level. Witt Tennis helps kids set and achieve goals along the way, such as making the middle school or high school team and reaching milestones in their tennis skill development, including match and tournament play."

Reach out to Danny at witttennis.net







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