

CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

July 2006

President's Message

By Karl Nurse

Inside is a wrap up on the Pinellas Living Green Expo. It was a huge success with 5,000 people who were looking for information and products to translate their interest in a greener and cleaner community into concrete action. The exit surveys from visitors and vendors indicated a strong desire to make this an annual event. We will make this happen.

An event of this size could not have happened without a broad coalition of interested groups including: CONA, the Sierra Club, Florida Native Plant Society, Audubon Society, Defenders of Wildlife, and help from activists from Tampa and Clearwater. Businesses from Progress Energy to the St. Petersburg Times provided considerable resources for the event. Several governments including: Pinellas County, City of St. Petersburg, Tampa Bay Water, SWFWMD and the Univ. of Florida helped as well.

My conclusion from the expo is that there is widespread interest in energy and water efficiency. Clearly, people are prepared to invest their money in building a more efficient and cleaner life style. THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED. WHAT A TEAM EFFORT!

CONA will be working on the other issues during the next months. Public safety is always first on neighborhoods list of concerns. The July meeting will largely focus on crime and public safety. As the City prepares to do a management review of the police department, it is an opportunity to look at other communities and how they attack crime.

CONA Board Meeting

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

The SUNSHINE CENTER, 330 5th St. N.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m.; meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Items:

CONA Business – Treasurer's Report
CONA Citizen of the Month
Nominating Committee for 2007
Crime and Public Safety
Updates – City Budget, Police Review,
LDR's (zoning)
Open Forum – Neighborhood Concerns

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First Annual Pinellas Living Green Expo was a Huge Success



CONA hosted the first sustainability exposition ever held in Pinellas County during the weekend of June 17th and 18th. By all measures, the event was a resounding success. Not even a malfunctioning air conditioner could dampen the enthusiasm of the participants.

I am delighted with the results and grateful to everyone who helped make this possible. This was a collaborative effort with participation from local governments, academia, businesses, environmental advocacy groups, and neighborhoods. I cannot recall any other project that enjoyed so much support from such a diverse group of interests. Without this broad base of support, the expo could never happen.

CONA should be proud of its role. In the beginning, Karl Nurse envisioned an expo in Pinellas County similar to events in other areas of the country. CONA championed the idea and organized the planning and structure for the event. North Kenwood Neighborhood offered its "good offices" as a 501(c) 3 organization. Without the energy, commitment and leadership from CONA, the expo could not have gotten started. As with many good ideas, organizing an expo of this size is difficult. In the weeks leading up to the expo, we

were unsure how successful it would be. Exhibitors were waiting to see who else was participating before committing to a booth at the expo. Many of those who had committed were being frustratingly slow with their payments. It was not at all clear that we would raise the money necessary to lease the Coliseum.

In the end, all of the available space had been sold out and we were turning away applicants. We collected sufficient money and "in

Right: Twigs & Leaves, owner and CONA Member, Michael Manlow explains the benefits of using native Florida plants to an interested customer.

Below: The Coliseum Exposition hall from above looking at all 73 exhibitors.



kind" contributions so that all of our marketing plans could be implemented. The Coliseum was jammed full with 74 booths. We had more hybrid cars in the parking lot than we could accommodate. As someone pointed out, these were good problems to have.

A great measure of success is the more than 5,000 people who attended. This substantially exceeded our expectations and left our vendors very pleased. All of the exhibitors said they would like to participate again next year. Others, who did not participate, have also told us they would like to be involved next year. In one year, we have outgrown the Coliseum.

The expo demonstrated what many of us intuitively believed. We have shown that there is a strong public interest in "green" products and services. To the extent that the expo

encourages change in the way we buy, sell and consume resources, it will be truly successful.

The challenge now is to build on the success, energy and goodwill developed by the first expo. The concepts demonstrated at the expo need to become integrated into the way we live. Next year's expo needs to be bigger and better.

Thank you to everyone who supported and participated in the first annual Pinellas living Green Expo.

Steve Plice, Chair
Pinellas Living Green
Steering Committee

Thank you to all of our PLGE Volunteers!!

Well, we did it! The Pinellas Living Green Expo was a huge success! We estimate a turn-out of 5,000 people over the weekend. WOW! Our exhibitors couldn't have been more pleased: many of them had to run back to their stores and offices to gather more info and restock products. Healthy Homes low VOC paints took off, Scoot-It sold 10 scooters on Saturday alone (more than the previous month), Shirts of Bamboo sales rocked all weekend and they came back to the store Saturday to find a line of customers waiting! Progress Energy said it was the best run Expo they have experienced. Despite the broken AC on Sunday, our crowd still continued throughout the day and people were patient.



Planning the first year of an event like this was challenging. Finding sponsors and exhibitors was not always an easy process since Pinellas Living Green Expo was a "new thing." Now that we have proven ourselves, the next year will be easier for us to get more exhibitors and to attract even more sponsors who are cutting edge, big name sustainable businesses. We will have the wind at our backs next time! (pun intended) A big thanks goes to our sponsors, but we could not have this without our volunteer support and commitment.

Just looking at the list of volunteer's names below, one can see that our event was helped by many volunteers and volunteer shift captains! Pat yourselves on the back for a job well done. Stay tuned for forthcoming announcements about Pinellas Living Green Expo 2007. We will be looking for committee members and helpers to make this even bigger and more successful. Many of you have great ideas and contacts for potential exhibitors, and that info will also be helpful.

A special thanks to a core team who made this event a success: Karl Nurse, Steve Plice, Annie McWilliams, Mo Eppley, Conrad Weisner, Tom Killian, Barbara Heck, Ray Wunderlich and John Bagg. It is a pleasure to work with such dedicated and wonderful people!

Volunteer Captains: Jennifer Salmon, Gregg Stemm, Jean Whipple, Kai Warren, Mary Robbins, Cathy Harrelson, Cherry Jo Pascal, Octavine Swanson, Peter Belmont, and Anna Marie Garrett

Pinellas Living Green Expo Volunteers: (my sincere apologies for anyone left off this list, but I think I have everyone): Carol Schiffler, Cass Rael, Christina Jurdan, Cyndi Robbins, Joseph Reed, Judy Blanton, Kai Warren, Luis Gludinio, Lucy Peak, Mary Diez, Mary Robbins, Sandy Culver, Robert Curran, Mike Dema, Marilyn Hafling, Richard Ellman, Amy Abrams, Bruce Taylor, Candy Wilson, Cheal Lynn, Jude Badagi, Judy Landon, Keely Sinclair, Mary Sanders, SHaron Purtell, Thomas Giesow, Katy Anderson, Vic Shirley, Lena Marie Garrett, Barbara Hawkins, Doug Norcross, Marcia Biggs, Mary Alpern, Mary Gerken, Octavine Swanson, Lucy Rice, Peter Belmont, Sara McDonald, Trey McDonald, Sue Sutter, Susan McMillan, Conrad McMillan, Bev Griffiths, David Shaffer, Chauncey Keane, Jamie Garner, Jill Miller, Jen Aldrich, Alex Size, Carolyn Green, Gwen Hollander, Inger Padilla, Janet Folsom, Joan Fernandez, Khristy Ferguson, Marco Padilla, Mark Grantham, Patricia Guaveia, Roland Martens, Shirley Buckland, Mitch Hull and Rick, Barb Deggans and family, Bill Stokes, Rebecca Falkenberry, Dani Skrzypek, Pamela Langan, Dave and Donna Hoover, Janie Johnson, Jeff and Kirsten Frank, Joanne Shrewsbury, Joyce Walters, Lucille Ruga, Mary Bright, Norma Roberts, Rheda Weeks, David Hastings, Steven Rye, Vivian Baker, Samm Simpson, Alletta Dreller, Barry Robbins, Becky Neilson, Bob Griffiths, Bob Kassay, Carole Griffiths, Sylvia Campbell, Denise Hillard, Donna Robbins, Ellen Thompson, Heather Belanger, Lisa Fink, Nicoles McConnall, Joan Zacharious, Ron Griffiths, Jeni Mohr, Jan Copley, Linda Demler, Veronika Slep, Alex Koutsianopolis, Amanda Ransone, Cathy Wilson and family

Also, stay tuned for an evaluation form. I'd like to hear your feedback so we know what worked and know where to make improvements for next year.

Thanks again, everyone!

Darden Rice
Pinellas Living Green Expo, Volunteer Coordinator

The PLGE Kids Korner was a huge success.

Kids of all sizes and ages found us in the back alcoves and stayed to play, draw, plant and Zip a Drip. Kids planted over 135 special cups of flower and veggie seeds to grow at home. We hope to see lots of nasturtiums, sunflowers, marigolds and zinnias sprouting soon. In addition, we may also see peas and pumpkins sprouting too as our new gardeners work their magic.

One of the biggest surprises for kids was the special Zip a Drip Station. Kids learned about the life cycle of a drop of water. They traced the cycle on special zippered bags. Pebbles were added inside the bags to simulate the earth. Each kid added four squirts of water and two breaths of air and then zipped the bag shut. When the bag is placed in direct sunlight, the water cycle starts. Water evaporates into the air, condenses into clouds, precipitates down as rain, percolates through the ground to the aquifer and then into our lakes and gulf and starts over again as it evaporates into the air. What a fun and easy way for kids to learn how precious our water is here.

The biggest draw was our special Tattoo Station. We have our bamboo shirt company to thank for suggesting and supplying the really cool looking red panda tattoo decals. Never knew red panda bears could be such a hot seller !!! On Saturday and Sunday all the kids sported the cool design (it does wash off quickly). They also now know that the China Red Panda bear is called "Firefox" in his native land.

As a final activity, each child was issued their own special Kids Korner Passport. Twelve vendors were identified as having booths or information of special interest. Each kid could have his Passport "stamped" with a special sticker when he visited. What fun.

It was a fun-filled day for everyone who attended Kids Korner. Mark your calendar, Kids Korner will be bigger and better than ever next year.



PLGE Chairman Steve Plice (second from right) and Conrad Weiser greet Pinellas County Commissioner Kenneth Welch and St. Petersburg Councilman Jaime Bennett and his wife Aimee at the Kick off Reception Friday night at the Coliseum.



Hybrid cars were a huge draw for all Expo attendees. We actually had more hybrid cars than we could accommodate in our available outdoor space.



Alternative transportation methods were also a big hit with the crowd. Long a choice of European city commuters, scooters are quickly gaining popularity here.



City of St. Petersburg and its many departments welcomed all Expo attendees. With its new "Green City" designation, St. Petersburg understands that there is strong public interest in "green" products and services. The City is encouraging changes in the way we buy, sell and consume resources.



The historic Coliseum welcomes hybrid cars including the City of St. Petersburg's own hybrid car (pictured on the left). As part of the "Green City" designation, the City is doing its part to help conserve precious resources.

Thank you to our PLGE Sponsors



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2006 Mayor's Conference on Historic Preservation

By Conrad Weiser

About 200 civic-minded citizens enjoyed the Historic preservation Summit held at the Coliseum from nine to three on Saturday, June 24th. Host and Keynote Speaker was Mayor Rick Baker. He opened the program with an expansive review of our city's history drawn from the pages of the fascinating textbook that the Mayor authored about our colorful past.....extending all the way back to previous geological eras! He traced the story of a community growing apace with our nation as maritime and railroad interests spawned the commercial trade center that we now know as St. Petersburg.

Program Chair Bob Jeffrey of Development Services/Historic Preservation discussed the development of local ordinances that support historic preservation in our city dating from the 1980's. He introduced co-worker Kim Hinder who compared our own legislative program with preservation ordinances in other communities. We learned of the parallel efforts of the Pinellas County Preservation Task Force. The city effort, to date, has established two historic preservation districts and has registered 82 properties of historic value. There were several opportunities, during the program, to take questions from the floor via a remote microphone. Many of the guest speakers responded to these issues.

To better gauge the attendees views on the most important aspects of the preservation theme, a series of 6 panels, divided into five basic themes, [and one more for ad hoc issues], were mounted at one side of the Coliseum. All attendees were provided with a set of three blue sticker dots. With these, the entire audience could express their selections by "voting" for those top three themes that seem most important to the program. This allowed all to express their favored positions without the extensive verbal debate that certainly would not have allowed everyone to be heard.



Downtown St. Petersburg, 1920s

After an excellent box lunch, [thanks to Harvey's Fourth St. Grill], we heard from a Stetson Law School Professor who described a variety of tax credits available for historic site restoration including: Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit, as well as local ad valorem exemptions that may be applied. Applications for most of these tax credit programs must be filed in advance of any physical reconstruction work.

Three fascinating local case studies were shown by Bob Jeffrey that pictured, and provided the financial details of restoration of the Emerson Apartment Building, The Pennsylvania Hotel remodeling and the change of use feature in restoring the city hall annex, previously a school building.

It was clear that our nation, our state, and our city are now alert to the need to preserve our historic heritage symbolized by the many structures now being protected and restored under new legislation that dramatically supports these preservation projects.

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CONA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES

The Sunshine Multi-Service Center - June 21, 2006

President Karl Nurse called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

- ◆ Our program began with a round of applause for the success of the Pinellas Living Green Expo hosted by CONA.
 - Karl noted that this was the largest project ever undertaken by CONA.
 - The project embraced the volunteers and support of many area organizations.
 - Under the leadership of Steve Plice and the meticulous management of Treasurer Annie McWilliams, we will net a revenue carryover to next year.
 - The success is seen in the 5,000 "Green Motivated" visitors and the profuse letters of praise offered by our sponsors and vendors.
- ◆ Steve Plice, (Jungle Terrace), then offered a summary report of the 2006 Living Green Expo.
 - The leadership challenges were dramatically simplified by a remarkable team of talented professionals with a wide range of skills they brought.
 - Soliciting sponsors and funding will unquestionably be easier next year.
 - Our vendors provided glowing letters of praise despite the failed air-conditioning on Sunday.
 - The Progress Energy and St. Pete. Times exhibit teams both reported that this has been the best trade show they visited.
 - Barbara Heck's Kid's Korner pleased parents who discovered this exhibit was not selling anything for their participating visitors.
 - John Bagg provided very professional leadership in organizing the show layout with our vendors.
 - Ray Wunderlich discovered that even our vendors were enjoying the many, varied Information Sessions.
 - Tom Killian was praised for his work with the outside exhibitors.
 - Annie McWilliams "Saved the show" when she insisted we provide cold bottled water for our vendors, Sunday, and ultimately to all of our visitors.
 - Our biggest "Kick Start" for this year's show was Progress Energies early commitment of \$6,000 as our first sponsor.
 - Our special appreciation to Darden Rice for the 114 volunteers she enrolled largely from the Sierra Club.
 - In future years, there may be an opportunity to merge our 2 day Expo with the 2 day's of seminars of the Green Trends conference of the Florida Green Builders Coalition.
 - Our exit polling effort revealed visitors came from all over the area.
 - The water bill ad inserts proved to be very effective in enticing our visitors.
 - Most of our vendors were impressed by the serious, "Green" interests of our Expo visitors.
- ◆ Vice President Tom Killian made the award of our "Citizen of the Month" to past CONA President Jim Biggerstaff. Jim offered some fond recollections of his work with other neighborhood leaders.
- ◆ Tom also reminded us of the coming Neighborhood Night at Tropicana Field, (July 21st), encouraging all of our member neighborhood leaders to promote sales of the \$5 tickets that will be sold in contiguous seating blocks.
- ◆ Annie McWilliams gave her Treasurer's Report of a current balance of \$3,434.99.
- ◆ Karl Nurse offered a brief recap of the local crime scene-
 - 1) The Court Watch Group plans to display records of specific judges that have a record of excessive leniency with repeat offenders.
 - 2) Karl scheduled a meeting with local PBA leaders to encourage their support of the upcoming Police Review Study.
 - 3) CONA will seek participation in the Police Review Study and implementation.
 - 4) Andy Garr will be leaving the anti-drug program of The Neighborhood Partnership Office.
- ◆ Karl also reported on attending the Charter Review Commission hearing at City Hall. Though 100 spoke against revising the Dual Voting feature proposed for the November ballots, the commission members approved it.
- ◆ Cass Rael, (North Kenwood), distributed data packages from the County Commissioner's Drug Paraphernalia Abatement Task Force.
- ◆ Circuit Court Judge, (Group 32) candidate Pat Siracusa spoke of his qualifications.
- ◆ Candidate for Florida House of Representatives, Liz McCallum, told us of her qualifications and legislative goals.
- ◆ Sandra Kerr, speaking for the Clearwater Neighborhood's Coalition made a presentation of the Hurricane Preparedness Program they have developed for Florida neighborhood organizations.
 - She encouraged all of our neighborhood association leaders to download their "Neighborhood Survival Kit" compiled from many sources. It's an Acrobat PDF file at www.ClearwaterCoalition.com.
- ◆ Barbara Heck, (Snell Isle POA), made the following CONA resolution urging our local Post Office Administration considering canceling our post mark to:
 - 1) Allow CONA to see the report and review the findings that were presented only in summary form.
 - 2) Review and evaluate the consolidation move, not to Tampa, but back to the St. Petersburg facility.
 - 3) Do NOT eliminate the St. Petersburg postmark nor make it obtainable ONLY IF you drive to a St. Petersburg Post Office. [Motion approved]
- ◆ Gary Crosby, (Crescent Lake) invited us to an open-air movie viewing of "ET" at Huggins Field, (under the water tower), June 24th at 9 PM
- ◆ A representative of Eagle Crest Neighborhood Association asked the support of other CONA members at the City Council hearing, July 18th at which they will ask that the zoning change requested by a developer, for the plot at 66th Street and Ninth Avenue North, be denied to avoid higher density housing.
- ◆ Travis Jarmin spoke for Bayway Isles seeking support for his motion to require that replacement of all concrete light poles should be of similar materials.
 - Moved, (McWilliams) to table the Bayway Isles motion until the issues are more thoroughly investigated. [Approved]
- ◆ We heard a report from Will Michaels of the activities of the CONA Historic Buildings Committee. He urged all CONA members to attend the Historic Preservation Summit at the Coliseum on June 24th, 9AM – 4:30PM
 - Travis moved that 8 additional structures, that he identified, be added to the city's list or worthy to preserve. [Approved]
- ◆ Our program closed with a presentation by the new President of Historic Kenwood, [our featured CONA neighborhood this month], Jim Longstreth and his colleagues.

Our meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM - Conrad Weiser, Secretary



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CONA's Citizen of the Month

CONA's July Citizen of the Month Award goes to someone small in stature, but you all know her as "Mighty." She has worked tirelessly for CONA and for her neighborhood. Please help us congratulate **Mo Eppley**.

Here are just some of Mo's activities and accomplishments:

- Born in Kansas City, the youngest of four girls, Mo has lived in 8 states.
- 2004-2007 President Greater Woodlawn Neighborhood Assn.
- 2004-2007 CONA Representative for Greater Woodlawn.
- Owner of MityMo Design, Mo is a Graphic Artist and Web Designer.
- Designs our monthly CONA Newsletter and CONA website.
- Designed the PLGE logo, website, brochures, handouts and program.
- Graduate of Eckerd College.
- Graduate of our CONA Neighborhood Leadership Program
- Married to Lance, they will celebrate their fourth anniversary in October.

Hurricane Season 2006 – Be Prepared !!!

By Barbara McCormick Heck

With the 2006 hurricane season upon us, CONA is asking neighborhood residents to participate in a "Neighbor to Neighbor" Program. Take a moment from your busy schedules and check with your immediate neighbors to assure they have an adequate hurricane plan in place.

Some of the questions everyone should be thinking about are as follows:

- Do you have adequate food and medical supplies for a week?
- Do you have extra water supplies – 1 gallon per day per person?
- Do you have pets and do they have a place to stay?
- Do you have pet food/water, pet litter and pet medical supplies?
- Do you have a place to go if asked to evacuate?
- Do you have any special needs (oxygen, wheelchair, etc.)?
- If so, have you filled out the Fire Department's Special Needs Form?
- Do you need help in securing your home and evacuating?
- Do you have an emergency contact person (preferably out of state)?

This program is not meant to scare people, but to prepare people for severe weather. As the nation has learned from the 2004-2005 Hurricanes Charlie, Katrina and Wilma, being prepared can help us to better survive what nature sends our way. Take the time and talk to all your neighbors.

Additional hurricane information may be found on the St. Petersburg website at www.stpete.org Click on the "Hurricane Info" tab.

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