

CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

June 2006

President's Message

By Karl Nurse

I just returned from the vacation of a lifetime – a week in Paris! There are some things that I observed there that were interesting to me. Police walked the streets, often in pairs, in the busier areas. It is the cleanest city I have ever seen. City crews were out cleaning streets, sidewalks, subways and parks seven days a week. It was clear that whenever anything was built from Hotels, to homes, to bridges and street lights for the last 500 years, that people built the BEST they could build, not the CHEAPEST. As a result, there are thousands of buildings that are heavily used, beautiful and are hundreds of years old.

The upcoming hurricane season presents an opportunity to get ahead of the curve and plan for the storms instead of reacting to the storms. The Clearwater Neighborhood Coalition will give us a condensed version of their hurricane preparation seminar at the June meeting. This is intended to show what neighbors can do to help each other.

The Pinellas Living Green Expo looks like it should be a huge success. All booths are sold and 15 information sessions are ready. Please spread the word in your neighborhoods. People will leave the expo with concrete ways to save 30-50% on their energy, gas and water usage. Mainstream solutions from local companies will be on display. It will be a Green Day in St. Petersburg!

Finally, it all starts with public safety. Several neighborhoods around town are engaged in active battles with the criminals. I will not single out individual neighborhoods. However, it is clear from the phone calls and emails that I am getting that there is a surge of property crimes and the relating drug activity occurring. Hopefully, the management review of the police department will provide some direction to help more effectively fight crime. In the meantime, it is critical that we relay to our elected representatives that this is the first priority for neighborhoods. Safe neighborhoods allow us to switch to the quality of life projects that we enjoy!

CONA Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 21, 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

Pinellas Living Green Expo Summary – Steve Plice

Neighborhood Nite at Tropicana Field – Tom Killian

Featured Neighborhood - Historic Kenwood

Open Forum – Neighborhood Concerns

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CONA 101 Neighborhood Association Check List

By: Tom Killian

Tax Exempt Status

Should your association have 501 (c) 3 Tax Exempt Status? Some associations in our city have become 501 (c) 3 Tax Exempt because of the following:

- They want to apply for local, state and federal grants available only to associations who have this status.
- They want to accept (tax deductible) donations from businesses and individuals.
- They want to run a legitimate raffle to make money for their association.
- They want to eliminate sales tax on items purchased such as printing, labels, etc.

The 501 (c) 3 status allows the giver to write off the donation on their income tax. Many large national chains will not make donations to associations who do not have the 501 (c) 3 classification. Many city, county and state grants are only available to associations who have it. However, having this status does involve additional work. Your association will have to file both state and federal paperwork each year. If you do not comply in a timely manner your status can be revoked.

To set one up you will need to work with both an accountant and an attorney. Costs typically run a couple of thousand dollars to have it set up properly. Check to see if you have an accountant and an attorney in your membership. Perhaps they could "donate" their services and save the association a lot of money.

Reviewing your By Laws

Every two or three years each association should review their by laws to make sure they reflect your current status. If your association has grown considerably you may want to expand your board of directors to get some new members involved. Example: If you have four officers and three board members you may want to add two more board members. Sometimes by adding voting positions new people may step up.

A By Law committee should be set up consisting of officers and members. Each line of your By Laws should be reviewed to make sure the wording is correct and reflects what you are doing now and your plans for the future.

If you would like to receive more information about any of the activities listed above please call the association for details. If you have CONA questions, please call me.

CONA Leadership Graduation 2006

The Council of Neighborhood Associations held their 2006 Neighborhood Leadership Graduation Banquet on May 19. The St. Petersburg Yacht Club hosted the event where twenty-nine graduates received their certificates and leadership pins.

Ingrid Comberg, Leadership co-chairman, served as master of ceremonies. Former Mayor David J. Fischer was our guest speaker and told the class about the city's growth and development over the last thirty years. Mayor Fischer started the Partnership Office which has gained a national reputation as the best in the country. Susan Ajoc, Neighborhood Partnership Director, spoke for the city and complimented the leadership program for its development of neighborhood leaders.

CONA's Neighborhood Leadership Program is eleven lessons over a five month period of time. The program is

held the second and fourth Mondays of each month from six to nine in the evenings. Lessons are held at the Police station, City Hall, Main Library and various other St. Petersburg locations. The program lets the students meet the people they need to know when problems occur in their neighborhood. Four hundred people have graduated from the leadership program over the last fourteen years.

Next class will start in January 2007. Please contact Ingrid Comberg at 821-2192 for class schedule and registration. CONA wants to thank Patricia Guaveia, Planning Chairman, and Greg Karpinsky, Co-chairman for their time and dedication. Special thanks to our group leaders for their help in making the 2006 CONA Leadership program a success. Thanks also to Progress Energy for sponsoring our Graduation Dinner.

Historic Kenwood has changed dramatically during the years since it was developed by Charles R. Hall in early 1912. Today Historic Kenwood celebrates its diversity and the ability of its residents to enjoy the many facets this neighborhood has to offer. So much so, Historic Kenwood will be identified by Cottage Living magazine in their July/August issue as a Top Ten neighborhood in which to live!

Having the largest concentration of bungalow homes in the Southeast has made the annual HKNA BungalowFest Tour of Homes an important destination, noted in national magazines for historic preservationists and home décor enthusiasts. This event is held the first weekend of November and continues to inspire other neighborhoods to have tours of their own. HKNA also publishes a calendar which has featured many of these charming bungalows.

The Craftsman House on Central Avenue received a prestigious statewide preservation award for the restoration of this 1918 Arts & Crafts bungalow, which has been transformed into an art gallery, café and pottery studio. Neighbors enjoy Wednesday night Happy Hour on the porch.

The Historic Kenwood Garden Workshop in conjunction with the HKNA last year donated student backpacks filled with school supplies for the children of need in our local schools. The 2nd annual Garden Workshop plant sale, held

the 3rd Saturday in May, offered cultivated plants from Historic Kenwood yards and produced over \$3,000 to help continue the back pack tradition. HGW is working on a story and recipe book this year as well.

Last year's inaugural Landscape Contest included 22 entries! Our honorable judges reviewed before and after pictures to pick the top three winners who were awarded a total of \$1000 in prizes. The contest is already under way again for this year. Monthly porch parties, classic Movies in the Park sponsored by our neighboring Grand Central District and our Founder's Day celebration with free food and live music, provide just plain fun for everyone. Realtors and neighbors keep our Historic Kenwood Welcome Ladies informed when new residents move in, so they can welcome them with a plant donated by HGW and basket of goodies donated by local businesses in the area.

Historic Kenwood continues to work on its street corner landscape project and street sign improvements. Also currently in the works is a possible dog park in the area around I-275 and 4th Avenue N.

Now you can see why Historic Kenwood is a Top Ten neighborhood. All this information and more, can be easily found on our award winning website www.historickenwood.org.

Neighborhood Associations that have paid their dues

Albert Whitted Airport Committee
 Americana Cove
 Azalea N.a.
 Bahama Shores N.A.
 Bartlett Park N.A.
 Bayou Highlands NA.
 Bayway Isles Homeowner's Club
 Brighton Bay Home Owners Assoc.
 Broadwater Civic Association
 Causeway Isles N.A
 Central Oak Park N.A
 Childs Park N.A
 Coquina Key N.A
 Coquina Key Prop. Owner's Assoc.
 Crescent Heights N.A
 Crescent Lake N.A
 Crossroads N.A
 Disston Heights N.A
 Downtown N.A

Eagle Crest Homeowner's Assoc.
 Euclid/St. Paul N.A
 Fossil Park N.A
 Garden Manor N.A
 Greater Pinellas Point Civic Assoc.
 Greater Woodlawn N.A
 Historic Old Northeast N.A
 Harris Park N.A
 Historic Roser Park N.A
 Historic Uptown N.A
 Holiday Park Homeowner's Assoc.
 Isla Del Sol Owners Assoc.
 Jungle Prada N.A
 Jungle Terrace Civic Assoc.
 Lakewood Estates Civic Assoc.
 Live Oaks N.A
 Magnolia Heights N.A
 Mangrove Bayou N.A
 Maximo Moorings Civic Assoc.

Meadowlawn Civic Assoc.
 Mel-Tan Heights N.A
 North Kenwood N.A
 Northeast Park N.A
 Old Pasadena N.A
 Old Southeast N.A
 Placido Bayou Community Assoc.
 Ponce De Leon N.A
 Riviera Bay Civic Assoc.
 Shore Acres Civic Assoc.
 Snell Isle Property Owner's Association
 Sterling Manor Home Owners Assoc.
 Tropical Shores N.A
 Tyrone Landing N.A
 Venetian Isles Homeowners Assoc.
 Westminster Heights N.A
 Winston Park N.A
 Woodlawn Oaks N.A
 Wyngate Home Owner's Assoc.

Pat Siracusa Honored at 2006 Neighborhood Partnership Awards

Pat Siracusa was awarded the 2006 Mayor's Outstanding Community Initiative Award for Improving the Quality of Life in St. Petersburg Neighborhoods.

For the past 4 years, Pat Siracusa has actively worked with CONA and the neighborhoods along the 34th Street corridor to reduce drug and prostitution activity. By partnering with neighborhood leaders and St. Petersburg Police, Pat has helped citizens make their voices heard in the courtrooms of Pinellas County through Court Watch. More than 30 criminals that regularly get arrested and released to the neighborhoods of St. Petersburg are off to prison and not likely to return to the neighborhoods that have taken a hard line against their crimes. For his efforts the Mayor recognized him with the Outstanding Community Partnership Initiative Award in 2006. Pat Siracusa was the only attorney recognized for "outstanding commitment to crime victims" for the 6th Judicial Circuit in 2005.

- In conjunction with Court Watch, CONA and the 34th Street Federation, Pat Siracusa has now appeared on over 100 criminals from St. Petersburg
- St. Petersburg Neighborhood Associations have helped send away over 20 hardened criminals in the last 3 years through CONA who would have otherwise been released back into the community.



Pat Siracusa and "Neighborly Neighbor" award winner Frank Klim of Disston Heights.



Pat Siracusa receiving his award from Mayor Rick Baker.

Neighborhood Nite at Tropicana Field

Friday July 21 at 7:15 PM ~ Ray's vs. Baltimore

\$5.00 per ticket (upper deck behind home plate) Remember - free parking at Tropicana Field

WOW !!! Great game, great seats, great bargain AND FREE PARKING !!!

Here is a great social event for all the baseball fans in your association and it only costs \$5 a seat. Act fast as these seats will go fast at this price.

- Collect the ticket money from your association membership.
- Write a check to CONA for your tickets.
- Mail check before July 7th to CONA Treasurer at CONA, P.O. Box 13693, St. Petersburg, FL 33733-3693.
- Tickets will be delivered to each Association President who will distribute them to their own members.
- For further information contact Program Chair Tom Killian at 343-2041.
- **Remember – the Association that brings the most members will get introduced on the field.**



See you at the Trop !!!



Pinellas Living Green Expo

June 17 - 18, 2006

**Save Money.
Save the Environment.**

Saturday, June 17

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sunday, June 18

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The Coliseum, St. Petersburg
535 4th Ave. N.

Pinellas Living Green Expo is a **FREE** educational event focusing on resource conservation solutions.

Participants will learn how to **save money, save natural resources, and protect our environment for future generations.**

The **Pinellas Living Green Expo** is a **FREE**, fun-filled family event that helps residents make informed decisions and take action to lead more healthy and sustainable lives with less impact on the environment. This two-day event will provide information, ideas, resources, products and motivation to live more sustainably.

www.pinellaslivinggreenexpo.org

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CONA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES

The Sunshine Multi-Service Center - May 17, 2006

President Karl Nurse called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance to Our Flag.

- ◆ Treasurer Annie McWilliams reported a current CONA bank balance of \$3,738. The account for our Pinellas Living Green Expo has a standing balance of \$17,093. Our current roster of dues paid CONA Members numbers 55 of whom 22 have opted to use our CONA bulk mail privilege. Annie appealed for our member associations to keep her up to date with their newly elected officers.
 - At the President's call, Phil Whysong moved approval of the April Minutes published in our newsletter. [Approved]
- ◆ V.P. Tom Killian announced the CONA Citizen of the Month was being awarded to Ingrid Comberg. Presenting her with a plaque, Tom noted her many achievement in providing leadership for neighborhood programs for 30 years.
- ◆ Tom then made an appeal to recruit volunteer workers for our up coming Pinellas Living Green Expo. June 16, 17, and 18.
- ◆ He also reminded us of the Day's Baseball Game at Tropicana Field July 21st. with joint CONA sponsorship selling tickets at \$5.00. He encouraged neighborhoods to advertise the ball game in their newsletters.
 - Tickets bought through CONA will be delivered to the neighborhood presidents.
 - Adjoining blocks of 20 seats are still available to neighborhood requests.
 - Tropicana Field parking will be free.
- ◆ Concluding, Tom reminded us of the joint annual picnic hosted by Jungle Terrace neighborhood and CONA. Held in Walter Fuller Park, the picnic will be enjoyed from 11 AM until 2 PM. Participants should bring a dish to share. Member neighborhoods are encouraged to advertise this joint CONA picnic in their respective neighborhood newsletters.
- ◆ President Karl Nurse provided an update on our plans for the Pinellas Living Green Expo.
 - Our Expo web site now includes advertisement inserts, in a variety of sizes that we hope our members will publish in their own newsletters.
 - Our public advertising includes 7 marked PSTA busses and 10 billboards.
 - The St. Pete Times will display \$12,000 worth of ads in their many regional editions. [This space was purchased via a matching 50/50 grant.
 - Ad brochures will be inserted in nearly 90,000 utility bills and municipal paycheck envelopes.
 - The Expo will include 15 workshops, (information seminars), covering a wide range of environmental concerns.
 - Our Green Expo will change the community and help build a green industry catering to the demands of a green community.
- ◆ Karl also provided some updates on city government.
 - CONA will closely monitor the results of the Council initiated review of our Police Department. Implementation of the resulting consultant's recommendations will be vital to the success of this study.
 - Mike Connors has been appointed to lead the Green Cities Certification Project, though funding seems questionable. Of the possible score of 281 points for certification, the city has, thus far, earned only 42 credits.
- ◆ Pat Siracusa, of the State Attorney's Office, provided an update of our local Court Watch Program.
 - We heard of a two-year struggle to dislodge a drug house that finally closed with the imprisonment of all of the residents.
 - Carol Griffiths, leader of the local Court Watch team spoke of working closely with the Community Police Officer (CPO), of their neighborhood.
 - There are 17 other pending court appearances they expect to attend wearing their yellow t-shirts now widely recognized by judges and bailiffs.
 - Pat acknowledged that juveniles are difficult to discipline because the courts and the Juvenile Justice Division always seek rehabilitation rather than punishment, a fact clearly exploited by juvenile offenders.
 - Pat has served many years at Boot Camps and has never seen youth abused. He supports the successes of the "About Face Program" of rehabilitation.
- ◆ Susan Ajoc, (Dir. Neighborhood Partnership), made several announcements.
 - She reminded us of the "Free Museums Day" this Saturday from 9 AM to 6 PM.
 - The city ran a storm preparedness exercise on Monday. The theme this year will be "Neighbors Helping Neighbors", focusing on self-sustaining neighborhood teams during and after major devastations.
 - We were reminded of the September deadline for neighborhood grants this year. She noted that some proposed projects have been integrated with work done for Boy Scout merit badges,
- ◆ We learned that the Clearwater Neighborhood Coalition, [a CONA counterpart], will share their Hurricane Preparation Program with us at our July monthly meeting, (7/19/06).
- ◆ In severe storm threats the PSTA busses will be available for transportation, including carrying evacuated pets. These will supplement evacuation to the public shelters. [One shelter and several hotels will accept pets during storms.]
- ◆ There will be an important workshop of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, (MPO), hosted by Mike Fredericks, held at Eckerd College at 6:30 PM on June sixth. It will focus on traffic plans in the Pinellas Point area.

- ◆ Greg Pierce, (Childs Park), requested CONA support to promote in drafting improved noise control ordinances. His committee will report back after studying the efforts of other cities on the web.
- ◆ Will Michaels, (Bahama Shores), alerted us to a June 24th presentation at the Coliseum that will focus on efforts to preserve historic structures in our city. Many worthwhile structures that do not qualify as historic landmarks have disappeared at the hands of aggressive developers seeking to capitalize on the hot housing market of recent years.
- ◆ Beth Rollins of the City & County Management Association spoke to appeal for CONA support to retain the dual voting rights defined in our current county charter.
 - The Charter Review Commission, [chaired by Commissioner Susan Latvala], will hold a meeting at 6 PM, on June 8th. in our City Council Chambers, to consider abolition of the 1999 provisions that enable municipal governments to vote on rejecting provisions proposed for countywide statutes. Such charter revision would render all municipal governments powerless to oppose and county approved laws and ordinances, essentially yielding to the county commissioners.
 - If the CRC cannot be dissuaded from their recommendation to abrogate the dual, (city and county voting in parallel), voting provisions, it will be very expensive to challenge this revision.
 - Moved, (Bagg), CONA opposes efforts, now under consideration by the Charter Review Commission, to abrogate the dual, (city--county), voting provisions of our county charter that were initially provided in 1999. [Approved]
 - Beth promised to keep CONA informed of CRC activities and to provide a copy of the charter revision questions, (deceptive she feels), that will appear on our November ballots.
- ◆ Cathy Wilson, (Greater Woodlawn), solicited the opportunity to address our member's meetings to alert them to the need to monitor the implementation of the current Police Department Management Review.
- ◆ Barbara Hawkins, (Greater Pinellas Point), invited all to their picnic to be held at Bay Vista park, on June 20th at 6:30 PM. Bring a covered dish to share, but there will be free dogs & chips....and a marching band.
- ◆ Karl Nurse told us of efforts by a consortium of AVRAC, CONA, League of Women Voters and possibly the NAACP to persuade the city to provide live television coverage of our candidate debates.
- ◆ Karl, (a PSTA Board Member), also provided some insights as to plans for important improvements of our county bus transportation system.
 - Subway construction was considered but deemed too expensive.
 - Local transportation projects must have funding to match federal grants.
 - The federal highway grant waiting list is 10 years long!
The "Bus Rapid Transit System" will be implemented here in 2009.
 - Central Avenue will be the first corridor for major improvements followed by 4th Street, 16th Street and Highway 19.
 - Significant improvements include: More frequent bus schedules, electronic schedule displays at the bus shelters, nicer colored busses, fewer stops on express corridors, remotely radio controlled traffic signals to speed the flow.
 - Lockable bike racks will be installed at many bus shelters.
 - Ultimate goal- fewer cars on street, and more bus riders.

Our meeting adjourned at 8: 45 PM - Conrad Weiser, Secretary

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CONA Newsletter Deadlines

Copy Deadline:
30th of each month.

Publication:
2nd Monday of month.

Mailing:
2nd Wednesday of month.

Editor:
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Layout:
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CONA's Citizen of the Month

Our June Citizen of the Month is a very hard working individual who has made a big impact on the city of St. Petersburg. Below are some little known facts about this person.

Please help us congratulate **Jimmy J. Biggerstaff**.

- Born in Brazil, Indiana.
- Moved to St. Petersburg in 1987.
- Very involved in civic issues.
- Disston Heights President 1996, 1997 and 1998.
- Council of Neighborhood Associations President 1999, 2000, 2001.
- Attended all City Council meetings while President of CONA.
- Speaker at Neighborhood Leadership Program.
- Successfully fought the Post Office to keep curbside mailboxes out of St. Petersburg.
- Worked on Computers for the Community.
- Married to Judy, they have three sons and one grandson.
- Collects and sells antiques on E-Bay.



Pinellas Living Green Expo

Don't forget to attend our **FREE**
Pinellas Living Green Expo
June 17 and 18 - St. Pete Coliseum
www.pinellaslivinggreenexpo.org

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