

CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

October 2007

You are invited

The St. Petersburg Museum of History and
The St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce

are jointly sponsoring a

CANDIDATES FORUM

October 25, 2007 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM

St. Petersburg Museum of History

***For City Council seats in Districts 1, 3, 5 and 7
To be voted on citywide, November 6, 2007***

The Museum is located on the Pier approach at 335 Second Ave NE.
On street parking available or use the city's Dolphin Parking Lot to the east
of the museum. (Museum lot is reserved for handicapped parking only)

**Seating is limited. To reserve your seat, please call
Jessica Eilerman at 388-0682 or jeilerman@StPete.com**

CONA Board Meeting

October 17, 2007

The SUNSHINE CENTER, 330 5th St. N.

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

Refreshments provided

Agenda Items:

Citizen of the Month Award

CONA Business – Treasurer's Report – Updates

Open Forum

(Check CONA website for any last minute program changes)

Very Important Upcoming Events:

October 25 – Candidates Forum at St Pete Museum of History

November 6 – Election for City Council, Districts 1, 3, 5, 7

November 28 – General Membership (date change)

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President's Letter

VOTE City Council Elections on November 6th

Are you going to let 11% of the voters tell you what to do? If you sit home and do not cast your vote on November 6th, that is what will happen. Eleven percent is the predicted turnout for Council Races in Districts 1, 3, 5 and 7. Those elected to these four City Council seats will help set the direction and pace for St. Petersburg for the next four years.

Freedom to cast a ballot is a right we have that our forefathers gave their lives for and our current service men and women continue to fight for. They made a difference for us – now you can repay them by making a difference too. VOTE on November 6th (or earlier by Absentee Ballot).

Pinellas Hope – Pilot Program for the Homeless

“Pinellas Hope” is an innovative pilot program aimed at reducing street homelessness in Pinellas County. It will provide a centralized location for assistance, counseling, placement and shelter.

Built on the three C's of community, commitment and compassion, the proposal calls for the donation of land by the Catholic Diocese. Private commitments will cover capital costs and the County will fund the operations costs. Pinellas Hope backers already include Progress Energy, St. Pete College, Religious Community Services of Pinellas County and the Pinellas County Coalition for the Homeless

Pinellas Hope will continue to rally community support for its efforts, as current plans call for it to open its doors as early as the first of December. It will give all of us a chance to help others less fortunate. Pinellas Hope supporters also understand that, as a pilot project, it will be as much a learning experience as it is a provider of crucial services.

Neighborhood Associations grow in Pinellas County

In July, CONA welcomed the formation of CNCN (Council of North County Neighborhoods). CONA provided guidance and the framework for their by-laws and organizational setup. Cass Rael is our CONA liaison to them and attends their meetings.

We now look forward to working with the City of Largo as they develop a plan for their various neighborhoods. This is in the very beginning stages and we are excited for them. As we have done in the past, CONA will offer them assistance and guidance as requested. We hope that, in time, they will also form a CONA like umbrella association to assist all their neighborhoods.

CONA continues to work closely with CNCN (and any new groups) on all relevant county items. We are all committed to making Pinellas County a great place to live.

Crime Watch Coordinators Meeting – October 9th

St Petersburg Police Department hosted their annual Crime Watch Coordinators meeting on Tuesday, October 9th at the Main Branch Public Library. Officer Johnny Harris brought everyone up to date on latest practices and techniques. CONA's Public Safety Committee members were introduced and answered questions from the various neighborhood coordinators.

Snipe Sign Patrol

Please remember to e-mail Travis Jarman with locations of snipe signs. The City is developing a database of these offenders. Please do not remove these snipe signs. Let City personnel do that for us. Just keep reporting those locations. We are making progress. Thanks everyone.

CONA LEADERSHIP

OUR PURPOSE AND MISSION

St. Petersburg's most important asset is its people. The combination of citizen participation and active neighborhoods has contributed to the improvement of the quality of life in our city. As we continue to meet the challenges of today's urban community, citizens and neighborhoods play an important role in preserving and improving what is best about our city. As a result, the quality of neighborhood leadership becomes even more important.

The C.O.N.A. Leadership program has been developed to ensure that St. Petersburg has a continuing base of knowledgeable and talented people ready to step into Leadership positions.

THE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES ARE:

1. To broaden potential neighborhood leaders' understanding of the community;
2. To expand the pool of skilled neighborhood leaders;
3. To encourage the establishment of networks among neighborhood leaders;
4. To enhance the ability of neighborhoods to resolve problems on their own or in cooperation with other neighborhoods and/or institutions and;
5. To introduce participants to decision-makers in our City and County governments, and throughout our community.

COSTS AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Tuition is \$75.00 and covers all classes, including the historic bus tour and lunch, and the graduation dinner. Payment must be submitted before November 30, 2007 to be considered for enrollment. Once accepted into the program, the tuition is non-refundable. Students must attend all classes, and any unexcused absence will result in failure to graduate. Applications and further information may be obtained by contacting one of the Co-Chairs.

Ingrid Comberg 727-821-2192

Mary Darling 727-865-1621; email ladyemery@verizon.net

CLASS DATES 2008

All classes will be on Mondays 6-9pm

Exceptions Quasi-Judicial will be on Tuesday night The Bus Tour and Paint Day on Saturday.

Orientation Night January 14th

City Government January 28th

Crime and Neighborhoods February 11th

Effective Meetings February 25th

Our Diverse Community March 10th

Historic Bus Tour Saturday, March 15th

Effective Communications March 31st

City Services April 14th

County Government April 28th

Quasi-Judicial Tuesday May 13th

Paint day TBD

Graduation Dinner Thursday May 22, 2008

CONA Leadership 2008

Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

Application Form

Neighborhood Leadership Program 2008

Completed applications and tuition must be received by November 30, 2007

Name _____ E-Mail Address _____

Home Address _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Additional Phone/Fax _____ Cell Phone _____

Neighborhood _____

Education/Training/Employment

.

Special Skills/Talents

On what boards, committees or groups have you been or are you currently active?
What have you accomplished in these activities that you think is important?

What do you consider the greatest issues facing our neighborhoods today?

What would you like to learn from the CONA Leadership Program?

How did you learn about the CONA Leadership Program? _____

Participants should attend all classes, including the historic bus tour, and complete all assignments, projects or requirements in order to graduate.

Tuition for the program is \$75.00. This includes the bus tour with lunch and graduation dinner. Completed applications and a \$75.00 check payable to CONA Leadership should be sent to:

**Ingrid Comberg
620 Fifth St. North
St. Petersburg, FL 33701**

Questions or additional information, please contact Committee Co-chairs

**Ingrid Comberg (727) 821-2192
Mary Darling (727) 865-1621 email ladyemerry@verizon.net**

2008 CONA Elections

By: Tom Killian Nominating Committee Chairman

Our 2008 Elections are fast approaching. This year with the change in our By-Laws we will be electing five Officers and five Standing Committee Chairmen. To qualify for one of these positions your association must be a member in good standing however you do not have to be your CONA representative or alternate.

We are looking for dedicated individuals who can donate their time and talents to help CONA grow and prosper.

The positions available are

President

2nd. Vice-President

Treasurer

1st. Vice-President

Secretary

The Standing Committees are **CONA Leadership, Court Watch, Audit, Nominating** and **Public Safety**. The Nominating Committee presents the slate of candidates at the November board meeting. Nominations from the floor are accepted. Nominations are closed at the end of the November meeting. The vote is taken at the December board meeting. The results are announced at the end of the meeting. The newly elected board is sworn in at the beginning of the January 2008 board meeting.

If you would like to enter your name or recommend someone for any of the ten positions or find out more about the responsibilities of each position please contact: Tom Killian 343-2041, Theresa McEachem 823-6390, Mary Darling 865-1621.

WE'RE LOOKING AT POWER IN A NEW LIGHT.

INTRODUCING A **BALANCED SOLUTION** FOR THE FUTURE.

At Progress Energy, we're using innovative and environmentally responsible solutions to meet our area's growing energy needs. We are expanding our energy-efficiency programs to help you save energy and money.

We are supporting advanced technologies like solar power and plants fueled by vegetation waste. We are investing in existing power plants to

ENERGY EFFICIENCY
ALTERNATIVE ENERGY
STATE-OF-THE-ART PLANTS



ensure their safe, efficient operation while assessing the need for new plants and better ways to get electricity to you. The result is clean, reliable, affordable power – for today and tomorrow. To learn more

about our bright thinking,
visit progress-energy.com.



CONA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES

The Sunshine Multi-Service Center - September 19, 2007

- President Barbara Heck called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag.
- She welcomed all of our visitors, recognizing several members of City Council as well as several candidates.
- Treasurer Keith Locke reported a current balance in our Leadership account of \$1,812.31.
- Jodi Bennett of Greater Pinellas Point told us of their "HOT" Program, (Help Our Troops), through which 400 gift packages have been mailed to our military personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan.
 - She encouraged all of our neighborhood associations to join in this program sponsored nationally by the Military Officers Association of America.
 - Many details of this program can be read on Pinellas Point's web site: <http://www.greaterpinellaspoint.com/>
 - Councilman Herb Polson recalled his gratitude for mail packages while serving in Iraq three years ago.
- In a closely related presentation, Ingrid Comberg of Uptown urged that we contact our Senators, in Washington, to offer our support for pending Senate Bill S.B. 1444, [already approved in the House], that will provide free mail of letters and gift packages for active duty military personnel serving in Iraq or Afghanistan.
 - This bi-partisan legislation is sponsored by Senators Hillary R. Clinton (D), and Norm Coleman (R).
 - The CONA Listbot will provide information on these programs.
- The President presented our Citizen of the Month Plaques to Will Michaels, (our 2nd. V.P.), and to Attorney Peter Belmont who was nominated but could not appear last month.
- We heard of the extensive plans for the Pinellas Homeless Connection, a one-day program scheduled for September 22nd. in The Coliseum.
 - Modeled after a San Francisco, successful for several years, the program seeks to provide many types of social services to the visiting homeless participants.
 - The staff of volunteer workers will include a variety of medical personnel. Clubs, scout troupes, and church groups were invited to assist in the program that day. [See City and CONA websites.]
- Barbara also gave a recap of the National Neighborhood Day picnic held at Dell Holmes Park on September 16th.
- The President, speaking for Travis Jarman, Chair of the new CONA Snipe Sign Patrol Committee, told us of a new level of cooperation between the City Codes and Sanitation Departments, (with a new initiative from the Mayor), to document and prosecute the purveyors of illegal snipe signs in our community.
 - Moved, (D. Rice), to modify the CONA By-laws to add the, (Art.4, Sec1) "the monthly meeting date will be the third Wednesday", unless otherwise voted upon by the Board of Directors. [Approved]
 - Moved, (D. Rice), to reschedule the date of our November to the 28th to avoid conflicts with Thanksgiving. [Approved]
- We next heard a presentation by Askia Aquil of St. Petersburg Neighborhood Housing Services.
 - Simple forms of mortgage contracts are disappearing, replaced by more complex schemes that demand much greater study and care.
 - Florida is currently third in the nation for home mortgage foreclosures. The situation is likely to grow worse in the near term.
 - Experience has shown that loss of their home has been more destructive of families than is the trauma of a divorce.
 - The St. Petersburg Housing Authority is actively seeking volunteers to educate homeowners threatened with fore closure.
 - Financial intervention has successfully turned around and elevated several depressed St. Pete. neighborhoods in recent decades.
 - State and County housing authorities have provided low cost loans to save many distressed homeowners.
 - There is a national phone hotline to help owners facing foreclosure.
- The President reminded us that the both the Neighborhood Partnership Grants, (still with a possible max award of \$25,000), and the Police Forfeiture Grant have application deadlines next week. CONA Mentors are available to help.
- The Open Forum Segment of our program:
 - We were warned not to risk trying to collect snipe signs- Let the city do it.
 - City and county ordinances exempt neighborhood-meeting signs legally situated, (on approving private property- not right-of-way).
 - City Development Services is now using e-mail to announce neighborhood permit applications.
 - Will Michaels reminded us that we still seek a thirty-day neighborhood study opportunity before city staff publishes their recommendations to the EDC.
 - Neighborhoods should seek early opportunities to discuss with developers their project plans....even before permits are applied for.
 - Since Sally Eichler's Codes Enforcement staff logs all phone complaints, identifying development conflicts early will support neighborhood objections.
 - There is a need to educate the public of many special PSTA bus services available to the poor and handicapped, (e.g. The Go Card).
 - Councilman Polson noted that PSTA is developing an integration with the county school bus system.
 - The hope was expressed that announcements of citywide events and activities should be published on our CONA News media rather than adding to the message density of our CONA Listbot.

Our meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Conrad Weiser, Secretary

Don't let your energy bill get you in hot water

October may be “Energy Awareness Month,” but using energy wisely should be top of mind for every Floridian all year round. Being smart about energy use is critical to our state’s long-term energy future. It helps reduce our dependence on foreign fuel and results in a cleaner environment. Best of all, using energy wisely can also result in lower energy bills each month.

The U.S. Department of Energy indicates that almost 13 percent of the annual energy consumption in the average home is due to hot water usage. Generally, the only appliance that uses more electricity is the air conditioning system. As a homeowner there are many simple, low-cost ways to save energy around your home to reduce hot water costs.

Progress Energy Florida recommends the following:

- Set the water temperature at 120°F. Lowering the thermostat on your water heater can reduce energy consumption for hot water by as much as 10 percent.
- Add an insulating blanket to an older water heater.
- Reduce expensive heat loss by insulating the cold and hot water pipes that enter the water heater tank.
- Turn off your water heater at the circuit breaker if your home will not be occupied for two or more days.
- Install low-flow shower heads. A low-flow shower head is inexpensive, easy to install and uses up to 60 percent less water.
- Check for leaky faucets. A leaky hot water faucet wastes water and the energy used to heat it.
- Take quick showers instead of baths.
- Wait until there is a full load to wash clothes or dishes – this saves the electricity that heats the water and runs the machine.
- If buying or replacing a water heater, purchase the most efficient unit available. The Energy Guide label found on most units can help you determine which one to buy.

To really impact your energy bill’s bottom line, you may want to consider a solar water heater. According to the Florida Solar Energy

Water consumption figures for typical household uses*

Use	Average number of gallons of hot water per usage
Automatic clothes washer	32
Shower	20
Bath	20
Automatic dishwasher	12
Food preparation	5
Dishwashing by hand	4

* Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Center, a solar water heater could save between 50 and 85 percent on the hot water portion of your monthly electric bill – about \$200 to \$300 per year for a family of four.

In addition, when you invest in a solar water heating system for your home, you can receive a \$450 credit from Progress Energy Florida. And, when you sign up for Progress Energy’s Solar Water Heater with EnergyWise program you can receive up to \$60 in additional credits every year. EnergyWise is a program that enables Progress Energy to temporarily cycle off power to select electrical equipment – such as central heating and air conditioning units, pool pumps, and water heaters – for brief durations during peak periods of community electrical demand. Not only will you enjoy lower energy bills each month, you’ll also help Progress Energy reduce the need for additional generation. Progress Energy currently has more than 350,000 customers enrolled in EnergyWise.

Additional solar water heater incentives – up to \$2,500 – may also be available through state rebates and federal tax credits. Details about Solar Water Heating with EnergyWise – or other energy saving programs from Progress Energy Florida – can be found at savethewatts.com, or by calling 1-800-700-8744.

By making a few simple changes in your household routine, you will save water and energy. And, you’ll keep your hard-earned money from going down the drain.

LOOKING AT POWER IN A NEW LIGHT





**2007 Officers and
Executive Board Members**

President

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Audit Committee

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CourtWatch Committee

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CONA Leadership

Ingrid Comberg - 821-2192
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Frequently Called Numbers

Neighborhood
Partnership Office: 892-5141
Mayor's Action Line: 893-7111
Codes Office: 893-7373

SPPD Community Service Numbers:
District: 1 551-3181
District 2 551-3182
District 3 551-3183

CONA Newsletter Deadlines

Copy Deadline:
30th of each month.

Publication:
2nd Monday of month.

Mailing:
2nd Wednesday of month.

Editor:
Darden Rice - 822-6241

**The Council of Neighborhood
Associations of South Pinellas County
P.O. Box 13693
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CONA's Citizen of the Month October Citizen of the Month

Sgt. Phil Quandt 1962 – 2007

It is with a great sense of sadness and loss that we honor the passing of our good friend. Sgt. Phil Quandt. Phil was Sergeant of the District One CPO's through most of the Community Policing Program.

A St. Petersburg native, Phil was a 22 year veteran of the Police Department. Along with fellow Sgt. Tim Montanari, he created many of the policies and programs that our CPO's use to help our neighborhoods fight crime. Neighbors that needed help with crime problems met an instant friend and ally in this kind and gentle man.

Sgt. Quandt was blessed with an irrepressible sense of humor too. The officers he served with and the neighbors he helped all treasure their own "Phil stories."

Sgt. Quandt was also a leader in the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and helped to better working conditions, wages and benefits for his fellow officers.

CONA sends condolences to Robbyn his wife of 20 years and to his sons Ryan, 15, and Trevor, 11, and to his extended family and friends.

The CONA Officers, Board Members and Associations salute Sgt. Phil Quandt and honor him as our October CONA Citizen of the Month. Thank you.