

CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

December 2008

CONA wishes you a happy Holiday Season and a very happy and prosperous New Year !!!

2009 CONA Elections

The following have been nominated for Officer and Standing Committee Chairs for 2009. Our 2009 Election takes place at our December 19th General Membership meeting.

President	Barbara Heck
1st Vice President	Mike Gulley
2nd Vice President	Will Michaels
Secretary	Conrad Weiser
Treasurer	April Gausman
Court Watch	Carole Griffiths
CONA Leadership	Ingrid Comberg
Nominating	Judy Ellis
Public Safety Committee	Jeff Frank

Please call Theresa McEachem, (Chair) 823-6390 with any questions. Thank you Nominating Committee members for serving this year.

Don't delay – Join today!

by Barbara Hawkins, Membership Chair

All CONA Memberships will expire on December 31, 2008. The 2009 CONA Membership Renewal Application is printed in this Newsletter. Complete the application and send your \$35 check to join today. All Neighborhood renewals will be entered in the Prize Drawings at the October, November and December CONA Meetings. At the September meeting, 25 applications and invoices were distributed to the Neighborhoods present so don't delay - join CONA today! Come to the meeting to enjoy fun with friends and see who wins?

2009 Membership and Invoices available on website www.conastpete.org

CONA Board Meeting

December 17, 2008

The SUNSHINE CENTER, 330 5th St. N.
Doors open at 6:30 p.m.; meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Items:

- CONA Officer/Board Nominees – Vote
- CONA Neighborhoods Brag Night
(Neighborhoods tell tall tales)
- CONA Neighborhood Social and Thank-you's
(CONA thanks everyone for helping in 2008)

Important Upcoming Events:

- Jan 1 Happy New Year !!!
- Jan 17 CONA General Meeting

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“Green Stuff”

(Yards, Watering, Codes and other “green” stuff)

Water Restrictions are in effect.

Please use water wisely. Fines start at \$175 !!!

While we had rain during the summer, it was not enough. We are currently in a severe drought. We need to become water wise right now. Please follow the watering rules and times. Please use a shut off valve when you water your potted plants and keep to the allowable times. Please check your sprinklers and make certain they are watering the yard and not the street/sidewalk/roadway. We need help from each homeowner throughout St. Petersburg. Please do your part.

Water Restrictions based on your address. Watering allowed either 5-9AM or 7-11PM

Reclaimed (voluntary)

Even numbers: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

Odd numbers: Wednesday, Friday, Sunday

All Other (mandatory 1 day a week – fines start at \$175 + court costs)

Even Saturday only

Odd Sunday only

Short list from Codes Department for Yard Violations*

Grass must be kept under 10 inches

Ground Cover must be kept under 24 inches

Hedges (front yard) must be kept under 5 feet high

Trees/Shrubs must be trimmed to 8 feet above sidewalks

Trees/Shrubs must be trimmed to 14 feet above street or alley surface

Tree Removal Permit needed for any tree 2 inches or larger in diameter and above chest height

(*Please check with Codes Department for full explanation)

Codes and Overgrown Lawns: Lawns can look overgrown without actually being a code violation. Current codes state that a violation occurs when grass is more than 10 inches high and ground cover is taller than 24 inches in height. The law requires that the property owner be notified of violation conditions and given a reasonable time to comply. If the owner fails to bring the property into compliance, the property is referred to the City's Sanitation Department whose crews mow, trim, edge and clear rubbish from the property. The costs of these activities are charged as a special assessment to the property owner and can run in the hundreds of dollars.

Public Sidewalks with Shrubs and Trees: Shrubs and trees over public sidewalks must be trimmed up to a height of eight feet to allow motorists to see past them and allow pedestrians to walk under them.

Roadways and Alleys: Trees must be trimmed to a height of fourteen feet above the street or alley.

Gifts that keep on giving

During these challenging economic times, consider holiday gifts that can save your family and friends money or give back to the community. Below are three ideas for gifts that keep on giving.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY GIFT BAGS

Start with an eco-friendly “green” bag and consider adding:

- **Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs):** CFLs can save in three ways: they use 75 percent less energy per bulb, produce 75 percent less heat (that works against your air conditioning system) and last 10 times longer. According to the U.S. Dept. of Energy, if every American home replaced just one light bulb with an ENERGY STAR qualified CFL, we would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes for a year, more than \$600 million in annual energy costs, and prevent greenhouse gases equivalent to the emissions of more than 800,000 cars.
- **Low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators:** Inexpensive and simple to install, low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators can reduce your home water consumption as much as 50 percent as well as reduce your energy cost of heating the water by as much as 50 percent.
- **Switch and outlet sealers:** These easy-to-install foam sealers stop drafts that infiltrate your house through the outlets and add comfort and energy savings to your home.
- **Weatherstripping:** Like the sealers above, weatherstripping helps eliminate air coming into your home through doors and windows, adding comfort and reducing energy use.
- **Programmable thermostat:** Programmable thermostats save energy by allowing you to set temperatures according to when the house is occupied - a very efficient way to tailor your heating and cooling use to when you need it. And, make sure you recommend the ideal settings for optimal energy savings, which is 70 degrees or lower in the winter and 78 degrees or higher in the summer. And remember, a change of just one degree above or below the recommended setting could save or cost you between 7 – 10 percent on the heating/cooling portion of your energy bill.

- **Air filters:** Changing filters once a month has a dramatic impact on system performance, which affects energy usage (dirty filters reduce airflow through the system; therefore, the dirtier the air filter, the harder and longer the system has to run).

An energy efficient gift bag is a present that will be remembered and appreciated throughout the year.

SOLARWISE FOR SCHOOLSSM CONTRIBUTION

SolarWise for Schools is a special program that purchases solar energy systems for schools in the company’s service area. The solar energy systems provide teachers and students with an exciting, hands-on experience with solar and renewable energy and related math and science curriculum.

Customers can take part in SolarWise for Schools by participating in EnergyWise, the company’s energy management program. This free program allows customers to receive monthly credits on their bill in exchange for allowing Progress Energy to reduce energy consumption if our community experiences an unusually high power demand. If that happens, Progress Energy can send a signal to cycle power off and on to selected electric equipment such as your water heater and your central heating or cooling system to temporarily decrease energy use. By enrolling in SolarWise for Schools the credits are contributed to the fund that buys the solar systems and provides the school curriculum.

HOME ENERGY CHECK

A Home Energy Check is a guilt-free gift you can give yourself and the first step to lowering your energy costs. Progress Energy Florida offers its customers a free evaluation of your home to analyze its overall energy use and will provide a customized report with specific recommendations that can help you save energy and money on your monthly power bill. This gift to yourself is one that could continue to give for years to come.

For more about a Home Energy Check or SolarWise for Schools, visit savethewatts.com or call 1.877.364.9003.

LOOKING AT POWER IN A NEW LIGHT



Prepare for the Holidays

William Proffitt, St. Petersburg Police Department

With the current economic woes, many will be looking for bargains, but we know that criminals will be shopping for some good deals too. So here are some timeless tips to help everyone enjoy a safe and crime-free holiday season.

- Avoid shopping alone. There is safety in numbers.
- Stay aware of your surroundings, especially in retail parking areas where there is a lot of traffic.
- Lock your car and never leave purses or gifts in plain view. A random check of cars in retail parking lots last year found many with packages and valuables in view.
- Keep your car keys in your hand when you leave a store. Scan the parking lot for suspicious people or cars as you walk alertly and confidently to your vehicle. If your key fob has a panic alarm, use it if you are approached by a suspicious person.
- Be careful when using an ATM. Stand directly in front of it to keep anyone from seeing your PIN.

Criminals consider a distracted person an easy victim, and our hectic schedules make us more vulnerable to crime this time of year.

The St. Petersburg Police Department has prepared for the holiday shopping season by assigning officers to monitor major retail centers in the city for crime. The Department's Volunteer Road Patrol will provide patrols in many parking lots and will cite vehicles parked in spaces for the handicapped without a permit.

Remember to stay alert, follow these simple precautions and enjoy the holidays.

CONA Public Safety Committee Report

Jeff Frank, Committee Chair

Public Service Committee chair Jeff Frank presented the results of the community policing questionnaire sent to all neighborhoods earlier this year at the November CONA Board meeting. Jeff discussed the methodology and general conclusions. The results have been shared with the Police Department and can also be viewed on our website at www.conastpete.com

**Save the Date
May 2-3, 2009**

**Pinellas Living Green Expo
Harborview Center,
Downtown Clearwater**

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU Is Presently Testing Applicants for Jobs in the Tampa Bay Area

Opportunities for employment are presently being offered by the U.S. Census Bureau in preparation of the 2010 Census.

There are both part-time and full-time jobs in the Tampa Bay Area as well as throughout the State of Florida.

Individuals will be compensated for participating in training, if selected for employment.

Mileage is reimbursed and wages are paid weekly.

Applicants must take and pass a basic skills test. Testing sites are located throughout the Tampa Bay area at various times and dates for convenience purposes.

For additional information and to schedule a test, please call the toll free number at 1-866-861-2010 or contact Regina A. Martin-Tuthill at RMartinTuthill@aol.com.



Ingrid's
**Ice Cream
Parlor**

497 7th Ave N
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Next to Historic Round Lake
Open 12 - 7 daily

CONA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES

The Sunshine Multi-Service Center - November 19, 2008

- President Barbara Heck called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- Barbara noted that we have a By-law Quorum in attendance this evening.
- Kia Warren, spoke for absent Nominations Chair Theresa McEachern.
 - All current Officers and Chairmen have agreed to serve again in 2009 with the exception of Audit Committee Chair Keith Locke, and Nominations Chair Theresa McEachern.
 - Judy Ellis was nominated for 2009 Nominations Committee Chair.
 - The nominations will be open until the close of this meeting.
- Chris Claus, City Water Conservation Coordinator made a presentation of recently adopted water use restriction imposed by Swiftmud.
 - All neighborhood presidents have been notified of the new rules.
 - The once per week lawn watering restrictions has been extended.
 - Inspectors will not provide warnings before fine citations are issued.
 - Hand watering only before 8 AM or after 6 PM. Elderly residents can appeal for exceptions.
 - Decorative fountains are limited to 4 hours per day.
 - Lawn renovations are to be postponed. [If new home construction- approved.]
 - Wash own car OK, once per week.
 - "Snitch Phone" to Water Use Inspectors: 892-5300
 - Our President urged support of these new regulations, drawing comparisons with draconian measures imposed in California in the 1970's.
- City Councilman Jim Kennedy invited all to a preview exhibit at the Dali Museum on December 12th. [He recused himself prior to the Tierra Verde discussion that followed.]
- David Striebich, a spokesperson for the Tierra Verde residents, provided an historic review of their struggles to resist the three efforts by the City of St. Petersburg to annex portions of their island community.
 - The Pinellas Planning Council has opposed the annexation.
 - Pinellas County has threatened to sue the city if they pursue annexation before protocol's have been agreed upon.
- Moved, (Sherman, Crossroads), [confirming position of CONA Executive Board], that CONA will express to our Mayor and to City Council that we advocate halting current efforts to annex a portion of Tierra Verde. [Approved] [Amendments were proposed but subsequently withdrawn.]
- Copies of our proposed By-laws, (revision 5), were distributed, noting two minor revisions the committee has endorsed.
 - Moved, (Gulley, Coquina Key), adoption of the revised By-laws as submitted. [Discussion followed, but no motion amendments were sustained] [Motion approved unanimously]
- Jeff Frank gave a report for our CONA Public Safety Committee.
 - We heard a summary of the results of their recent Neighborhood Crime Survey.
- Our Treasurer, April Gausman, provided her current balance report: \$2,043.
- Ingrid Comberg reminded us that CONA Leadership enrollment for our next class closes in two weeks.
- Membership Chair, Barbara Hawkins, promised one more, (December), raffle prizes drawing for neighborhoods that pay their 2009 dues in advance.
- Will Michaels, of our Historic Preservation/LDR Committee provided an update of their current activities.
 - The committee compiled our recommendations for development of the Pier, and submitted it to the city's "Pier Visioning Staff".
 - Not yet resolved, the City Council seems more in favor of the 50 ft. height limitation for the Al Lang Field zoning designation advocated by CONA.
 - Preservation of the historic Henry Bryant home and the Bay Gables House are still under negotiation between the city and a developer.
 - CONA will urge preservation at the upcoming Council hearing.
- Regina Martin Tuttle, Area Manager for the 2010 Census, made a presentation seeking to recruit local survey workers, with 9,000 new hires anticipated before the April first, 2010 survey...
 - Full time and part time positions are open. There are options for days and hours of work appealing to working Moms.
 - These federal worker pay scales range from \$10. to \$16. per hour.
 - Local knowledge is vital- every tent dweller or culvert "resident" must be counted.
 - Regina requests an opportunity to make her recruitment appeal to any and all local organization meetings. Please contact her at: 866-861-2010
- Under Old Business:
 - Kia Warren reminded us of the need for volunteer workers to assemble and install the new city playground KaBoom equipment on December 6th.
 - Hoping to gather 250 volunteers. [Must be at least 16 years of age]
 - Starting time- 7:30 AM Breakfast & Lunch will be served.
 - Site is 38th Street and Fairfield Avenue South, bordering Pinellas Trail.
 - KaBoom is contributing \$100,000 in recreational equipment for park.
- Under New Business:
 - Barbara announced closing of the nominations for our 2009 candidates.

Our meeting concluded at 8:45 PM

Conrad Weiser, Secretary

December President's Message

By Barbara McCormick Heck

None of us could have foreseen the breadth and depth of the challenges this nation would face in 2008. CONA and the neighborhoods accomplished much even during these very difficult economic times. However, we may need the proverbial crystal ball to guide us through the extremely challenging economic climate we all will face in 2009 and beyond.

We know that funding sources are drying up or are exhausted. We know that some city, county, state and federal services are being reduced or eliminated. We know major projects are being revised, delayed or scrapped. All these things impact every one of us in some way or another.

At this time the neighborhoods can help by prioritizing what is really needed (as opposed to something you want). Neighborhoods should understand the funding cycles and what can and cannot be done and when. Think about dividing your project into phases. Think about partnering with other neighborhoods and other groups to complete your goal (and help with their goal). Get your

neighborhood involved in the initial stages of your project and also in the solution. Be realistic, be pragmatic and, most of all, be reasonable. Bring your request forward through proper channels and also ask CONA to help.

CONA is very committed to partnering with the city, the county and the neighborhoods.

- Together we will face these challenges head on.
- Together we will find innovative and exciting ways of surmounting them.
- Together we will explore and find new funding sources.
- Together we will surmount the obstacles before us and reach our goals.

Thank you CONA neighborhoods. Thank you CONA reps. Thank you St. Petersburg and Pinellas County officials and staff. Thank you all for your thoughts, your creativity, your activism and also your complaints. Most of all, thank you for helping to make St. Petersburg a wonderful place to live.

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.





**2008 Officers and
Executive Board Members**

President

Barbara Heck - Snell Isle
894-6020 - barbara@theheckhouse.com

First Vice President

Mike Gulley - Coquina Key
244-8374 - jmgulley1@hotmail.com

Second Vice President

Will Michaels - Bahama Shores
420-9195 - wmichaels2@tampabay.rr.com

Secretary

Conrad Weiser - Edgemoor
522-5008 - MAOA1999@aol.com

Treasurer

April Gausman - Historic Uptown
244-1896 - april@realestatebyapril.com

Audit Committee

Keith Locke - Disston Heights
644-2195 - rkeith1084@earthlink.net

CONA Leadership

Ingrid Comberg - Historic Uptown
821-2192

CourtWatch Committee

Carole Griffiths - Disston Heights
522-7206 - cgriff6721@aol.com

Membership

Barbara Hawkins
866-1747 - be.hawkins@verizon.net

Nominating Committee

Theresa McEachem - Harbordale
823-6390 - terre66@aol.com

Public Safety Committee

Jeff Frank - Live Oaks
322-0488 - kirstenjeffinn@yahoo.com

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 (NEW):
25th of each month

Mailing:
2nd Wednesday of month

Layout Editor: Mo Eppley 686-2146
Coordinator: Mike Gulley 244-8374

**The Council of Neighborhood
Associations of South Pinellas County**
P.O. Box 13693
St. Petersburg, FL 33733-3693

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City of St. Petersburg Garbage Pick-up Holiday Schedule

Holidays will sometimes change your scheduled garbage pick-up day. Here is the schedule for the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

Dec 25th Christmas and Jan 1st New Year's Day

- Thursday collection will be on Wednesday.
- Monday, Tuesday and Friday collections will remain the same.

Brush Sites will be closed only on Christmas Day and New Year's Day. You can also access this information at www.stpete.org/garbage.htm

15 Ways to Use Water Wisely

1. **Sweep it away** – Use a broom, not the hose to clean sidewalks and driveways.
2. **Slow the flow** – Install a water-saving showerhead.
3. **Be a drip** – Drip systems pinpoint water to roots.
4. **Quick shower** – Keep showers under 5 minutes.
Keep a timer in your kids shower.
5. **Chill out** – Cool drinking water in the fridge; don't run the tap.
6. **Keep off the sidewalk** – Water your lawn, not the pavement.
7. **Use your head** – Flush only when necessary.
8. **Top it off** – Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes.
9. **Mulch and save** – Minimize evaporation with organic mulch.
10. **Double duty** – Use old water from the fish tank to fertilize plants.
11. **Save the rain** – Store it for garden watering.
12. **Hot stuff** – Insulate hot water heaters and pipes to save water and energy.
13. **Shower power** – A bucket in the shower can save water for cleanup.
14. **Stop, look and listen** – Check pipes, faucets and toilets for leaks.
15. **Fix your leaks** – A pinhole leak wastes up to 170 gallons a day.