

# CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

May 2009

## May President's Message

By Barbara McCormick Heck

CONA members are outraged at the senseless and tragic death of Paris Hamilton on April 5th. The City has come together as never before. We have all said . . . ENOUGH! This madness has got to end NOW!

CONA has formed a Task Force with VP Mike Gulley as Chairman. The group will be focusing on:

- What can we do to restore safety to the community?
- What can we do to prevent another brutal killing of an innocent person?
- What effective measures can be taken to eliminate the current gangs and prevent them in the future?

Please do everything you can to support and assist our Police Department, our neighborhoods and our friends as we work through these very difficult times. These are our neighborhoods. They belong to us, not to criminals. It is time we took them back from the criminals. Please help.

Repeating from April: There are lots of things you can and should do. Most cost nothing more than a little bit of your time and a lot of your brain power. Each of us has the power to do great and good things for us and for our neighborhood.

- Share your public safety issues.
- Get informed and stay informed.
- Let City and County leaders know exactly what you want.
- Encourage neighborhood participation.
- Help out.
- Inspire others.
- Take responsibility and take that first step.

Please attend the **Florida Neighborhoods Conference** right here in St. Petersburg, July 9 - 11th at the Hilton. Please come and show our "Sunshine City Hospitality" to all our guests from around the state. This is an excellent opportunity to network, gain insight, gather new ideas and pass along some of your great ideas and best practices. To register online, go to [www.stpete.org/fnc](http://www.stpete.org/fnc)

## CONA Board Meeting Wednesday, May 20, 2009

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

### Agenda Items:

Museum Updates:  
( Salvador Dali Museum, History Museum, Morean Arts Center )  
CONA Listbot Update  
CONA Treasurer and Committee Reports  
Old Business – New Business

### Important Upcoming Events:

May 10 - Mother's Day  
June 17 - CONA Meeting  
June 21 - Father's Day  
July 9-12 - Florida Neighborhoods Conference

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# CONA Working for You!

Here are updates on CONA's involvement with city/county issues affecting our neighborhoods.

## **Tone Down Program now on SPPD website**

Now, everyone can report those rude drivers via the internet. Upon verification of the information, a letter from Chief Harmon will be sent to the registered owner asking to turn down the radio. Please use the website to report overly loud car stereos/radios.

## **Roadside Litter – Pilot Program**

CONA is partnering with Keep America Beautiful and the City in a new pilot program designed to keep our major arteries into St. Petersburg clean of roadside litter. Look for full details very soon. Remember to always place trash in the proper receptacles. Thank you.

## **Snipe Signs**

Please continue to report snipe signs to CONA's Travis Jarman and City Codes Director Todd Yost. Many rental signs, summer sports leagues signs, daycare signs are starting to re-appear. In order to prosecute, the City needs to document and remove the signs. Please help everyone by reporting, NOT REMOVING, the signs. Remember, repeat offenders will now have to go to court.

## **Community Gardens now will have a Saturday Market**

Bartlett Park's success with its Community Garden can be shared with others. Starting in May, you can purchase veggies at their new Saturday Market. CONA hopes that Bartlett Park's success will inspire other neighborhoods to plan and plant their own community garden.

## **SPPD – Public Safety**

CONA works very closely supporting our Community Service Officers and the neighborhoods. We strongly support neighborhood Crime Watch groups and are showing many neighborhoods how successful Court Watch can be in making certain repeat offenders are given the maximum time.

## **Drought**

CONA asks each neighborhood to continue to post the most current water restrictions. We are in ad drought situation. Remind everyone to become a water saver, not a water waster.

# New law governing inoperable vehicles

On April 20th, the city began enforcing an amendment to the code governing inoperable vehicles aimed at cars hidden under tarpaulins. The law is quite simple: A car parked in the driveway must have a tarp that is clean and free of rips; the tarp must be at least 6" off the ground to allow the inspector to determine if the tires are inflated; and the tag must be visible to demonstrate that the car is current in its registration. If the tag is not visible, the tag number must be printed on the tarp in letters at least 2" high. In addition, the tarp must be fitted and designed for the purpose of protecting a vehicle. Serious enforcement began about a week later, with Codes citing more than a dozen cars in one neighborhood alone, just on a first pass-through.



## **Our CONA Community**

We would like to recognize significant happenings in our CONA Community. Please submit to Newsletter Editor Mike Gullely at [jmgullely@hotmail.com](mailto:jmgullely@hotmail.com).

Our Deepest Sympathy to the family and friends of Paris Hamilton, 8 years old, who was tragically killed in a drive by shooting April 5th.

**MAY WE HAVE THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY?  
YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO JOIN CONA - RSVP**

**WHO** CONA the citywide Council of Neighborhood Associations

**WHAT** Monthly Meetings - May 20 next meeting

**WHEN** 3rd Wednesday of Month 6:30 pm Social - 7 pm Meeting

**WHERE** Sunshine Center, 330 5th Street North, St. Pete

**WHY** Network with Leaders in Neighborhoods, City, County, Organizations  
Get the News, Presentations, Information, Discussion, Explanations

**HOW** Send \$35 Annual Dues and Membership Application to join CONA.

2009 Membership Invoice & Application available at [www.conastpete.org](http://www.conastpete.org)

Join CONA's 50 current 2009 Member Associations listed below.

Airport Association	Fossil Park	Meadowlawn
Americana Cove	Garden Manor	Mel-Tan Heights
Azalea Homes	Greater Pinellas Point	North Kenwood
Bahama Shores	Greater Woodlawn	Northeast Park
Bartlett Park	Harbordale	Old Pasadena
Bayou Highlands	Harris Park	Old Southeast
Bayway Isles	Highland Oaks	Ponce de Leon
Broadwater Civic	Historic Kenwood	Riviera Bay Civic
Central Oak Park	Historic Old Northeast	Shore Acres Civic
Coquina Key	Historic Roser Park	Snell Isle
Crescent Heights	Historic Uptown	Tropical Shores
Crescent Lake	Jungle Terrace Civic	Venetian Isles
Crossroads	Lakewood Estates	Westminster Heights
Disston Heights	Lakewood Terrace	4th Street Business
Downtown Neighborhood	Live Oaks	22nd Street South
Eagle Crest Civic	Magnolia Heights	
Edgemoor	Maximo Moorings	

2009 Membership Invoice & Application available at [www.conastpete.org](http://www.conastpete.org)

Please join us at the Meeting on Wednesday, May 20...

Barbara Ann Hawkins, Membership

# When it comes to saving energy, Mother really does know best

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**“Do you think I’m made of money?”**

**This and countless similar phrases uttered by mothers everywhere convey life’s little lessons.**

Mother’s Day offers an annual reminder of the many meaningful things our parents have taught us. While some pieces of motherly guidance – such as “Don’t pull your sister’s hair” – likely don’t apply to our adult lives, some of mom’s priceless words of wisdom withstand the test of time.

Although many of us didn’t fully appreciate our mothers’ insight when the rules were first laid out, a quick review reveals that, when it comes to saving energy, much of what mom said decades ago still holds true today.

**Lesson #1 – “Turn off the lights when you leave a room.”**

Perhaps the simplest – and most common – piece of motherly energy-efficiency advice, this is also one of the easiest and most effective. The simple act of turning off the light when you leave a room can help you save on your energy bill. In fact, eliminating four hours of daily use of four, 60-watt bulbs (the number often contained in a ceiling fan light fixture) can save you more than \$45 in energy costs over the course of a year. Considering that the average home contains 45 light bulbs, you can easily see the combined savings potential.

Want to make an even bigger impact on your energy bill? Replace just eight frequently used incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent ones and you’ll save \$140 per year.

**Lesson #2 – “Close that door! Were you raised in a barn?”**

Although the answer to this question is almost certainly “no,” this timeless tidbit can lead the way to significant savings. Keeping cooler air in is an easy way to decrease your cooling costs.

Instead of a barn, though, think of the attic. If your ducts aren’t properly sealed, you could be paying a small fortune to cool the hottest – and least accessible – portion of your house. Seal your ducts and you could save up to \$280 per year. Still not convinced? Schedule a duct check and you could qualify for a \$150 Progress Energy rebate.

**Lesson #3 – “Don’t touch the thermostat; it’s not a toy!”**

You can’t complete a conversation about limiting your cooling costs without touching on the heart of the matter – your thermostat. The best rule of thumb is to set it and leave it be. Simply altering the setting by only a couple of degrees can make a major impact on the price you pay to regulate your home’s temperature. Bump the temperature up to 78 degrees in the summer and down to 68-70 degrees in the winter and save up to \$299 annually. Progress Energy recommends customers have a digital or programmable thermostat as these styles are much more accurate than the old-fashioned mercury, dial-type version.

**Lesson #4 – “Don’t waste water.”**

Everyone knows wasting water isn’t good for the environment, but have you considered the cost of heating unused H<sub>2</sub>O? Whether it’s the shower or the washing machine, the potential for allowing energy savings to trickle away exists all the same.

Wash your clothes with cold water instead of warm and save 50 cents per load. Compound your savings by turning your water heater down from 140 to 120 degrees and save an additional \$85 per year.

**Lesson #5 – “Enough is enough!”**

This applies to all unaccompanied electronics. Turn off the computer when you’re not using it and only turn on the fan if you’re in the room. Customers who follow these simple steps can see significant annual savings on their energy bills, and it takes such little effort. For more information on how to reduce your overall energy consumption, sign up for a free Progress Energy Home Energy Check by visiting [savethewatts.com](http://savethewatts.com) or by calling 1.877.364.9003.

In retrospect, what may have once seemed to be mundane motherly advice can lead to significant energy and financial savings. Now is a great time to admit that Mother really does know best.

**LOOKING AT POWER IN A NEW LIGHT**



# St. Pete Codes Department update

On March 19, City Council passed a resolution to adopt a one time Lien Amnesty program. The program will run until September 30, 2009. The program goal is to provide relief to properties that have been clouded by financial encumbrances due to penalties placed as liens that were not a result of work performance completed on the property, thus making these properties more viable to owners to maintain and marketable during this substantial national economic downturn. To participate, a property owner or authorized representative can complete an application to be able to pay twenty percent of the outstanding lien balance on a property and have the remaining eighty percent released. There are some criteria in order for the application to be approved. Some of the criteria are that the property can not have any active Code violations or cases on the property and that the owner of the property can not have any active violations on any other property owned.

Currently there are over ten million dollars in liens certified on over four thousand properties. In the past two years the department has collected just over three hundred thousand dollars on these liens (one third of that was collected from one property owner).

For more information and to view updated information regarding this program, please visit:  
[http://www.stpete.org/codes/lien\\_amnesty\\_program.asp](http://www.stpete.org/codes/lien_amnesty_program.asp).  
There are frequently asked questions, the application, and criteria information posted at this site.

# City of St. Petersburg Garbage Pick-up Holiday Schedule

Holidays will sometimes change your scheduled garbage pick-up day. Here is the schedule for May, June and July, 2009.

## Monday, May 25th (Memorial Day)

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

## Saturday, July 4th (Independence Day)

- No change in schedule

You can also access this information at  
[http://www.stpete.org/sanitation/residential\\_collection/holiday\\_schedule.asp](http://www.stpete.org/sanitation/residential_collection/holiday_schedule.asp)



# Public Safety Committee update

The tragic events in the recent month have heightened the concerns of CONA, our member neighborhoods as well all the citizens and neighborhoods of St. Petersburg. We will be working hard to support the City and all the community groups on projects such as the new Gun bounty program, the April 25th Barlett Park-NAACP Peace march, the DMC Community Forum (also April 25TH ), as well as keeping up to date on developing new strategies.

Is your neighborhood planning a new Crime Watch or building on to your existing program? The Public Safety Committee can help. We are more than willing to come to one or more of your meeting and give help, tips, strategies and our support.

As of late, we've heard very little from the neighborhoods directly. We are here to help. Let us know if you having any policing problems or want to share best practices from your neighborhood. Here is a question for you. The thing that works best for our Crime Watch is \_\_\_\_\_? I look forward to hearing from you.

Jeff Frank  
Public Safety Chair

# CONA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES

## The Sunshine Multi-Service Center - April 15, 2008

- President Barbara Heck called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag.
- The President welcomed our guests from county and city government and explained that local, tragic events had prompted us to abandon the previously announced agenda for this evening's meeting.
- We heard from Cass Rael Sr. that CONA sold 240 tickets for the April 14th Ray's game with the Yankees.
- We shared a round of applause for this year's winners of the Neighborhood Partnership Awards.
- V.P. Will Michaels distributed copies of a summary of our CONA Goals Workshop convened last February. He explained that this third draft report reflects our priorities for the next 18 months.
  - Moved, (Hawkins- GPPNA), to approve the Goals Summary. [Approved]
- Reminding us of the posted decorum for this evening's meeting, Barbara Heck explained that this meeting will be devoted to hearing of and seeking to understand the tragic events of last weekend. CONA is committed to seeking solutions for our community crime scene.
- Police Chief Chuck Harmon opened our review of this tragic crime, explaining that the feud that erupted in lethal gunfire had been simmering for several weeks. Though several suspects have been arrested, the ongoing investigation urgently seeks more information from the community.
- Deputy Mayor David Metz repeated the appeal to our 100+ neighborhood associations, in St. Petersburg, to assist in gathering information on local crime activity.
- City Councilman Karl Nurse offered some background information on the crime ridden Citrus Grove Apartment Complex adjacent to the murder scene this weekend.
  - The 84 unit apartment does not have a tenants organization
  - The adjoining Campbell Park Neighborhood does not have a functional resident's association.
  - The nearby city recreation center does not seem to attract the neighborhood's youth.
  - A repair project to revive the faulty air-conditioning at Citrus Grove was recently halted for lack of funds.
  - The Neighborhood Partnership Office is currently active in trying to remedy some of these crime aggravating complaints.
- Pinellas County Commissioner Welch then offered some details of county concerns and county involvement. [He joined in the Memorial March for Paris.]
  - "The Connect The Dots Initiative" was identified as a vital tool to displace the too prevalent "Don't Snitch" moral widely adhered to in our crime ridden communities. The Paris murder may become the turning point in this campaign to win widespread support for the new aroused attitude to fight back against these criminal, drug elements. Community opposition to our Police is fading.
  - Commissioner Welch promised to try to restore funding to the Juvenile Welfare Board and some of its programs modeled after successes in Harlem... He asked CONA support for this vital budget challenge.
  - The Commissioner also spoke of his concern about restricting the use of assault weapons, (e.g. the weapon that killed Paris). Again, he asked for CONA support to press for such restrictive firearms legislation.
- Tom Tito spoke to us in place of Bartlett Park's President Betty Hayes.
  - The CAPE II Intensive Police Surveillance Program has been functioning in Bartlett Park for the last two weeks.
  - Tom displayed one of the new "Connect The Dots" posters being distributed for homes and store windows.
- We need more phone call tips on drug dealing, on crack houses and any other criminal activity in our neighborhoods. Some are reluctant to call; others doubt the impact of such tips.
- There is a need for a neighborhood crime patrol with African-American leadership.
- A four hour training program is available for Neighborhood Crime Watch volunteers.
- He reminded us of the "Stand Up For Paris March" had been scheduled from Bartlett Park to Campbell Park on April 25th starting at 10 a.m.
- Ray Tampa, speaking for the N.A.A.C.P., described three programs founded on the tragic death of Paris Whitehead-Hamilton.
  - 1) The Stand Up For Paris March on April 25th. Starting point will be the Frank Pierce Community Center. [Volunteers please sign in waivers at 9 a.m.] There will be free T-shirts.
  - 2) There is a project to establish a "Paris Line" alert system, (comparable to the existing Amber Alert Program), to collect data "For Paris" to counteract the "No Snitch" moral that currently protects criminals and inhibits crime reporting in our neighborhoods.
  - 3) As a memorial and reminder, there is an initiative to rename Preston Avenue to become Paris Avenue.
- Sevelle Brown, speaking as an area Representative for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, (SCLC), displayed a large banner for the "Connect The Dots Initiative". The program seeks to wipeout any residual sense of shame, (among young people especially), when reporting criminal activity.
- City Councilman Wengay Newton spoke of his recent visit with Governor Crist in a school here, [noting that frequent student brawls complicated that visit].
  - The need for legislative restrictions on assault weapons, (as used in the death of Paris), was Newton's primary thrust.
- Andrea Hildebrand spoke to us about the Bartlett Park Community Garden. She went on to encourage small individual gardens in your own yard for which she coined the name: "Paris Gardens". She noted that such small, intensively cultivated garden boxes can significantly supplement family budgets and even provide some surplus for sale to neighbors.
- Our meeting was next devoted to questions from our audience. Barbara Heck invited participants to come forward, to announce their name and neighborhood affiliation, to direct their question to our speakers, and to limit their inquiries to a single issue.
  - Ten neighborhood representatives posed questions to various members of our panel. Because none of these comments resulted in any formal motions or voting for CONA response, the details of these questions are not included in these Minutes.
- Following the Question & Answer segment, City Councilman Herb Polson interjected some comments on the local crime scene. He was particularly disappointed at the failure of many parents of troubled children and teens who fail to appear to claim their offspring following detention at delinquent youth facilities, (e.g. the Juvenile Assessment Center on 49th Street).
  - Repeating the comments of earlier speakers, he said: "Our Juvenile Justice System is broken!"
- The suggestion was offered that the crime prevention program, [mentioned earlier in the Citrus Grove scene], called CPTED, (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design), could be advanced through implementation by violation citations from the Codes Enforcement Department.
  - Barbara Heck encouraged compiling a prioritized list of such suspect properties for submission to Codes.

Our meeting adjourned at 9 p.m. Conrad Weiser, Secretary

# St. Petersburg Business Assistance Center

## Business Resource Center

The St. Petersburg Business Assistance Center (BAC) is your one-stop facility for starting or growing your existing small business. The BAC provides business counseling, training and access to capital and credit for startups as well as established businesses seeking growth or specialized assistance. Visit the BAC or call 727-893-7146 to learn more about how we can be of assistance to you. After all, "It's Your Business, St. Petersburg!"

The Business Resource Center (BRC), located within the Business Assistance Center, has computers equipped with business software and Internet access, interactive videos, and an extensive business reference library for business research and planning. The BRC is open Monday- Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Our Services

The Business Assistance Center (BAC) provides case management and follow-up services for the creation, retention and expansion of small businesses. Specifically, the BAC offers:

- \* Business Assistance - Liaise with businesses and city services
- \* Business Counseling, access to financial assistance, certification for contracting

and procurement opportunities through the Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program, technical assistance, mentoring and training workshops

- \* The Midtown/Childs Park Corridor Case Management Program - The BAC staff works directly with Midtown/Child Park businesses for business startup, retention and expansion
- \* The Business Resource Center (BRC) - a one-stop resource for providing users personal computers with Internet access, interactive videos and an extensive business reference library for business planning and research. The BRC is open Monday to Friday, 8 to 5 p.m
- \* Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program - certifies small businesses and provides technical assistance to enhance contracting and procurement opportunities with the City of St. Petersburg
- \* Weed and Seed Program - offers community development services

Contact us:  
33 6th Street South, Suite #301  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701  
(Corner of 1st Ave. S. & 6th St.)  
727-893-7146

# 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](http://progress-energy.com).





## 2009 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 - conrad33702@verizon.net

### Treasurer

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

### CONA Leadership

Ingrid Comberg - Historic Uptown  
821-2192

### CourtWatch Committee

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

### Membership

Barbara Hawkins - Greater Pinellas Point  
866-1747 - be.hawkins@verizon.net

### Nominating Committee

Judy Ellis - Lakewood Estates  
864-3957 - jellis5610@tampabay.rr.com

### Public Safety Committee

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

### CONA General Meetings

3rd Wed of each month

### CONA Board Meetings

2nd Wed of each month

### 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

### In Hand:

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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St. Petersburg, FL

## Florida Neighborhoods Conference

Mark your calendars for July 9 - 11, 2009, when the City of St. Petersburg will host the 13th Annual Florida Neighborhoods Conference (FNC) at the Hilton St. Petersburg Bayfront! This gathering of neighborhood and civic leaders from throughout Florida provides an opportunity for participants to share ideas and learn ways to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. The FNC includes workshops, neighborhood tours, and a chance to network with friends at numerous social events. Nearly 400 community leaders attended the 2008 conference in Tallahassee anticipates at least that many this year. Registration fees are \$50 per person which includes all workshops, tours and special events; hotel reservations and transportation arrangements must be made separately. View website to register for the conference and reserve your hotel room online at [www.stpete.org/fnc](http://www.stpete.org/fnc).

We need volunteers to help us manage the 2009 Florida Neighborhoods Conference that will play host to visitors from around Florida. Volunteers are needed to assist us in the following areas:

- Hospitality Support - Greeters, information assistance, social events
- Program Support - Room monitors, A/V equipment assistants, exhibition hall support, workshop assistants
- Tour Support - Tour guides, transportation assistants
- Administrative Support - Registration desk, workshop session signup

If you're interested in serving as a volunteer, please contact: Neighborhood Partnership at: 727-892-5141.



Neighborhoods  
St. Petersburg Florida