

CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

June 2009

June President's Message

By Barbara McCormick Heck

The 2010 City Budget cuts will impact each of us. Over the past months, our City government has been looking for ways to consolidate, trim, delete and more efficiently run government on much less money in 2010 and onward. It has been an extremely difficult task for everyone involved. We are talking about potential job losses, service reductions, closures and more.

City Council had its first Budget workshop on May 26th – a 6+ hour meeting with the various departments reviewing their proposed 5%, 7% or 10% reductions. Even with just a 5% reduction, it was evident that we will notice the changes. And a 5% across the board decrease will not get us to the lowered budget number we need to hit. Ouch.

The current proposed budget (complete with 5%, 7% and 10% decreases can be viewed on our CONA website at www.conastpete.org and also on the city's website at www.stpete.org.

Step One: I urge everyone to carefully read through the proposed Budget RIGHT NOW !!! Check to see what these cuts will mean to you and to your neighborhood. Right now is the time to talk to your City Council member about these cuts. Do not wait until "later", or at the end of summer and definitely not after the budget has been finalized.

Step Two: Plan on attending the Budget Public Forum tentatively scheduled for July 9th. Get ready to speak about how this budget (and its cuts) will affect you and what changes you might suggest.

Step Three: Reach out. Join with your neighbors and with your adjacent neighborhood associations when working on a project (clean-up, get-togethers, neighborhood socials). Spreading the "cost" or the "labor" over lots more people really helps minimize what each person needs to do or to spend.

Step Four: Support CONA, attend the CONA meetings and let CONA know when you need help.

Just remember everyone that **T-O-G-E-T-H-E-R** we can do anything. "Together" is the key

CONA Board Meeting Wednesday, June 17, 2009

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

Agenda Items:

Pinellas County Long Range Transportation Plan
City Budget Update
CONA Treasurer and Committee Reports
Old Business – New Business

Important Upcoming Events:

June 21 - Father's Day
July 9-12 - Florida Neighborhoods Conference
July 15 - CONA Meeting

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CONA Working for You!

Here are June updates on the neighborhoods' and CONA's involvement with issues affecting all of us.

“Paris Gardens” will be planted in memory of Paris Hamilton: Bartlett Park's success with its Community Garden is going to be shared with others as a memorial to Paris Hamilton. Designs have been finalized and volunteers are ready to install gardens for Paris' grandmother and for her godmother. In late June, a garden will also be installed at the Preston Avenue home where the shooting took place. There is now a waiting list of neighbors who would like Paris gardens installed. To become a gardening volunteer, please contact Andrea Hildebran.

Anti-Litter Campaign – Pilot Program: Phil Harris, Neighborhood Partnership, is coordinating this pilot program with the neighborhoods. Joe Kubicki is working on the Interstate areas with FDOT. On April 21, Neighborhood Presidents from Greater Pinellas Point, Lakewood Terrace, Highland Oaks were invited along with Bill Saunders (Keep Pinellas Beautiful) and your CONA President to meet and discuss an "Anti-Littering Campaign" (clean up and education) along the major south St Pete arteries.

Bill Sanders, from Keep Pinellas Beautiful, discussed the problem and how a litter "survey" would help identify the hot spots and what was needed. The Litter Survey was done on May 16th by a group of neighborhood residents, City Council members and City staff. The data is being reviewed and will provide the most appropriate course of action and solutions to implement. Phil Harris will be presenting the findings to the Neighborhood Presidents and discussing the next steps.

Drought: CONA asks each neighborhood to continue to post the most current water restrictions. While we have had many rains, we are still in a drought situation. Be a water saver, not a water waster.

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 re-appearing. 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.**

Public Safety (Crime Watch and Court Watch Programs): CONA will be working closely with our two newest District Officers assigned to help the Crime Watch Programs in our neighborhoods. CONA strongly supports neighborhood Crime Watch. We are ready and able to assist any neighborhood that wants to start a new or revitalize an existing Crime Watch group in their area. Please contact CONA Public Safety Chair Jeff Frank.

A second part of our Public Safety equation is Court Watch. CONA can show you how working with Court Watch is an effective tool in making certain repeat offenders are given the maximum time and kept off the streets. Please contact CONA Court Watch Chair Carole Griffiths.

Tone Down Program (stopping blaring car stereos) now on SPPD website: 103 violations were submitted online thru May 26th using the SPPD Website. Upon verification of the information, a letter from Chief Williams is sent to the car's registered owner asking to turn down the overly loud car stereo. Please use the website to report overly loud car stereos www.stpete.org/police/ Check the right hand corner of the SPPD website. Right under the Emergency 911 and Non-emergency numbers is a link "To report a loud car stereo violation". Click on the link to take you to the submission form. Please direct your questions to William Proffitt or Officer Chip Wells at SPPD.

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 17 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

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
Diston Heights	Lakewood Terrace	4th Street Business
Downtown Neighborhood	Live Oaks	22nd Street South
Eagle Crest Civic	Magnolia Heights	
Edgemoor	Maximo Moorings	

Please join us at the Meeting on Wednesday, June 17...
Barbara Ann Hawkins, Membership

Beat the heat while conserving energy this summer

Summertime is a welcome treat to millions of Floridians. But as the temperature outside your home soars, so too can your energy usage. Fortunately, there is a way to lessen a seasonal increase in your electric bill. Taking smart, simple steps to use energy wisely this summer can help you stay comfortable without losing your cool.

When temperatures rise, many Floridians' air conditioners start working overtime. In fact, the A/C is the largest energy consumer in most Florida homes. Set your thermostat at 78 degrees or higher to maximize your energy savings. For every degree you set your thermostat about 78, you could save 10 percent on your cooling costs. Also, making the switch from a manual to a programmable thermostat could reduce your energy costs by up to \$180 per year.

If you're looking to stay cool all summer long without escalating your energy usage, consider turning on a ceiling fan – but only when you're in the room. A fan's gentle breeze can make you feel several degrees cooler for a fraction of the cost of running your A/C. If you leave the room, be sure to turn off the fan. While it can make you feel more comfortable, fans only cool people, not rooms.

If some areas of your home are hotter than others, your windows could be to blame. High-performance windows, solar window screens and qualified window films can help eliminate "hot spots" in your home. As an added bonus, all three of these upgrades help protect upholstery, wood and art from ultraviolet rays – keeping these items from fading while saving energy. Before making any changes to your windows, check with Progress Energy to find out if you qualify for a rebate of up to \$250 and additional federal tax credits up to \$1,500.

Need another reason to fire up the grill this summer? Using the oven in the heat of the summer forces your A/C to work harder, raising your energy bill. Choose to grill instead of bake and savor the sweet taste of energy savings.

If a summer vacation is in the works, be sure to turn off your water heater before leaving town. Because you won't be home, there's no need to waste energy heating water that won't be used. Plus, once turned back on, most models will reheat the water to the set temperature in about an hour. When you're at home, decreasing your water heater temperature from 140 degrees to 120 can help you save up to \$85 per year.

These are just a few of the many things you can do to use energy wisely this summer. To learn how to save energy in your home, sign up for a free Progress Energy Florida Home Energy Check by calling (888) 302-8348 or by visiting www.savethewatts.com.

Progress Energy prepares for hurricane season

June 1 marks the beginning of the 2009 hurricane season.

As a company charged with providing safe and reliable power to the more than 1.6 million customers who depend on us, Progress Energy Florida focuses on hurricane preparedness year-round.

Throughout the company's 35-county service territory, Progress Energy is proactively taking a number of steps to minimize the likelihood of storm-related power outages by investing \$98 million in storm hardening improvements and system maintenance. From clearing trees away from our nearly 5,000 miles of transmission lines to replacing nearly 2,000 wooden poles and structures with metal or concrete poles, the company is taking significant steps to reduce the potential for storm-related outages.

Should a storm disrupt power to your area, Progress Energy's team of highly skilled, award-winning service restoration crews will be ready to respond at a moment's notice – day or night.

Progress Energy Florida is fully committed to providing its customers the quality of service they want and need, during hurricane season and all year long.

LOOKING AT POWER IN A NEW LIGHT



CONA Task Force Committee - “CONA Neighbors Helping Neighbors”

We believe that outreach to the neighborhoods and strengthening neighborhoods is ultimately the key to safer neighborhoods. Our goal is to find ways to use the existing resources and insure the neighborhoods are availing themselves of all the tools We will be combining neighborhood pride (making the neighborhood a neighborhood, looking out for each other, helping each other, etc) with enforcement of the existing standards we live by (codes, law enforcement, etc)

We are ready to get the working committee launched - your (CONA) recommendations, appointments, volunteers, etc. We envision this as a core facilitating group that engages some larger resources to help neighborhoods become safer. We have decided to call the group "CONA neighbors helping neighbors ". We would encourage differing views – there is a number of challenges in the neighborhoods, it will take a variety of talents to address them.

We will hold our first meeting Thursday June 11 at Fresh Go Wild Market and Grill, 600 34th St N at 6:30. Anyone interested in helping make our neighborhoods better and safer should feel free to attend. Feel free to also enjoy their healthy delicious food.

For more information call Mike @ 727-244-8374 or e-mail jmgulley1@hotmail.com

City of St. Petersburg Garbage Pick-up Holiday Schedule

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

Saturday, July 4th (Independence Day)

- No change in schedule

Monday, September 7th (Labor Day)

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

You can also access this information at http://www.stpete.org/sanitation/residential_collection/holiday_schedule.asp



Public Safety Committee update

National Nite Out is Tuesday August 4th. Now is the time for Neighborhood Associations and crime watch groups to start making plans for this event. Most groups start with a picnic or cook-out followed by a crime prevention awareness march led by their CSO officers. Call and schedule the event with Crime Watch officer Johnny Harris. You may be able to get the Mayor, Officer McGruff (the crime dog) and or the Police Chief to attend along with Tee shirts hats and other Promotional items. Plan early because supplies and scheduling of dignitaries is limited. Try sending out fliers and include application for your neighborhood association or crime watch. Also don't forget to mention the time in your news letter and the St.Pete Times neighborhood section. Invite your local fire department. They may show up with a Fire Truck for the kids to tour. Remember the first Tuesday in August is not that far away and there is no better way to showcase your crime watch and neighborhood than with a picnic and march.

CONA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES

The Sunshine Multi-Service Center - May 20, 2008

- V. P. Will Michaels chaired our meeting.
- Current election candidates were invited to introduce themselves
- Attending City Council members were recognized.
- Treasurer April Gausman reported a current balance of \$3,294. The Leadership Program has \$165.00 in their account.
- Katee Tully, speaking for the Morean Art Center told us of their new facilities that feature a permanent collect of Dale Chihuly Glass. The 3 story gallery provides 18,000 sq.ft. of exhibit space that includes a working demonstration of a Chihuly Hot Shop.
- Again on a cultural theme, our next speaker Connie Kone, provided an update of our St. Petersburg Historical Society first established in 1920.
 - The Founding Families Society is an ancillary group that is compiling interviews with residents that have roots in St. Petersburg from earlier than 1940.
 - We learned of the Florida STEP Program, (School Tour Education Program), a mandated curriculum requirement to insure that fourth grade students are given an adequate historical perspective of our state.
 - A diverse new collection is being assembled with the theme: "Aviation Art".
- Scheduled speakers for the Florida Orchestra and for the Dali Museum did not arrive.
- City Councilman Karl Nurse provided a preview of three issues of tomorrow's, (5/21/09), Council Meeting.
 - 1) Community Garden Zoning Provision.
 - 2) Restrictions on species of grass used on new lawns.
 - 3) Proposal to purchase more efficient police patrol cars.
- Leslie Curran of City Council told us of the activities at the Business Assistance Center serving small business entrepreneurs of St. Petersburg including organizations oriented toward the arts.
 - One branch of their activity is seen in SPARC the St. Pete. Artist's Resource Collaboration, May 27th, (5 to 8:30 PM). They offer counseling at the St. Petersburg Clay Company, 420 22nd Street South
 - Volunteer workers from the SCORE program are available
- Cass Rael Sr. presented the findings of his CONA Listbot Evaluation Committee, advocating several changes in our Listbot E-mail Network.
 - The subscriber rolls should be limited to only three per member neighborhood.
 - The name "CONA Reps Forum" would replace the current name "Listbot".
 - Authors who post messages must include their name and neighborhood.
 - Moved, (J. Frank), to accept the motion of the Listbot Evaluation Committee as approved by the CONA Executive Board. [Motion Approved]
 - Moved, (T. McEachern), amendment to limit approval of the motion for a three month trial period. [Amendment Defeated]
 - A discussion of the CONA News e-mail media followed, as an alternative to the CONA Reps Forum.
 - The CONA Blog at www.conastpete.org was recognized as yet another communication media available to CONA members.
 - There are no limits on those who request subscription to the CONA News.
 - Neighborhood activity events should be posted on CONA News not the CONA Reps Forum. Such listings should first be submitted to your neighborhood president before forwarding to CONA.
 - Items posted on the CONA Reps Forum should be held as private/proprietary. CONA News items are for public information.
- The CONA Reps Forum and CONA News archives on Yahoo are permanent files. V.P. Mike Gulley introduced the members of the newly constituted CONA Task Force that he chairs: Jeff Frank, and Steve Corsetti. His group will seek remedies for a broad spectrum of criminal activities that threaten our safety.
- They seek an outreach which will bring about cooperation and coordination with a wide variety of community groups striving to improve the quality of life for our citizens.
- Though inputs and concerns will be solicited from all organized element of our community, volunteers will be recruited with constructive attitudes.
- Our organization's motto will be "Neighbors Helping Neighbors", focusing on local responsibility, and local caring.
- Including young people will be an important initiative.
- Since the threats to our safety are common to all areas of the city it is wise not to regard any districts as "Problem Neighborhoods".
- We heard of other neighborhoods assisting Bartlett Park in their Crime Watch Patrol using magnetic signs on their vehicles.
- Jeff Frank reported for our Public Safety Committee,
 - The SPPD has added two new district Crime Watch Coordinators.
 - We have begun to use e-mail in addition to telephone trees to distribute local crime watch information.
 - We continue to request more crime data for distribution to our neighborhood crime watch teams.
- Ingrid Comberg, Chair of CONA Leadership proudly announced 25 graduates in our class of 2009 including the Son of City Councilman Bill Dudley. [Our current City Council includes three CONA Leadership graduates.]
- V.P. Will Michaels reported on the work of his Historic Preservation Committee.
 - Regarding the Pier Task Force we heard of the \$50M TIF funds currently available to restore some existing deteriorated pilings or, if the existing structure was abandoned, and a new building erected on land, (i.e. Spa Beach), those funds could be used for construction.
 - Will explained that approval of the 75 ft. height restriction for construction at Al Lang field will be voted on by City Council June 18th. Please e-mail them.
 - The congregation has agreed to apply for Historic Landmark Status for the 1899 St. Petersburg Cathedral.
 - The façade of the adjoining Baptist church will also be preserved.
- Deanne Kelbourne, the new Chair of our CONA Energy and Environment Committee told of several areas that they are researching and promised updated reports in our monthly CONA Newsletter.
 - Their next meeting will be June 30th, 6:30 PM, at Panera Bread.
 - Dave Hoover, (Riviera Bay), noted that they have one home owner's property, in their neighborhood, which is self-sufficient "Green".
 - It was urged that our Neighborhood Partnership grants should include credit points for "Green" virtues.
- Judy Ellis, (Lakewood Estates), working for litter and noise reduction programs, told of a city sponsored bus tour to appraise the extent of highway litter in our neighborhoods. The goals will be to improve public attitude, (especially children), to reject all acts of random littering.
- Keep Pinellas Beautiful Program was sited as discussed as education programs intended to revise and elevate public, Andrea Hildebrand, (Bartlett Park), told of the new "Paris Gardens" initiated to plant and cultivate private personal garden plots, utilizing children as volunteers in an educational environment for different age groups.
 - June 20 will be a big neighborhood cleanup day with cooperation between Bartlett Park and Harbordale.
 - Karl Nurse noted that several city recreation centers are sponsoring cleanup days as a youth activity program.
- July 9 through 11 will host the Florida Neighborhood Conference at our own Hilton Hotel.
- The next city budget hearings will be on July 9th.

Our meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM. Conrad Weiser, Secretary

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.



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.

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.





**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
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