

CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

August 2009

August President's Message

By Barbara McCormick Heck

Neighborhood Challenges. Neighborhoods have been very challenged this year as they deal with a wide variety of issues. Neighborhoods need your continued help if they are to succeed. Please volunteer to help and offer your suggestions. Can't join a Committee? Use e-mails, US mail and phone calls to make your case. So fasten your seat belts because we have a lot of work to do on these issues.

- 2010 City and County Budgets – dealing with the reality of the cuts.
- Public Safety – dealing with increases during these tough economic times.
- Foreclosures – dealing with unkempt homes, yards and absent landowners.
- Codes Enforcement – dealing with new policies.
- Land Development / Historic Preservation / Landmarking of historic resources – preserving our history for future generations.
- Going “green” – dealing with environmental impacts.

Vote – September 1st Primary. Our forefathers paid heavily for us to have the opportunity of free and unfettered elections. Please honor them and this country by casting your ballot in the September Primary and again in the November General Election.

School Starts Soon. Please place reminders in your newsletters and on your websites that school starts in just a few weeks. Ask your residents to please drive responsibly and slowly and obey all school zone speed limits. Let's keep our children safe – they are the future.

Grant Proposal Deadlines. Proposals for various grants are due very soon. Contact Tom Killian, CONA Mentor, if you need help. CONA has many successful grant recipients who can review your proposal and give suggestions. Grant information and application forms may be found on city web site at www.stpete.org/budget/grantsc.asp

- Neighborhood Partnership Grants – September 4th deadline.
- Police Forfeiture Grants – September 25th deadline.
- St. Petersburg Arts Grants – August 31st deadline.

CONA Board Meeting

Wednesday, August 19, 2009

The SUNSHINE CENTER, 330 5th St. N.

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

Agenda Items:

Women's Half Marathon – Diane McSpirtt
MLK Business District – Andy Hayes
Public Safety Committee Update
CONA Treasurer and Committee Reports
Old Business – New Business

Important Upcoming Events:

Aug 16 CONA Nite at the Trop
Sep 1 Primary Elections
Sep 16 CONA Meeting

On the inside

CONA Working in City and County.....	2
Public Safety Committee Update	2
9th Annual African American Mental Health Training & Forum	3
CONA NEWS	3
Progress Energy article	4
Neighborhood Partnership Office Updates	5
CONA Minutes	6
Greater Pinellas Point at the Museum	7
City Holiday Trash Schedule	7
CONA Minutes	8
CONA Citizen of the Month	8



Current workings in City and County

Here are your August updates on issues affecting all of us.

Neighborhood Partnership Grant Applications:

Deadline is September 4th. Programs may include picnic tables, pavilions, small playgrounds or other improvements to neighborhood parks, identity signage, and landscaping.

Police Forfeiture Grants Program: Deadline is September 25th. Projects eligible must impact crime prevention, neighborhood safety, drug abuse education and prevention, or school resource officer programs such as T-shirts and hats for Crime Watch teams. Application available online.

2010 Budget – Sep City Council Public Forum: Plan on attending and speaking at the Sep 3rd or Sep 17th City Council Public Forum on the Budget. Be at City Hall early to get a seat. Public Forum starts at 6PM.

Long Range Transportation Plan Public Forums: How should we spend our transportation dollars. What can we do to make travel in Pinellas County easier, safer and more efficient? Help update the transportation plan which extends to 2035. Attend one of the Public Workshops to learn about the LRTP, ask questions and voice your concerns and ideas for improvement.

- August 18, Dunedin Public Library, 223 Douglas Ave., Dunedin
- August 19, Park Station, 5851 Pinellas Park Blvd, Pinellas Park
- Drop in anytime from 4 – 7PM. Presentations are at 4:30PM and 5:30PM.

Free Foreclosure Counseling: Neighborhood Housing Services provides “free” counseling assistance to help homeowners in foreclosure manage their foreclosure or remediate their mortgage. They also provide Home Buyer Education courses designed to help people achieve the dream of home ownership. Go to www.stpetenhs.org for more information.

Waterfront Park Centennial: Peter Belmont and Cathy Martin are chairing the Steering Committee planning this 2010 year long event. New Year’s Eve will start the celebration with a family oriented fun event highlighting some of the historic features of our waterfront parks. In partnership with many other groups, activities will be taking place in all of the waterfront parks from North Shore to Poynter Park. Volunteers are needed for all these events. To get involved, volunteer or donate resources, contact Peter Belmont at peterbelmont@earthlink.net

Pier Task Force: CONA VP Will Michaels and DNA President Marilyn Olsen are serving on this 20 member Pier Task Force. Will chairs the Design Sub-committee. The Task Force is charged with providing multiple re-development alternatives for the Pier, identifying the estimated operating subsidy, reviewing the status of the Pier and identifying funding estimates for alternatives. The Task Force recommendations are due to City Council no later than February 25, 2010.



CONA PSC August update

Your Public Safety Committee has been busy the as of late. We have been visiting with neighborhood association during their meetings. We know public safety is a major concern for the neighborhoods and these visits gives us that individual look into those associations. At those meeting the new Neighborhood Calls for Service Summary Reports are being received well. They are currently being hand delivered by CSO’s or your district crime watch officer but hopefully in the near future they will be available thru e-mail or on line.

On-line this month is our new crime watch coordinator forum group. This is a way of keeping cwcs in contact with each other to share crime info, best practices, support and tips. Also this month we are scheduled to visit the PD communication center. Thou tours have been available to anyone; we are hoping to work it into our crime watch support program.

CONA Reps can help PSC by inviting us to one of your next neighborhood meeting and by passing our contact info along to your members and crime watch group.

Thanks
Jeff Frank, PSC Chair

Ninth Annual African American Mental Health Training & Forum in the African American Community



The St. Petersburg Weed and Seed Program and the African American Mental Health Initiative are sponsoring the **NINTH ANNUAL COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH FORUM** in the African American Community. The theme of the Ninth annual forum is “**Neighborhood Restoration; Strategies for Success**”. The training and forum dates are August 21 and 22.

August 21, is reserved for training mental health, substance abuse, health care and social service professionals. The training will be held from 7:30am to 4:30pm at St. Petersburg College Allstate Center, 3200 34th Street South, St. Petersburg, Florida.

On Friday, August 21, Dale R. Landry, MSW, will be the Plenary Speaker. Mr. Landry’s plenary will be an Overview of Mental Health Issues with Florida’s African American Youth. Friday workshops will include:

- “Self Evaluation: How do I Measure Up”?- Maikel Belfor, MSW, CAP
- “Mental Health Issues Impacting African American Youth in Florida’s Juvenile Justice System”- Dale R. Landry, MSW, CEO, Village Architects
- “Re-Gaining Your Emotional Language”- Jean Jones, BA, CAP, Westcare, Inc.

On Saturday, August 22, the Community Forum will be held at the Childs Park YMCA, located at 691 43rd Street South, from 9:30am to 3:00pm. It is free and open to the public.

Saturday’s plenary sessions will include:

- “Impact of Fatherless Homes”- Patrick Diggs, MSW, LCSW, Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office Psychiatry Department.
- “Re-Embracing the Education of Our Children”-Dorothy Whitlock, MSW, LCSW, Employee Assistance Program, St. Petersburg Police Department.
- “Black Leadership Commission on Aids Tampa Bay”- Reverend Dr. W. James Favorite, Beulah Baptist Institutional Church, Tampa, FL and Mac McDowell, MA, Public/Community Affairs Chair of the Black Leadership Conference on Aids Tampa Bay

The keynote luncheon address on Friday will be: “Black Leadership Commission on Aids Tampa Bay”-Reverend Dr. W. James Favorite, Beulah Baptist Institutional Church, Tampa, FL and Mac McDowell, MA, Public/Community Affairs Chair of the Black Leadership Conference on Aids Tampa Bay

CONA News -- It’s For You.

--by Conrad Weiser

The CONA News is a parallel listserv robot to our companion CONA Rep’s Forum. The Forum is only open to the elected leaders of each neighborhood, but the CONA News is for everybody. We want to share announcements of activities that will be of interest to all St. Petersburg residents, not events promoted just for your neighborhood. Please send posters, flyers or other format information of the events you want to share. Currently, they should be emailed to our Secretary, Conrad Weiser, conrad33702@verizon.net.

If you would like to be added to our free subscriber list send your preferred e-mail address to Conrad, at the above. We need to reach more citizens with a growing list.

Kids can help parents save the watts

Few people will ever have as significant an impact on a child's life as his or her parents. The behaviors that help define the way children approach the world are often taught at an early age. As schools open their doors for another exciting and informative year, now is a great time to take a fun, interactive and educational look at how energy is being used in your home.

Challenging your child to reduce his or her energy use can begin with a simple checklist. With the checklist in hand, take a tour around your home, pointing out opportunities for energy savings along the way.

Not sure where to start? Consider this checklist of energy-saving tips:

- Turn off the lights and fan when you leave a room (Better yet, consider replacing incandescent bulbs with energy-efficient, compact fluorescent ones.)
- Turn off televisions, computers and video games when you're finished using them
- Decide what you want ahead of time from your refrigerator and grab it without leaving the door open for long
- Set your computer to sleep mode instead of using a screensaver
- Take shorter showers to reduce water-heating costs
- Use a microwave to cook your food instead of the oven, to reduce energy use without heating your home

These are just a few of the countless steps parents and kids can take to reduce their energy use. For more ways to save energy and money while helping protect the environment, visit www.savethewatts.com.

Better yet, if you're looking for a cost-effective, informative experience parents and kids can both learn from, sign up for a free Home Energy Check. A Progress Energy Florida energy advisor will inspect your home

Progress Energy announces "Beat the Heat" tweets

In an effort to help customers save more energy this summer than ever before, Progress Energy is harnessing the power of Twitter by sending "Beat the Heat" tweets.

Twitter is a micro-blogging tool that allows users to send out short pieces of information to a group of followers.

Each communication, called a tweet, contains 140 characters or less of text. Tweets will focus on low- and no-cost tips, as well as programs offered by Progress Energy, to help customers save energy and money.

Followers of the new account will receive regular tweets throughout the summer that include practical ways they can save energy and save money on their energy bills. The program will run through Sept. 20.

For more information, visit www.twitter.com/EnergyAdvisors.

and recommend useful energy-saving tips. You may even be eligible for valuable rebates toward energy-efficient home improvements.

Finding new ways to use energy wisely is a lesson everyone can appreciate.

LOOKING AT POWER IN A NEW LIGHT



St. Pete Hosts the Florida Neighborhood Conference

The City of St. Petersburg and Neighborhood Partnership hosted the 13th Annual Florida Neighborhoods Conference (FNC) July 9-11, at the St. Petersburg Hilton Bayfront Hotel. The goal of the conference was to highlight the many resources available to help improve the quality of life in neighborhoods. Workshops covered a variety of topics including traffic calming, homelessness, landlord/tenant issues, community gardening, and dealing with foreclosure, abandoned homes, crime, and emergency preparedness. As part of the conference participants had the opportunity to choose among several local tours, such as: St. Petersburg Downtown/Cultural Arts, Historic Old Northeast, Historic Roser, Midtown/ Main Streets and Pinellas HOPE. Special Thank you to the Conference sponsors: Progress Energy, Neighborhood Partner Sponsor; St. Petersburg-Clearwater Convention Visitors Bureau, Good Neighbor sponsor; City of Tallahassee, Good Neighbor sponsor; City of Hollywood, Good Neighbor sponsor; City of Tampa & Hillsborough County Good Neighbor sponsor; and Constellation Energy, Contributing Neighbor Sponsor. Lastly, our additional scholarship and sponsors were: Catholic Charities-Pinellas Hope, Shore Acres, CONA/Greater Woodlawn, Downtown, Historic Old Northeast, Historic Roser Park, and Midtown. View the website for FNC 2010, post-conference information and/or your feedback at www.stpete.org/fnc.



St. Petersburg Carefest 2009

The City of St. Petersburg Neighborhood Partnership in conjunction with City Codes, Midtown Economic Development and Parks Departments are preparing for the 2009 St. Petersburg CareFest event. The 2008 CareFest-St. Pete event was a success with 1,037 volunteers giving of their time and energy to help others and beautify our community. Houses of Worship, community organizations, businesses who have a project that they would like included as a 2009 CareFest project or who would like to adopt a project should call Philip Harris 893-4110. CareFest activities will be held on September 26, 2009. For more information about CareFest call 536-2273 or visit online carefestusa.com.

Neighborhood Partnership Grants

The Neighborhood Partnership Matching Grant Program is designed to provide grant awards to neighborhood & business associations, organizations or groups of residents for specific improvement projects and strategic plans that build relationships and improve the community. The improvements are categorized into several areas. They include: decorative lighting, general improvements, neighborhood plans, public art and youth initiated projects.

Deadline is September 4, 2009 at 5 PM.

www.stpete.org/budget/docs/Neighborhood_Partnership_Matching_Grant_Program_FY_10.pdf

CONA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES

The Sunshine Multi-Service Center - July 15, 2009

[Copies of the Citizen's Budget for Fiscal Year 2010 were distributed at the door, by Deputy Mayor Tisch Elston, prior to our meeting.]

- Our President Barbara welcomed our guests and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag.
- Our first presentation was by Tim Finch, Director of the City's Budget & Management Department. Mr. Finch discussed many pages of the 2010 Budget, as distributed.
 - Declining property values, and inflation of our operating expenses, has left the city facing an \$18M shortfall, from a \$621M Budget.
 - All City Departments have been told to reduce their budgets 5% to 10%.
 - Higher paid Staff, (\$50K), were asked to accept 2-1/2% salary cuts.
 - City charges and rate structures will be going up.
 - There will be Public Budget Hearings at City Hall September 3rd, and 17th, at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers.
 - Our current Millage rate is the lowest in 30 years.
 - Public Safety, (i.e. Police & Fire), is the largest item in our Budget. No layoffs are planned for SPPD or Fire Rescue.
 - The 2012 Budget will be inflated to fund for Pier renovations.
- There followed a period of questioning from the floor.
 - Considering use of Reserve Funds, they are currently at the minimum level nationally recommended for municipal budgets.
 - Some assets, like the Stabilization fund, are tightly constrained as to the uses they can be applied to.
 - With the economic storm signals, was a Hiring Freeze considered? Yes, a "Soft Freeze" has been in effect.
 - Have grants been applied for? Yes, pay for 10 officers was provided by a COPS Grant, and 8 more from a Byrnes Grant.
 - Is a county wide Police Service being considered? Yes, we already have extensive cooperation/coordination with the Sheriff's Department. Greater integration will likely unfold.
- We next heard from Susan Ajoc of the Neighborhood Partnership Department reporting on last week's Florida Neighborhoods Conference.
 - She noted the achievement award won by Mary Alice Lange of our Historic Old Northeast Neighborhood.
 - The conference drew representatives from 52 cities.
 - Funded entirely by attendees and sponsors, the conference received no city revenues.
 - The Partnership Office is now located back in City Hall, not the Annex.
 - Deadline for Partnership Grants is September 5th. [See application form on CONA web page: www.conastpete.org. Deadline for Police Forfeiture Grants soon thereafter.
 - Tom Killian, (Jungle Terrace), was introduced as the CONA Mentor available to assist neighborhoods with their grant preparations. He stressed the need to attend a Neighborhood Grant Workshop.
- Cass Rael Sr. then reminded us of the August 16th date "CONA Family Day At The Trop." CONA tickets will be available in a section of the right field.
- Treasurer April Gausman reported a current balance of \$2,210.
- Mike Gulley, our Audit Committee Chair appealed for volunteers to assist with the procedural duties. A. Hildebran, F. Jackson, and K. Warren offered to work with the Committee.
- Will Michaels, of our LDR and Historic Preservation Committee, provided an update of their work.
 - Pier Planning: Not just location and construction but overall appeal. [Will is a member of the Pier Task Force.] They are now seeking to contract with a technical consulting firm.
 - Relocation of two historic buildings (Henry-Bryan and Bay

Gables/Chateau France) yet to be fully resolved. CONA and SPP recommended they be relocated in the downtown area which is consistent with their place in time and maintaining the downtown area as a mix of historic and newer architecture.

- Historic Preservation Society is planning a Candidates Forum, July 29th at Studio 620 to learn of their historic preservation perspectives.
- The outcome of the Al Lang Field Visioning session has not been released. CONA is advocating a total look at the Downtown Waterfront in addition to the separate examinations of the Port, Al Lang, and the Pier that have taken place so far.
- Speaking for CONA Leadership, Ingrid Comberg explained that their recruiting campaign for next year will begin after Labor Day. She urged neighborhoods to enroll their newly elected officers.
- Nominations Committee- No report at this time.
- Jeff Frank then spoke for our CONA Public Safety Committee.
 - "National Night Out", Tuesday August 4th will be celebrated by Neighborhood Crime Watch Groups all over the city.
 - Jeff displayed and discussed a new crime data report form: "The Neighborhood Calls for Service Summary Report. Currently available to Community Service Officers, (CSO), it will soon be available to the Neighborhood Crime Watch Coordinators, (CWC).
 - Jeff also announced establishment of a new Yahoo Groups Listserv to which all local Crime Watch Coordinators are invited to enroll. [Please e-mail Jeff at : kirstenjeffinn@yahoo.com
- Assistant Police Chief Luke Williams also rose to offer additional details about this new Crime Data Report Jeff displayed.
- The President of Central Oak Park Neighborhood Association, Ron Rolland, announced the death of Royal Eden Jr., their Crime Watch Coordinator and Police Department Volunteer for the last 7 years. He told of a Memorial Plaque for their "Unsung Hero" in appreciation for his devoted service to their neighborhood and to our city.
- Under Old Business, the President returned to the Central Oak Park motion, made at our June meeting, requesting specific support from CONA.
 - Jeff Frank, (our Public Safety Chair.), rose to explain that the CONA Executive Committee had investigated the situation at Central Oak Park and had voted not to support their requested letter as the information it was based on was not supported.
 - Assistant Chief Luke Williams insisted that there was no disparity in the service his Department provides to all neighborhoods.
 - Moved the question, (Sherman, Crossroad), Central Oak Park Motion for CONA Letter of Support. [Motion Failed]
- Travis Jarman, (Tierra Verde), rose to introduce Terri Pentek, of Florida Homeowners for Fair Treatment.
 - She spoke of the defeat, in 2009, of Senate Bill 1012 which sought to remove, for Condominiums and similar Community Associations tax exemption for taxation of underwater land overshadowed by private docks. [The current exemption is for all waterfront home owners.]
 - The Department of Environmental Protection, (DEP), has threatened to reintroduce the underwater land taxation, perhaps broadening it to eliminate all home owners' exemptions, [as a reaction to our current budget deficits.]
 - Travis moved that CONA direct a supportive letter to our county representatives in Tallahassee urging the resolve that legislation must not increase taxes on submerged land with private docks that belong to residential condominium owners. [Approved]

Our meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Conrad Weiser, Secretary

Neighborhood on display

The **Greater Pinellas Point Civic Association** has sponsored an exhibit of its neighborhood history at the **St. Petersburg Museum of History**, on display thru September 13th.

The Pinellas Point exhibit includes a 1,000 year timeline, interesting displays of the Bee Line Ferry, historic homes (including the Argenteau and Bayou Castles and the Tippetts' Home), Tocobaga Indian and other artifacts and mementos, photos, maps, and articles on famous residents and places, as well as present points of interest on a large wall mural.

St. Petersburg Museum of History
335 Second Avenue NE
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

For information on Hours and Prices:

www.spmoh.org
Tel: 727-894-1052

City of St. Petersburg Garbage Pick-up Holiday Schedule

Holidays will sometimes change your scheduled garbage pick-up day.

Here is the schedule for August and September 2009.

Monday, September 7th (Labor Day)

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

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

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

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

Return Service Requested

Presort Std
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit #1084
St. Petersburg, FL

Citizen of the Month

Roy Eden was an inspiration to all and a moving force in our city's Crime Watch Program. As a volunteer for the past seven years, Roy called neighborhood crime watch coordinators with their crime statistics. He posted alerts when the crimes started to come in waves, or when there was an especially serious crime, such as a homicide. He tirelessly helped so many Crime Watch groups over the years and continued to do so even as he was fighting cancer.

Roy has been recognized by the city as Crime Watch Coordinator of the Year and named Volunteer of the Year by the Suncoast Crime Prevention Association. CONA and all our neighborhoods in St. Petersburg honor the memory of Roy Eden Jr. with this award. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family now. Thank you for sharing Roy with us.