

CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

January 2011

President's Message:

I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as CONA's President for the coming year. I also want to congratulate the rest of the new Executive Committee officers and chairs on their election. This is the team that I will heavily depend on to move CONA and the neighborhoods forward. Also, thanks Will Michaels for his outstanding efforts on CONA's behalf this past year. I have extremely large shoes to fill.

By way of a little background – Besides being the quiet guy that sits in the back of the room and doesn't say much, I have been CONA 1st Vice president for the past 2 ½ years, served on the CONA Public Safety Committee for over 3 years, and served on the CONA City Budget Review Committee and CONA Audit Committee as well. My other neighborhood experience is 8 years in various offices including President of the Coquina Key Neighborhood Association. My volunteer experience spans almost 40 years primarily in various offices in the fraternal community, as well as a number of volunteer opportunities associated with the theatre and movie community before coming to Florida in 2001. My business experience spans over 40 years in the financial services industry, primarily in the investment field.

Under Will's stewardship, we enhanced a number of existing programs including the Public Safety Committee's involvement in the August Crime workshop and CONA Leadership program headed up by Ingrid Comberg. Look for some fascinating developments with that program and youth in 2011. Will also helped get our voice to the city on a number of quality of life issues through the Land Development Committee and spearheaded our CONA City Budget Review committee that presented CONA's views of the budget to the City. We will continue that effort very soon. Let me or Travis Jarmin know if you have an interest in participating. We will likely expand the scope for 2011.

Our Standing Committees have already begun formulating plans for 2011. Watch for developments from Cass Rael on Public Safety, Donna Law on Court Watch, Monica Abbott on Land Development, Andrea Hildebrand on Membership and Theresa McEachern on Nominations. We have several special Committees that will be active. Besides the City Budget Review Committee, we will have Tim Martin heading the Energy and Environment Committee, Kai Warren heading up the Codes Enforcement Committee, and Will Michaels heading up our Diversity Committee. While still a bit of a pipe dream, an initiative I want to explore is economic development (jobs). So far I just have some ideas.

I will be utilizing our two Vice Presidents, Cathy Wilson and Lillian Baker, in a number of leadership roles. Currently Cathy will be editing our newsletter. Both Cathy and Lillian bring a wealth of experience in dealing with neighborhood issues. You will be seeing lots from both.

Watch for our CONA Goals Workshop. While we have no specific date, we will be looking to have the event late February to early March. This is where we will set our goals, advocacy program, and activities for the year. All associations should try to have a representative at the workshop so your issues are heard.

Please remember to renew your association's CONA dues for 2011. The rates are \$35 per association plus an additional \$15 if you want to take advantage of the CONA Bulk Mailing Permit for your association mailings. Dues may be sent to CONA at POB 13693, St. Petersburg, FL 33733-3693. Also, please update and send in the contact information form available on the CONA website www.conastpete.org.

The next CONA meeting will be Wednesday, January 19th - 7PM, at the Sunshine Center. See you there! Mike Gulley

CONA Board Meeting Wednesday, January 19, 2011

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

Agenda Items:

Installation of Officers
American Cancer Society
New Negro RNBI Baseball
Pier Referendum
Committee Reports
New Business

Feb. 16, 7PM--Regular CONA Meeting

Important Upcoming Events:

1/13 – Mayor's Night Out - 7-9pm - J.W. Cate Center 5801 22nd Avenue N.
1/17 – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
1/19 – Regular CONA meeting – 7pm - 2011 Kickoff – Sunshine Center
1/31 – CONA Leadership Effective Meetings - 6:30pm - Edward White Hospital 2323 9th Avenue N.
2/10 – Mayor's Night Out - 7-9pm - North Branch Library 861 70th Avenue N.
2/14 – CONA Leadership – 6:30pm – City Hall 175 5th Street N.

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CONA Newsletter Deadlines

Copy Deadline: 25th of each month
In Hand: 2nd Wednesday of month
Coordinator: Cathy Wilson, 455-9546
We welcome articles, items of interest and meeting reminders. All submissions to the CONA Newsletter may be edited for clarity, taste and length.

2011 CONA Members



THANK YOU to these **CONA Members** who have sent in their 2011 dues...

Americana Cove

Bahama Shores*

Bartlett Park

Bayway Isles*

Broadwater Civic

Brighton Bay Master

Downtown Neighborhood*

Downtown Residents Civic

Eden Isle

Greater Pinellas Point

Greater Woodlawn

Highland Oaks

Historic Kenwood

Jungle Terrace Civic*

Lakewood Estates*

Lakewood Terrace

Live Oaks

Northeast Terrace

Pasadena Bear Creek

Riviera Bay Civic

Snell Isle Property

Tropical Shores

*Bulk Mail paid

Mistakes can happen so... If your association has paid their 2011 dues but you don't see your name here, please contact our Membership Chair, Andrea Hildebran at hildebran@gmail.com

Got a Neighborhood Story??

Carly Hart is a correspondent for the *St. Petersburg Times*. Her work goes into the Neighborhood Times section so contact Carly when there is news / story leads that will fit into The Neighborhood Times.

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Best Wishes for 2011

This is to again thank the CONA Board for the appreciation plaque presented at the December Board meeting. I was deeply touched by the honor. Let me also take this opportunity to thank all of you who spent so many hours this past year to advance the quality of life in your neighborhood and the city and to make CONA an even more effective organization. It has been a great privilege to work with you through CONA in this regard.

As your Immediate Past President I will continue to offer my assistance to CONA where you think I might be helpful. One area that your new President Mike Gulley and I are discussing is how CONA can further accelerate its involvement in increasing respect for dialogue and understanding among persons of diverse backgrounds.

To that end, I contacted County Commissioner Ken Welch and asked him to chair a meeting of some representatives from CONA and the larger Midtown area (PACT). I also enlisted the support of Community Tampa Bay, an organization skilled in organizing educational activities addressing race and diversity. (Some of you will remember Community Tampa Bay made a presentation to the CONA Board in June.) Ken agreed to chair and an initial meeting was held on December 21st. At this meeting it was agreed that those present would work together on educational activities regarding race and diversity generally, as well as other Midtown neighborhood priorities (public safety was especially discussed). A small work group was formed to develop a draft plan of action. If you are interested in helping with this effort please contact me. Thanks to Mike Gulley and all others who responded to my call to participate in this endeavor during the busy holiday season. Best wishes to all of you as we proceed into the New Year!

Will Michaels, Immediate Past President



CONA Leadership 2011 Begins!!!

Our Class of 2011 begins with Orientation Night on January 10th and continues through our Graduation Night on May 19th. In between are 9 exciting programs that help neighborhood leaders become more effective advocates. During the course of the program, they'll meet people who shape our community and gain valuable tips on how and where to go for help. We have another outstanding group signed up to participate in this year's class. They'll be attending CONA Board meetings during the program so please stop and say hello.

Mayor Announces Noise Control Program

In mid-November, Mayor Foster began a program designed to give citizens a way to deal with loud car stereo noise in their neighborhoods. The initiative, called Soft Letters, allows a citizen who has seen a car with one of those really loud, subwoofer-enhanced booming stereos to report the car tag, the car make and color, along with the date, time and place of the incident, directly to the Mayor's office. The Mayor will then send out a so-called "soft letter," a polite warning asking the car owner to be more courteous to those around him. The letter carries no fine or other punishment and is designed to act as a reminder that this behavior is anti-social, unsafe and unhealthy. In addition to being a distraction to the driver, the noise is destructive to the ear and has been shown to cause learning disabilities in very small children. It is also a hazard to emergency vehicles; their sirens cannot be heard at intersections over this kind of racket.

This program began in Gulfport, Mississippi in 2006 and has had considerable success. Our own Gulfport is now doing it, as are Largo and Clearwater. Police chiefs believe it works because it puts the 'boomer' on notice that others are willing to take the time to report him, and also because this noise is often associated with drug dealing; the last thing a lot of the boomers want is attention from the police department.

The program is all the more important now because the state's car stereo law is under review by the courts. It may be two or more years before a final decision comes down; during that time both the state law and several sections of St. Petersburg's city ordinance are not being enforced.

If you see a loud car on the road, and if you can safely get the tag (Florida tags only), and if the noise is within the city limits of St. Petersburg, report the information to the Mayor at 893-7201 or mayor@stpete.org. You can also contact noisefreeflorida@tampabay.rr.com for more information or if you wish to make a complaint anonymously.

Judy Ellis

CONA Committee Updates

We plan to use this spot to update CONA members on what our committees are up to. For this month's edition, we're just doing a quick introduction since most of our committee chairs are new to their roles and we have new members to CONA too.

CONA Leadership: Ingrid Comberg from Historic Uptown is our long-time chair here. The 2011 program begins on January 10th and continues through May 19th.

Court Watch Committee: Donna Law from Central Oak Park is the new chair of Court Watch.

Land Development/Historic Resources Committee: Monica Abbott from Jungle Terrace is the new chair of the LD/HR Committee.

Membership Committee: Our new chair at Membership is Andrea Hildebran from Bartlett Park.

Nominating Committee: Chaired by a long-time CONA hand for 2011, Theresa McEachern of Harbordale is looking for members to help her draw the slate of officers and chairs for 2012. Please contact her by email at terre66@aol.com or by phone at 823-6390 to volunteer.

Public Safety: A name well familiar to CONA folk, Cass Rael from North Kenwood is our newly elected chair at Public Safety.

City Volunteer Board Openings

Like most municipalities, our city makes liberal use of volunteers to help in administering many of their programs and to staff several boards or commissions run by the city. Each position is unique and the qualifications to serve vary but all serve the city and it's residents. Go to the city's website at <http://www.stpete.org/boards/> and check under the committee or board listing for more information. Following are the current openings:

City Beautiful

5 regular members

Terms expire 12/31/11 & 12/31/12)

Code Enforcement Board

1 regular member (Architect category)

Term expires 12/31/11

Commission on Aging

1 regular member

Term expires 12/31/13

International Relations Committee

1 regular member

Term expires 12/31/13

Nuisance Abatement Board

4 regular & alternate members

Terms expire 8/31/12, 11/30/12, 12/31/12 & 12/31/13

Recipe Corner

Sharing food and conversation either before or after is a sure-fire way to improve turnout to your association meetings. What to bring to satisfy that neighborhood craving though? Try this time-tested goodie on your crowd. We think it'll leave them smiling...

Key Lime Pie

1 graham cracker pie shell

4 large egg yolks

1 can sweetened condensed milk

? cup of Key Lime juice

1 12oz container of non-dairy whipped topping

Bake pie shell at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. While pie shell is baking, separate eggs and discard the whites. Whip the yolks until smooth then add the condensed milk and mix well. Add the Key Lime juice and blend until completely mixed. Pour into crisped pie shell and bake for 10 minutes. Allow pie to cool to room temperature then refrigerate for 2 hours. Spread non-dairy topping onto cooled pie just before serving.

**We hope to make this a regular part of the CONA Newsletter so please send in your favorite crowd-pleasing recipe to Cathy Wilson at catgwna@knology.net

CONA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES

The Sunshine Multi-Service Center - December, 2010

- President Will Michaels opened our meeting by leading us in the Flag Salute. He welcomed all of our guests. He offered a special thanks to Charles Wheeler of the Sunshine Center Staff, and to Mr. & Mrs. Shattman, (Crossroads), who provide our abundant refreshments each month, [donations appreciated].
- Our Treasurer, April Gausman reported a current balance of \$861.67. She reported our membership renewals are at the highest rate in recent years. Her report was approved.
- Turning to the task of our elections for 2011, Will noted that there is only one office being contested- Chair of the Public Safety Committee. He suggested that all other elected offices be confirmed by acclamation.
 - Moved, (Sherman, Crossroads), that all of the uncontested candidates be elected by a vote of acclamation. [Approved]
- Will then asked all of the elected Officers and Committee Chairs to rise for him to introduce.
President- Mike Gulley,
First V.P.- Cathy Wilson
Sec. V.P.- Lillian Baker,
Secretary- Conrad Weiser,
Treasurer- April Gausman,
Membership Chair- Andrea Hildebran,
Land Development & Historic Resources, (LDR) Chair- Monica Abbott,
Leadership Chair- Ingrid Comberg,
Nominations Chair- Theresa McEachern,
Court Watch Chair- Donna Law
- Point of Order, (Sherman, Crossroads), "Why is Corsetti a candidate if Executive Committee asked for his resignation?"
 - President responded that Executive Committee vote of Nov. 15th only set a process in motion and the individual declined to resign therefore there was no action that prevented him being nominated from the floor.
- Will announced that each of the candidates for Public Safety Committee Chair would be allowed three minutes to promote their election, which was done.
- Theresa McEachern then announced and began the voting procedures. She will call the name of each member neighborhood qualified to vote, and called the names of the designated representatives for each neighborhood.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Land Development & Historic Resources Comm. [Chair Maureen Stafford]. After enumerating the many projects her committee has pursued this year, Maureen offered special appreciation for the Cityscape Sub-committee headed by Travis Jarman, noting his prolonged struggle to exclude digital highway billboards. She introduced Monica Abbott who will Chair the LDR Committee next year. We also heard a motion to approve the Mission Statement of the Midtown Sub-committee submitted by Chair Vel Thompson, (read aloud by Maureen). [Approved]
- Public Safety Committee: Steve Corsetti asked Scott Swift to provide a report. He expressed appreciation for Ray Tampa the retiring head of the area NAACP and congratulated Reverend Sykes, their new President.
- Ingrid Comberg provided an update on the plans for the 19th Annual CONA Leadership Class of 2011. She announced three Leadership scholarships for Gibbs High School students have been reserved.
- Jean Corsetti spoke as Chair of the Membership Committee noting the forms used this year to solicit membership information and to collect data on current, local neighborhood problems.
 - We heard briefly from the former Chair, Barbara Hawkins who recalled the various membership recruiting activities she developed to stir interest in CONA participation.
- Theresa McEachern, Nominations Chair reported that 36 votes were distributed for the Chair of the Public Safety Committee. The election was won by Casimiro (Cass) Rael Sr.
- A standing ovation was afforded Will for his year as CONA President and a plaque was presented to him for his excellent service.

NEIGHBORHOOD PRESIDENT'S BRAG NIGHT

- Wildwood reported winning award as "Neighborhood of the Year" from the city.
- Live Oak has expanded their Listbot e-mail network, held a Chili Cookoff, and constructed Holiday Parade Floats for caroling.
- Historic Old Northeast discussed Candlelight Tours, a well organized Crime Watch group, a Time Capsule for student historians in connection with a new sundial and developing plans for the Waterfront Park Centennial.
- Riviera Bay boasted of their voluminous canal trash collections, their annual Police/Fire Heroes Picnics, the Christmas Luminarios lining their streets, award of a Swiftmud Grant, Picnics & Easter Egg Hunts and a 20 boat decorated parade.
- Pasadena/Bear Creek- Massive waterway clean up projects and manual recycling of dumpster collections. Received Partnership and Police Forfeiture Grants.
- Historic Kenwood: The Artists Overlay District effort, growing Facebook readers, growing membership projects, Parade Floats, expanded Crime Watch, Art-In-The-Park, Historic Preservation Collections, very contemporary web site, juried Art Show and started a neighborhood Softball Team.
- Fossil Park- developing new biological programs to control wild ducks.
- Grand Central- Our best year financially, despite recession. Big crime reduction. Filled all empty business properties in neighborhood.
- Heights- City's smallest neighborhood. Needs help for developing a web page. Trying to build a mall park.
- Diston Heights- City's largest neighborhood. Annual Christmas party in addition to sponsored Christmas packages for identified needy families.

OTHER COMMENTS:

- Cathy Wilson Reported on some promising new developments that are not downtown: newly developing live theater freeFall at 7000 Central Avenue.
- Council Member Wengay Newton spoke on progress in dealing with abandoned properties. He also reported on a coalition of 38 cities cooperating on rail system developments studied on a Council trip to Denver. He congratulated President Will Michaels for his excellent service this past year.
- It was announced that Cathy Wilson has been appointed our Newsletter Editor to relieve Mike Gulley, the President-Elect.

Adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Conrad Weiser, Secretary

Police and Citizens Stopping Crime Together

There are many things you can do to keep your own house safe from burglars, such as installing motion sensor outdoor lights, keeping the hedges well trimmed so law breakers don't have a convenient hiding spot and making sure all your doors and windows are locked at all times. However, if someone is determined to break into your home and/or steal your property when they think you are away, they will very likely at least try even if you've done everything possible to safeguard your home.

There is something else you can do. Participating in our neighborhood crime watch program is a great way to deter crime. Neighborhood Crime Watch is one of the most effective and least costly ways to prevent crime and reduce fear. It bonds area residents to help reduce crime and improves relations between police and the communities they serve. One of the most important things to remember about criminals is that they never want to be seen by anyone, because if they are ever caught by the police they won't want someone to be able to identify them. When a criminal knows there is a good chance they are being watched, they will be far more likely to move on and look for an easier target.

A neighborhood watch is a program in which all the people who live in one area agree to watch out for each other. So if one of your neighbors notices a suspicious person hanging around your house, or a car that keeps driving up and down your block, they will notify you and contact the police. Criminals are warned of an active crime watch by signs that are posted prominently in the area. When they see these clear signals that the people in this community are working together to prevent crime, they will know their chances of being caught are much higher and go somewhere else. There is a fund set up by the police department to which, once a year, active crime watch groups can apply to receive these signs free of charge.

To get your own neighborhood watch together, set up a meeting and invite everyone who lives around you as well as your respective Crime Prevention Officer. Try going door to door to either tell people personally or create a small flier that announces the time, location and intent of the meeting. On the night of the meeting, the Crime Prevention Officer will explain to everyone the benefits of working together to watch over each other's property. The officer will be able to offer great tips and training that will help you protect your neighborhood more efficiently.

One final thing that is important to remember is that although people who are part of neighborhood crime watch can help prevent crime, they are not trained to stop a criminal. We want to stress to the members of crime watch that they are not taking on the job of a law enforcement officer, they are working with the rest of their neighbors to keep an eye out for each other. Your crime watch group should work together to help deter crime, warn others of potential danger but never put themselves at risk by trying to stop a crime on their own. If any criminal activity is spotted, the best thing to do is call the police immediately by dialing 911 or the non-emergency number 893-7780.

Contact the Crime Prevention Unit to start a Neighborhood Crime Watch in your neighborhood at 893-7128.

City of St. Petersburg Office on Crime Prevention

[Editor's note: Neighborhoods may request a presentation by the SPPD's Crime Watch officers for one of their meetings even if they do NOT have a city recognized Crime Watch group by calling the same number listed in the article.]



**CONA 2011 Executive
Committee Members**

President

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

1st Vice President

Cathy Wilson - Greater Woodlawn
455-9546 catgwna@knology.net

2nd Vice President

Lillian Baker - Wildwood Heights
743-7463 ebylly7@hotmail.com

Secretary

Conrad Weiser - Americana Cove
522-5008 conrad33702@verizon.net

Treasurer

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

Audit Committee

Cathy Wilson - Greater Woodlawn
455-9546 catgwna@knology.net

CONA Leadership Committee

Ingrid Comberg - Historic Uptown
894-3048

Court Watch Committee

Donna Law - Central Oak Park
lawholdingsinc1@yahoo.com

**Land Development & Historic
Resources Committee**

Monica Abbott - Jungle Terrace
rabbott100@aol.com

Membership Committee

Andrea Hildebrand - Bartlett Park
643-7189 hildebran@gmail.com

Nominating Committee

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

Public Safety Committee

Cass Rael - North Kenwood
744-9560 cvraelsr@hotmail.com

Immediate Past President

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

OTHER CONA COMMITTEES

City Budget Review Committee

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

Codes Committee

Kai Warren - Historic Roser Park
821-9609 kaistpete@gmail.com

Energy & Environment Committee

Tim Martin - Historic Kenwood
251-9979 timothymartin@yahoo.com

Frequently Called Numbers

Animal Control: 582-2600
City Council: 893-7117
Codes Compliance: 893-7373
County Commission: 464-3377
Mayor's Action Line: 893-7111
Neighborhood Partnership
Office: 892-5141
Sanitation: 893-7334
SPPD: 893-7780 (non-emergency)

Florida Abuse Hotline: 800-962-2873

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

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Citizen of the Month – Dorothy Gilliam

Our January Citizen of the Month award goes to Dorothy Gilliam for her tireless work with the 13th Street Heights Neighborhood Association, her history of crime fighting and her community spirit. She is a jewel in St. Petersburg's crown and we all are very glad to know and work with her.

Did You Know...

The CONA website has lots of information?

There are back issues of the CONA Newsletter containing Board of Director's meeting minutes. Our By-Laws are posted on the site as are copies of CONA position papers on a number of issues. Find out what our site holds by going to: <http://www.conastpete.org>