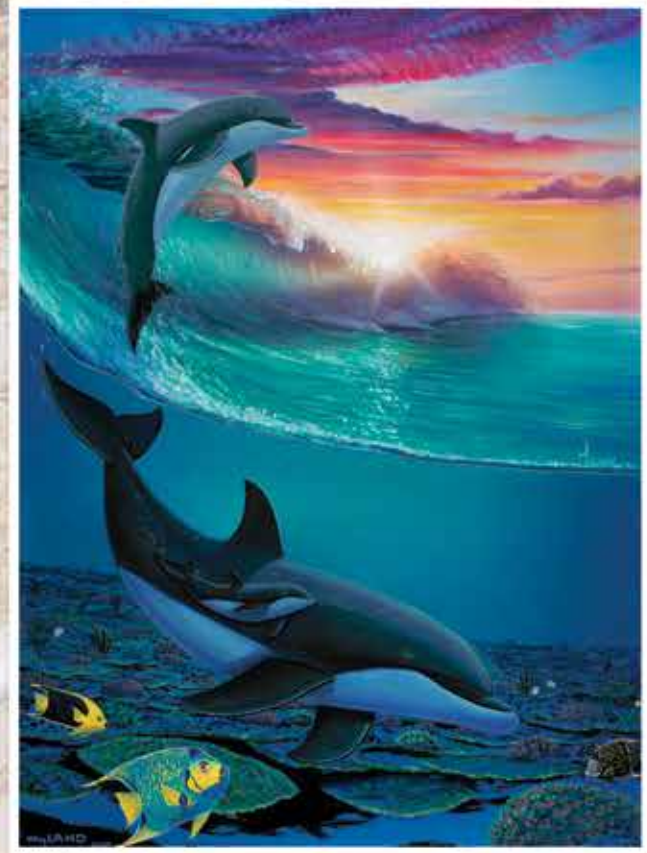
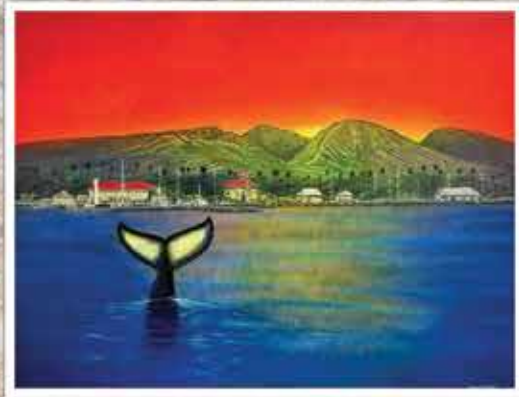




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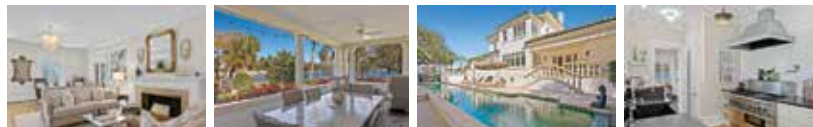
Feature Properties



1800 North Shore Dr NE

This Palm Beach style home is one of St. Petersburg's most iconic properties. Situated on over a half-acre of land with 360ft of open waterfront consisting of FOUR water lots, this remarkable property reveals a tropical alley of towering palms and tended flower beds of North Shore Park and the wide boulevard along Tampa Bay. Enjoy magnificent water views from many rooms in the house. The 60-foot heated lap pool separates the main house from the guest house which is above the 2-car garage. This landmark home, at the epicenter of the historic Old Northeast neighborhood.

5 BD | 5.5 BA | 4,527 SF **\$6,300,000**



4019 Bayshore Blvd NE

You haven't seen a house built and finished like this on the open water of Tampa Bay. The 100' long dock offers great views of the Sunshine Skyway Bridge and miles of open water. A beautiful new seawall, 16,000 lb. boat lift, dock lighting, and under water fish lights all showcase the waterfront lifestyle. Countless updates were completed 2021-2023. Every detail, each space and all the features and amenities are so well thought out and custom-designed. This home is truly unique in every sense.

4 BD | 5 BA | 5,149 SF **\$5,500,000**



224 Toledo Way NE

This 2015 custom home has just undergone 8 months of renovations and \$750K+ in high end updates that transformed this property into an amazing single story coastal contemporary dream house. An ideal location on Snell Isle, Toledo Way NE has a great elevation (never flooding or water pooling) and is lined with other gorgeous multi-million dollar homes. Just a block to Brightwaters Blvd makes it THE IDEAL location and house for a buyer that wants top of the line everything.

5 BD | 3 BA | 3,200 SF **\$2,995,000**



12416 Gulf Blvd

For anyone who has long been drawn to living on Florida's sandy white beaches, this is your dream come true! Located just steps from the pristine beaches of the Gulf of Mexico, this home is surrounded by a lovely seaside community on Treasure Island and just 20 minutes to downtown St. Pete. With meticulous finishes and updates completed by the owner (owned since 2013), you will be wowed by every single space making this indoor outdoor living compound a PERFECT "10"!

2 BD | 1.5 BA | 994 SF **\$1,250,000**

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2121 Bayou Grande Blvd NE
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2610 Coffee Pot Blvd NE
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Spring Cleaning

For various reasons over the past few months, I've neglected our house. Closets are in disarray; weeds are threatening to overtake the yard. The office and garage have become chaotic catch-alls. It's long past time to do something about it and in order to procrastinate those miserable tasks a little longer, I got to researching the origins of spring cleaning.



An actual photo of our garage. Yes, I know it's a disaster.

At first, it seemed obvious. It makes sense, especially in colder climates where folks have been cooped up all winter, to air out the house once the season changes. As one internet article noted, "it's warm enough for windows to be open, but not so warm that there are bugs."

Well, that obviously doesn't apply to Florida. But there are many global traditions that feature spring purging and cleaning, including Norwruz, the Persian New Year. Celebrated particularly in Iran, the two-week holiday has myriad traditions, including "shaking the house," a deep cleaning of everything in the home before the festivities. In Jewish traditions, Passover comes with a mandate to scour the house of every crumb of leavened food and lends itself to a good house cleaning. Catholics conduct a thorough church cleaning before Easter; Eastern Orthodox traditions have a "clean week" before Lent, which applies to body as well as the home.

Whatever you call it, this is the time of year to come clean and make way for something new. That's what spring is all about, right? New beginnings.


In this issue, you'll find variations on that theme, from blooming art to planting your own Florida paradise; from forging new links in the community to celebrating the next stages for our city's historic places. Stories that speak to the irrepressible nature of life.

And, when you're done reading this issue, remember that newspaper is great for cleaning windows.

~ Shelly

Have a story you'd like to share? Email me anytime at editor@northeastjournal.org.

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ADVERTISING
Susan Seta-Williams
(727) 259-3149
northeastjournal@gmail.com

EDITORIAL
Shelly Wilson, *Managing Editor*
editor@northeastjournal.org
Julie L. Johnston, *Copy Editing*

ART DIRECTION/PRODUCTION
Julie L. Johnston, *Ad Design/Layout*
JohnstonGraphicDesigner@gmail.com

DISTRIBUTION
Jamie Mayo, *Distribution/Subscriptions*
distribution@northeastjournal.org

WRITERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Abby Baker	Amanda Hagood
M.Shackelford Burns	Jon Kile
Jeannie Carlson	Will Michaels
Rick Carson	Brandy Stark
Mary Fletcher	Janan Talafer
Laura Flint	Shelly Wilson

PHOTOGRAPHY
M. Shackelford Burns
Brandy Stark
NEJ contributors and the community at large

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MEET THE WRITERS

We would like to sincerely thank and introduce our contributors. The time and talent they dedicate to writing about good people, good places, and good things happening is what makes the *Northeast Journal* the quality publication that our readers have come to expect and love. Join our team by contacting editor@northeastjournal.org.

Abby Baker is a Tampa-based journalist for local media. She currently lives in Seminole Heights, but writes stories about Gulfport and St. Petersburg communities. When she's not on deadline, she likes to paint, travel and spend time with her two very chubby cats.



M. Shackelford Burns is a writer and photographer originally from the northeast of Scotland, now resettled and happy to call the fair city of St. Pete his new home. After a 32-year career as a professional cameraman and filmmaker, he is now pursuing his lifelong dreams of writing, playing music, and eating fresh fruit daily.



Jeannie Carlson is a correspondent for Tampa Bay Newspapers, Inc. as seen in *Tampa Bay Times*, *TBNWeekly.com* and *Beach Beacon*; an adjunct English professor; and a writer at *Examiner.com* ("Swedish Cooking with a Southern Accent"). She has been a resident of and inspired by the ONE since 2000. [JeannieCarlson.com]



Rick Carson has lived in St. Pete since 2001, after a career journey that took him from national politics to the innkeeper of a B&B – from the cesspools of Washington to cleaning guestroom toilets (ask him if there is any difference). [rickcarson1@gmail.com.]



Mary Fletcher was a *St. Petersburg Times* advertising graphic designer for 20-years. She is president and designer for The Florida Aviation Historical Society; was the Board secretary of Flight 2014; and piloted for the Civil Air Patrol search-and-rescues and Sundown Patrols. Mary is active in the Ninety-Nines and the Florida Suncoast Chapter.



Laura Flint, a Tennessee native, moved to St. Pete in 2017. After obtaining her master's in literature, she began a career in youth sports and recreation. For Preserve the 'Burg, she began spending time with volunteers, planning events, and writing about the special places and neighborhoods in St. Pete. Laura lives in south St. Pete with her husband and two children.



Amanda Hagood teaches courses in environmental humanities at Eckerd College. She also contributes to *The Gabber Newspaper*, *Creative Loafing Tampa Bay*, and *Bay Soundings*.



Jonathan Kile moved to St. Pete in 2001. A rare genetic condition forced him to give up a career in sales in favor of a full-time position as father, husband, and writer. He blogs about his family travels and advocates for awareness of vascular Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome at dontmakemeturnthisvanaround.com. He's on the board of literary nonprofit Keep St. Pete Lit.



Will Michaels is retired as executive director of the History Museum and has served as president of St. Petersburg Preservation and vice president of the Dr. Carter G. Woodson Museum of African American History. He is the author of *The Making of St. Petersburg*. [wmichaels2@tampabay.rr.com]



Brandy Stark is an artist, writer, and educator who lives in Crescent Heights. She is known for her hand-wrapped wire metal sculptures, fascination with local ghost stories, lore, and legends, and her immense love of all things pug. When not working, she spends time with her pug pack, pocket pets, and bearded dragon.



Janan Talafer A long-time Snell Isle resident, Janan was the editor of the *Northeast Journal* for many years, and still enjoys writing about people and places in St. Petersburg. She loves swing dancing, blues music, and gardening, even when the weeds threaten to overtake the yard. [janantalafer@gmail.com]



Shelly Wilson is (almost) a Florida native who tries very hard to love her state in the summer. She has been a writer and editor for 20 years, recently at the *Gabber Newspaper*, and now as the new editor of the *Journal*. She loves to read, travel, kayak, and share great stories. She lives in St. Pete with her wife and an obstinate dog. [wilson.raechelle@gmail.com]



Have You Found a Warbleson?

Bronze Bird Scavenger Hunt Down Three After Ten Years

Ten years ago, the Warbleson family – Daddy, Mama, and six youngsters – arrived in St. Petersburg. At the time of their arrival, they were quite the celebrities. Mayor Rick Kriseman celebrated them and the *Tampa Bay Times* featured them in an article on Christmas Day, 2014. The story goes that the youngest Warbleson, Buddy, got lost somewhere along



Beach Drive and the family fanned out to find him. Mama Warbleson looked at the Vinoy, and Daddy at the Birchwood. Betty, Bethany, Brian, Beatrice, and Benny took up positions at North Straub Park, South Straub Park, the Museum of Fine Arts, the 200 block of Beach Drive, and the Museum of History, respectively. Brochures were printed and distributed to encourage people to look for all eight members.

The Warblesons are not people, of course. They are little bronze warblers, bird sculptures “hidden” in plain sight along or near Beach Drive, and were the brainchild of local high school student, Molly Doyle. She thought of the idea for a “Birds on Beach” scavenger hunt and enlisted the support of the city and the various locations where the little bronze birds were to perch. Donna Gordon, a renowned local sculptor, honored in 2012 as the Raymond James Financial Woman Artist of the Year, designed and produced the casts. Each of the eight birds is unique and its features exemplify the places where the birds are located, such as the mustache on Buddy at the Dali, and the paintbrush in Brian’s beak at the MFA.

Unfortunately, only five of the family members remain on their original perches. The first Warblesons to disappear were those in the two Straub parks. It’s believed they were removed by the city, but their whereabouts are unknown. The remaining six family members stayed in place until recently: Mama Warbleson disappeared during recent renovations to the front of the Vinoy; Daddy Warbleson was “birdnapped” this past November from the historic Lantern Lane mailbox in front of the Birchwood.



Fortunately, Daddy was discovered in the bushes a few weeks later, a little bruised and with a missing leg. The crew at the Birchwood was able to mend him and he has reclaimed his position outside.

At one time, searching for the eight Warblesons was a fun way to explore the Beach Drive area and learn from the website or the free brochures about the rich history of the area, but it seems now most people don’t know about the scavenger hunt. Recently, however, Birds on Beach brochures were edited and reprinted, and are available at the St. Pete Store and Visitors Center on 2nd Avenue North. And since the original casts by Donna Gordon are still available, hope remains that local businesses, museums, or other entities might be interested in highlighting their organization with a clone the lost three and restore the Warbleson family to its original eight.

In the meantime, five of the warblers are still in their original locations after almost ten years and locals and visitors are invited to embark on this “bird quest” adventure to find Daddy, Brian, Beatrice, Benny and, of course, Buddy. ●

~ Peter Rowell

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Spring is Blossoming in the Arts



Photos courtesy of the St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts

Brandy Stark

Spring is springing in the 'Burg which means that it is time for the annual Art in Bloom event at the Museum of Fine Arts! As part of our local landscape, this exhibit presents a living four-day floral art installation pairing some of the Bay area's finest floral artists with works of art throughout the museum.

What makes this event so special is its unique combination of art and nature and the way it creates an immersive experience for museum visitors. The pieces add a multi-sensory encounter for those who attend. Intermingled with the scent of flowers is a contrast of colors, shapes, and textures.

"Flower arrangements have the captivating ability to introduce a fresh perspective to the art, drawing in a new and appreciative gaze," says Darcy Schuller, director of marketing and communications for the museum. "It encourages the viewer to look longer, understand how the flower designer interpreted the art: Are they mimicking the same colors? Are certain shapes being identified? Are they using the vessel in a creative way? Everyone has an emotional connection with flowers, and it pulls the viewer in and enhances their engagement with the artwork. After attending, the event swiftly transforms into an annual favorite, a must-see experience that draws visitors back year after year. We consistently report record attendance during this four-day display each year."

Much of the coordination for the event falls to the members of The Margaret Acheson Stuart Society. Initially founded in 1962, this nonprofit organization



supports the MFA working to stimulate public interest and participation in museum activities. The society hosts several large fundraising events each year that help support major exhibitions, art acquisitions, art restorations, educational programs, capital improvements, and operating expenses. The first outreach with this specialized exhibit manifested in 1997 with the first Art in Bloom.

"One of our members, the late Mary B. Perry, a gardener and avid Ikebana designer, learned about a similar floral event at another museum," says Darcy. "There are a lot of moving parts and supporting events. The MFA's guild, The Stuart Society, plans, organizes, and helps execute the many happenings of Art in Bloom."

The amount of work that goes into this temporary living exhibit is extensive. The museum curator selects

specific artworks throughout the museum. A group of 40 professional florists, members of garden and Ikebana clubs, along with skilled DIY flower arrangers, bring their expertise to interpret these works of art through floral compositions. The floral designers submit their preference for which work to reinterpret into bloom, thus creating a unique exhibit each time.

As any good art historian knows, flowers not only represent beauty in art, but are also a reminder of the ephemeral – like the blossoms, this exhibit only lasts for a limited time. These floral interpretations will be displayed in the museum's galleries and gardens Thursday, April 4 through Sunday, April 7, and are included with the cost of museum admission.

Additionally, there are also three supporting events. Flowers After Hours – "Flamingle" (Thursday, April 4, 6 to 9 pm) allows attendees to see a preview of the floral arrangement in the galleries. A live Caribbean band will play and hors d'oeuvres are included.

The Art in Bloom "Palm Beach Retreat" Luncheon will be held at the St. Petersburg Yacht Club beginning at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, April 5. Tickets include a formal sit-down lunch along with an entertaining program by celebrity florist Canann Marshall.

Conversations with the Designers will be held on Sunday, April 7, from 2 to 4 pm at the MFA. This event provides an intimate opportunity to meet the Art in Bloom floral designers who will discuss their individual interpretations. ●

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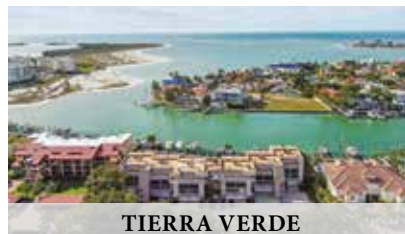
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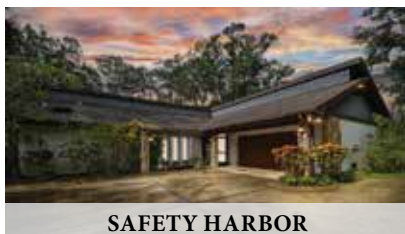
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AROUND TOWN

Louis Armstrong's Daughter Stirs Audience with Powerful Film



Louis Armstrong's daughter, Sharon Preston-Folta, is the subject and star of Little Satchmo.

"The poignant narrative invites viewers to contemplate the profound impact of fame on personal relationships and the human desire for acceptance and belonging."

On January 30, a sold-out crowd at Studio@620 had the rare pleasure of screening the Emmy-winning PBS film Little Satchmo, followed by a talk with the film's subject and star, Louis Armstrong's "secret" daughter, Sharon Preston-Folta.

Green Book of Tampa Bay and the Woodson African American Museum presented the event, which was sponsored by the Pinellas County Urban League. Therapist Dr. LaDonna Butler moderated the post-screening "fireside chat," which packed a powerful emotional punch.

"I was unprepared for the magic that happened during the whole event," said Green Book of Tampa Bay co-founder Hillary Van Dyke. "It truly led to healing for some people, and I can't thank Sharon enough for being brave enough to create a film that would allow others to process their own traumas and maybe find their own voices to heal."

"Little Satchmo is a poignant portrayal of the life of Louis Armstrong's daughter, a little girl burdened by the weight of her father's fame and unable to openly acknowledge their relationship.

The film delves into the emotional complexities of navigating identity and connection in the shadow of a larger-than-life figure," said participant Dr. Loretta Caldwell Thompson. "The poignant narrative invites viewers to contemplate the profound impact of fame on personal relationships and the human desire for acceptance and belonging."

The screening and chat turned into a memorable, even cathartic experience, say participants and organizers, inspired not only by the film's themes, but by the uniqueness of this community.

"St. Petersburg is a very connected and involved community, especially with the arts and storytelling. This was the perfect setting. Different from any panel I've seen," said Sierra Umberger, associate producer for the film. "I had a few conversations with audience members who felt very touched by the film, some folks even holding back or shedding tears.... I think the conversation about the impact and interpretation of the film from viewers will have the conversation continuing for a while." ♦



A still from the movie Little Satchmo.

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Old Boats Give New Life to a Worthy Cause

Jon Kile

With its waterfront lined with masts bobbing in calm water, ropes clinking against metal like windchimes, St. Petersburg has a rich sailing culture. The bay offers a large, protected playground for experts and beginners alike. World champions and Olympic medalists have called these waters home. But not all winners are the fastest. The St. Petersburg Classic Regatta is a beloved tradition that is about more than sailing.

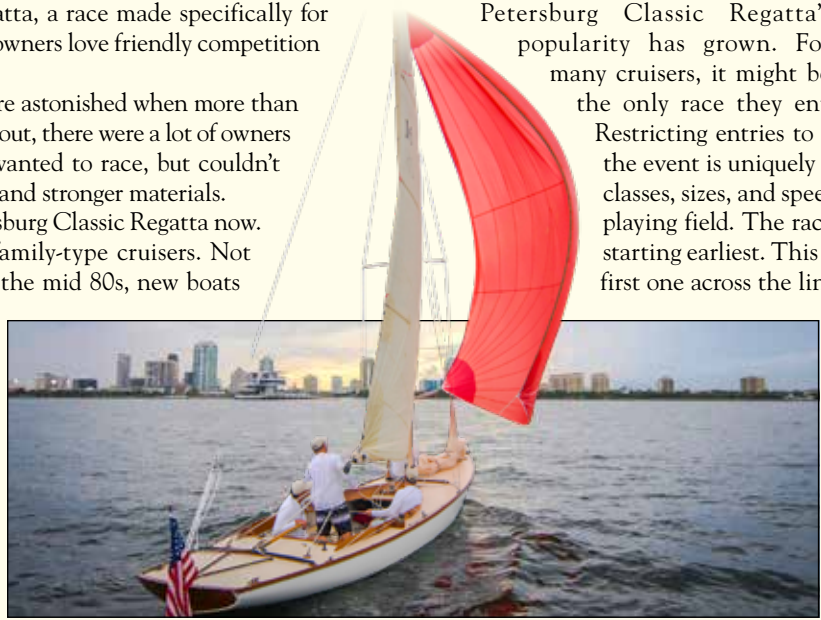
In a world where technology is rapidly changing the sport, a group of dedicated sailors has created a unique way to hold on to traditions. Fourteen years ago, the St. Petersburg Sailing Association recognized the challenge that many sailboat owners had keeping up with newer, faster boats made with new materials. So, they created the St. Petersburg Classic Regatta, a race made specifically for boats twenty years and older – vessels whose owners love friendly competition but might not be the fastest on the water.

Organizers of that first Classic Regatta were astonished when more than 70 classic boats registered to compete. It turns out, there were a lot of owners of boats built in the 1970s and 1980s who wanted to race, but couldn't compete with boats built with newer, lighter, and stronger materials.

Rich Treinan helps organize the St. Petersburg Classic Regatta now. He said, "Older sailing boats were mostly family-type cruisers. Not many were built to be racing boats. During the mid 80s, new boats with lots of hi-tech materials became available at a lower price. Serious sailors gravitated toward the hi-tech boats. This split the community and the family cruisers couldn't compete."

Images of John Candy in the film *Summer Rental* come to mind, winning a race in Boca Ciega Bay with his extra-large Chicago Blackhawks jersey hoisted atop the mast, giving his family the extra sailing power they needed.

Originally dubbed the "Good Old Boat



Chief, winner of Most Beautiful Boat in 2023.

Regatta," those early races also created an opportunity to give back to the community. Organizers formed a bond with Neighborly Care Network, and began donating the proceeds from the regatta to Meal on Wheels of Pinellas. The 2023 regatta in October raised \$59,000 bringing the total over the years to more than \$260,000. Treinen likes to joke that they are "raising a boat-load of money" for people in need.

Heading into its 15th year, the St. Petersburg Classic Regatta's popularity has grown. For many cruisers, it might be

the only race they enter all year, and they keep coming back. Restricting entries to boats older than 20 years isn't the only way the event is uniquely competitive and fun. With boats of different classes, sizes, and speeds a handicapping system is used to level the playing field. The race start is staggered, with slower-rated vessels starting earliest. This means that regardless of the type of boat, the first one across the line is the winner.



Richard Boler and Sydney Frasca, Good Neighbor Award winners in 2019 and 2023.

Coming in first isn't the only way to win. Recognition is given to the most beautiful sailboat in the competition, most stylish crew, oldest boat, most unusual boat, and oldest and youngest skippers. The most prestigious award is the Good Neighbor Trophy, which goes to the top fundraising team. This plaque is displayed at the St. Pete Yacht Club with each year's winner engraved.

Meals on Wheels of Pinellas County is one of the oldest federally funded Meals

"He Gave Me My Life Back"

St. Pete native John R. had been living with low back and leg pain from spinal stenosis. "My legs and back were in extreme pain and my doctors told me the only solution would be surgery." Then he met St. Petersburg's Dr. Matthew Mann.

Spinal stenosis, or narrowing, is often the result of osteoarthritis, or 'wear and tear' arthritis, that can pinch the nerves as they come out of the spinal cord. John explained that the first few steps every morning were excruciating. It had progressed to the point that his legs would give out occasionally when he got up to walk to the kitchen for his morning coffee. "I can't live the rest of my life being scared to get out of bed in the morning."

John was experiencing sciatica pain and leg weakness which are the most common signs in people suffering from spinal stenosis. The symptoms of spinal stenosis often start slowly and worsen over time. John explains that his symptoms of low back and leg pain started 10 to 15 years ago but were mild and easily managed at the time. By the time he decided to get help with his condition John stated, "it feels like someone is stabbing a hot knife into my butt and then my leg just goes weak."

Unfortunately, John's story is all too common. In the U.S. alone, over 2.5 million people suffer with spinal stenosis. This condition mostly affects people over 50, but those over 65 years of age tend to have more severe symptoms.

If you are unfortunate enough to be facing the same disheartening prognosis, the following realities may be familiar. You are scared to get out of bed because you know the pain is just a step away. You have difficulty walking, shopping, or doing activities like running or pickleball. You have changed your life to accommodate the pain or the fear of falling from doing too much at once.

Your doctors have told you the only solutions are either medicines that don't seem to work or a major surgery that cannot guarantee you'll feel better. It is important to know that you have proven options that can help without the need for harsh drugs or invasive surgeries.

Dr. Mann, the founder of St. Petersburg Acupuncture and Integrative Medicine uses the science of acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine with other integrative techniques that assist in increasing blood flow and reducing inflammation to help alleviate the symptoms associated with spinal stenosis.

"I'm excited to wake up in the morning again. I'm 80 years old and I'm back to riding my bike and playing drums again. I can join my wife now for her nightly neighborhood walks that I had to stop years ago. I didn't really have much faith in acupuncture being able to help my pain, but I had to try something. I was scared of getting a surgery that didn't help my friend with the same condition." John states, "I regret I didn't try acupuncture sooner. I lived with the pain for so many years, when in just a couple of months, Dr. Mann had me feeling 20 years younger."

John's back to working on his hot rod, playing drums in a local band, and enjoying nightly walks with his wife. She even personally thanked Dr. Mann for giving her husband his life back.



Dr. Mann, DAOM AP, has been practicing East Asian medicine for over a decade. He focuses on using acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine while integrating other scientifically proven techniques to offer non-surgical, non-drug options for people with chronic pain and complex chronic conditions. Dr. Mann specializes in chronic cases of pain and internal medicine, especially cases that have been deemed 'hopeless' or 'untreatable'.

If you've missed too many pickleball matches or weekend markets because of pain or other chronic conditions, it's time to call Dr. Mann and the team at St. Petersburg Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine.

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on Wheels programs in the country. But as food costs rise, federal funding alone doesn't come close to covering the need. Susan MacIntyre with Neighborly Care Network explained how important this event is for the organization, which can't afford to dedicate staff to special events.

"When the Sailing Association decided to add a charitable aspect to their Classic Regatta we were lucky that a Meals on Wheels volunteer had a connection to their committee. Neighborly Senior Care Network is a lean organization," MacIntyre explained. "We do not have an event coordinator on staff. We focus on individual donations and grants to help pay for more than 500,000 meals served each year in Pinellas County. Since the St. Petersburg Yacht Club is part of the event, we can use their wonderful club for the after-party to add to the fun and attract more guests and sponsors. All because the sailors acted on the idea of a Meals on Wheels volunteer." ♦



White Hawk, previous most beautiful boat winner.



Al Lima and the Crew of Jade, a winner of the Good Neighbor award in 2018 and 2020.

Interested in being a part of the 15th Annual St. Petersburg Classic Regatta? Reach out to Rich Treinen at reinenrich@aol.com. The St. Pete Sailing Association membership includes entry into all of cruises and races, as well as educational seminars, and other social events, and boat ownership isn't required. For more, visit spsa.us. To learn more about other Neighborly services or to volunteer for Meals on Wheels, visit neighborly.org.

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Emily Rivera and Marc Wagner have worked at Harvey's for 15 years. They met at the restaurant and married last November.



Wood planks of the sundeck ceiling saved from the Soreno Hotel



Harvey's sits nestled under its iconic green awning.

They wanted to eat, drink, and be with friends and family. We went to a lot of great restaurants back then, Pepin and Rollande et Pierre were staples."

This strong tie to community stuck with Dan Jr., and as he grew up, he found himself in the hospitality business working at several local establishments, including the Edgewater Beach Hotel, The Princess Martha, and Rollande et Pierre. With a background in the restaurant business, Dan Harvey Jr. knew he wanted to open his own place, and as time went on, he found the perfect spot.

The plaza in which Harvey's sits today was once owned by Dan Jr.'s uncle. It was called Coffee Pot Plaza and was constructed in 1953. Dan Jr. recalls, "It was the original shopping center for Pantry Pride and one of, if not the, original shopping centers in St. Pete." Dan Jr. was able to open his restaurant here, with an unusually large kitchen space or "back of house." Dan Jr. had the space, now he wanted to make it worthy of his vision, which was to represent the age of the building – to make it feel like it had been around forever, and in doing so offer visitors a step back into St. Petersburg history.

With the help of his family, Dan Jr. did just that. He recalls, "My mother, sisters, aunt, uncle, brothers-in-law – everyone was so active in making this restaurant, but the guiding force through all of these years was and is Dad really keeping an eye on everybody and being the solid steady man, always here." Dan Jr. refers to his father as a "bookkeeper extraordinaire," adding that "at 96 years old now, his mind is sharper than mine. Dad is and always has been steady with everyone and everything. If it wasn't for him, I just don't know where we would be."

When Dan Harvey Sr. retired 40 years ago, he immediately set up shop at Harvey's grill, helping in every way imaginable. You can still find him working in a small office in the back, manually inputting daily sales numbers into a ledger. He often keeps the door open so that he can continue to keep an eye on everything and everyone.

So it was, with the full support and help of his family, that Dan Jr. opened Harvey's 4th Street Grill on April 1, 1984.

A Place in Time

While locals love the menu, Harvey's is also essentially a museum, chock full of area history. The front and back doors of the building are from the Sunshine School, which opened in Pass-a-grille in 1926. When that building was demolished in February of 1984, Dan Jr. found a way to keep a bit of it alive by restoring the doors that once hung at the school. He says that he scraped away layer upon layer of paint to get down to the original Florida Cypress wood. He also managed to get chalkboards and even some pine flooring from the school, which can be seen at the restaurant.

When you enter, your eyes are immediately drawn to the giant, raised bar at the center of the dining room. This is no accident; Harvey says that his idea was for the bar to be the feature of the restaurant. "It is the linchpin of Harvey's, and the red rail makes it stand out. The rail is an original from Disston Junior High." As you walk to the bar, don't forget to look down at the restored maple flooring taken from the ballroom of the Vinoy Hotel. Harvey recalls, "I pulled these floors up



Dan Harvey Jr., right, with Scottie Gross, Harvey's longest-serving employee.

myself. They were going to throw the floors away because of water damage, but I was able to save them and use them here."

Heading to the back of the restaurant you'll cross some of the building's original tile from 40 years ago. Then you enter the sundeck, with its beautiful, wood-plank ceiling patterned by stamping and salvaged from the historic Soreno Hotel. Dan Jr.'s niece and restaurant manager, Rosie Meyer, recalls the day she helped her uncle with these wood planks: "I was 12 years old and it was the dead of summer and hot. We were in a warehouse piecing the wood together that makes up the ceiling of the sundeck. I was complaining and Dan told me, 'Nope, this is going in the restaurant, and we are going to finish this.' So, we matched boards

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in order to line up the stamps on the wood. It was like a puzzle, but it turned out great." The hotel, which was demolished on January 25, 1992, quite literally went out with a bang when it was blown up for *Lethal Weapon 3*.

Harvey's eccentric and plentiful décor covers almost every inch of wall space with many nods to St. Pete and a place in time that no longer exists. Dan Jr. looks around his restaurant and says, "We've collected almost every picture and item hung on these walls from around the city. We even have glass blocks and an office door from Webb's City," the popular local drug store opened in 1925 by James Earl "Doc" Webb.

Dan Jr. feels like he did justice to his vision of the restaurant. "The concept fits the neighborhood. It fits the history of our city. You come in here and it's like a favorite flannel shirt you have had forever. It's what you know and it's comfortable. It's a place to come to hang out and celebrate and recognize things from the past."

Howlin' at The Moon

The phrase "full moon party" is synonymous with the history of Harvey's. Every month around the full moon the restaurant throws a party that always includes music, live Maine lobster, and drink specials. How did this come about? Dan Jr. says "we have never missed out on the opportunity to have a party!"

About six weeks after the 1984 opening, Dan Jr. decided he wanted to throw a party to thank everyone. He got a keg and served a lobster dinner with live music in the background. It was a night of gratitude and more importantly, fun. Dan Jr. recalls, "If people wanted to scream and yell, well it's a full moon party and they can do whatever they want!" The next day, Harvey's went back to being a cozy little restaurant, but the community loved it and wanted more. Harvey's made it a monthly party, and everyone kept showing up. Dan Jr. reminisces: "Our customers had so much fun. There would be a line down to the grocery store doors. Today, well, it's not quite like it used to be, but 500 moons later and we are still having them. Full moon parties are an original."



The Harvey family: Carly Mertz, Dan Harvey Jr., Dan Harvey Sr., Michael Meyer, Rosie Meyer, George Stovall (in yellow), Jane Stovall, Briant Wildes, and Joey Wildes.

The Harvey's Community

While the success of Harvey's ultimately goes back to the Harvey family and their commitment to Dan Jr.'s vision, they all point to the staff and the camaraderie that comes from being part of the Harvey's team. Some of the staff have been there 15 to 25 years, and others since day one. Dan Jr. introduced me to the "new guys," who laughed and said they had been there three or four years. Dan Jr. says the staff are like family – and staff return the love, using words like family and community, with one member calling Dan Jr. "iconic – he's a legend."

While talking about the success of Harvey's, Dan Jr. and Rosie both comment on the St. Pete community. Dan Jr. applauds the neighborhood: "It is the best in the city, and I love seeing everyone in here." Says Rosie,

"We are very fortunate. We are a spot for anyone in St. Pete, and we have a great, loyal customer base. We are nothing without our community. The impact they have on us is so special."

Dan Jr. describes his restaurant as "a place in the neighborhood that you can come to talk to everybody, say whatever's on your mind, listen to what other people have to say, and just chat." It has been that way since April 1, 1984. Harvey's 4th Street Grill has created a space for friends to meet, family get-togethers, celebrations, work meetings, and of course, a place to party. After 40 years, Dan Harvey Jr. and his family see no end in sight. ●

Harvey's hosts its 40th Anniversary Party on April 5, from 6:30 to 9:30. More at harveys4thstreet.com.

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A Smile to Remember: "Jovial Jay"

Jay Marshall, an Old Northeast resident and neighborhood champion for 17 years, passed away on January 8. Jay served our country for 30 years in the US Department of Justice in Washington, DC, and 23 years in the US Army, achieving the rank of Lt. Colonel before "retiring" to St. Pete. If you had the pleasure of knowing Jay, he was a neighbor with a contagious smile and laugh, great sense of humor, and a guy everyone wanted to be around.



Showing kindness, spreading joy, and lending a helping hand came easy to Jay. He served on the HONNA Board of Directors as a member and eventually as president. He assisted Maureen Stafford in spearheading the neighborhood Crime Watch program, chaired porch parties, was our jovial bartender at the Candlelight Tour of Homes

document parties and was on the tour committee from 2008 to 2021. Locally, he volunteered on many boards – with CONA (Council of Neighborhood Associations), St. Petersburg Commission on Aging and Better Living for Seniors – and ushered at the Cathedral Church of Saint Peter.

On a personal level, he founded House to Home Relocation company in 2010 with his wife of 25 years, Barbara, where for almost 10 years they helped so many elderly transition from their homes into senior living. Jay was blessed to have two children and four grandchildren and enjoyed traveling the world with Barbara. He loved the Old NE, mingling at porch parties, and sitting on his front porch with a good book in hand, chatting with neighbors as they walked by, and watching the butterflies.

Thank you, Jay Marshall, for your service to our country and neighborhood and for the kindness and laughter you shared with so many. We will miss you, your smile, and grateful heart.

~ Sharon Kantner



Palladium to Host Neighborhood Meeting

The Wednesday, March 20, HONNA quarterly meeting will take place at the Palladium Theater, 253 5th Avenue N., beginning at 7 pm (note the meeting is *not* on the usual Monday). Parking is available in the lot to the east of the building.

Executive Director Paul Wilborn will present meeting attendees with an historical overview of the grand theater as well as plans for a major renovation of the 100-year-old venue. Attendees will also be treated to a tour of the building.



HONNA Annual Yard Sale

An Old Northeast tradition and a favorite benefit for HONNA members, the annual HONNA yard sale is set to happen Saturday, March 16, from 8 am to noon. Your location and items for sale will be listed on a neighborhood map, which will be available online or the map can be picked up the morning of the event at Westminster Palms, 939 Beach Drive, in the side parking lot (follow the signs).

HONNA members can also take advantage of secure document shredding on that day from 9 am to 1:30 pm. The document shredder truck will also be located at 939 Beach Drive in the side parking lot. If you aren't a HONNA member, now is a great time to join or sign up on the day of the event at Westminster Palms. To register for the yard sale or to join HONNA, go to HONNA.org. Please complete the registration form by March 15 to list your address with major items to be placed on the map.

A Goodwill truck will be available in the Westminster Palms side lot from 10 am to 3 pm to accept yard sale items that weren't sold.

Easter Egg Hunt and Bunny Appearance



Hundreds of colorful Easter Eggs filled with prizes will be waiting for Old Northeast children at the annual HONNA Easter Egg Hunt at Northeast Exchange Coffee Pot Park, 1st Street NE at 30th Avenue, on Saturday, March 30, starting at 10 am. Rumor has it the Easter Bunny plans to make an appearance and will be the perfect companion for family photos. Kids of all ages are encouraged to attend, and there will be a special area just for toddlers. In addition to the Easter eggs, light refreshments will be served. So, bring the whole family and celebrate this ONE tradition. And don't be late as the eggs go quickly!

Upcoming Porch Parties

Neighbors will gather on a Friday between 7:30 and 10 pm to meet new residents and reconnect with ones we've missed seeing. Light refreshments and water will be provided, but guests are encouraged to BYOB. For more information, visit HONNA.org/events. Porch parties are a benefit for HONNA members and their guests. Non-member neighborhood residents are also welcome to attend, in which case a small donation at the door or online is appreciated to help defray party expenses.



Upcoming PPs: March 15 (St. Patrick's Day party), Chris and Deidre McCabe, 556 17th Avenue NE; April 19, Evey and John Schweig, 176 26th Avenue N. ●



In an effort to honor Old Northeast homeowners for preserving or updating their home or property and investing to keep the character and history of their homes intact, HONNA recognizes them with the Neighborhood STAR Award.

Here are the STARS for March and April: 455 10th Avenue NE, Arthur Garretson; 110 30th Avenue N, Lauren Childers.

Watch for new STARS in the neighborhood monthly, and you'll be able to find them posted on HONNA.org in addition to HONNA's Facebook page. Have a home to honor? Send the information to Charleen McGrath at cfmcgrath@msn.com. ●



HONNA Flags

HONNA offers a variety of flags that you can purchase to display your love for The ONE. The five choices come in several color combinations: hunter green, burgundy, patriotic, diversity, and the new centennial flag and garden banner. You can find them at HONNA.org/shop.

HONNA Projects in 2023

It was a very busy 2023 for HONNA. Here's a look at just a few of the many highlights that helped make our neighborhood so unique. HONNA...

- worked with the city to get new palm trees planted along Coffee Pot Bayou
- painted all of the Old Northeast gateway monuments and headstones and enlisted local artist Chad Mize to put his special touch on the one at 5th Avenue NE and Beach Drive
- held spring and fall clean-ups in North Shore Park; over 350 pounds of trash was collected
- planted over three dozen native trees along public rights-of-way to promote and enhance our beautiful tree canopy; working with the city's Urban Forestry Department to continue our tree canopy enhancement efforts
- organized popular events: Easter Egg Hunt, 4th of July Children's Parade, Neighborhood-wide Yard Sale, Halloween Trunk or Treat, December Holiday Party and monthly porch parties
- supported local residents to prevent a drive-through restaurant on 4th Street, prevented a historical house from being torn down and turned into a parking lot, and worked with a developer to convert the locally designated historic Westminster Presbyterian Church property into residences
- produced the inaugural Art in the Garden Tour which showcased local gardens, artists and entertainers; proceeds helped fund the tree canopy replenishment program
- implemented a comprehensive communications plan that included a refreshed and updated HONNA.org website, monthly e-newsletters to neighborhood residents, and a social media program on Facebook and Instagram that now counts over 5K followers
- produced a new neighborhood flag and garden banner celebrating 100-year-old "centennial" homes
- continues to send out a weekly crime report from Officer Fuchs of the St. Petersburg Police Department via the NextDoor app
- celebrated the 25th Annual Candlelight Tour of Homes attracting 1,500 attendees, involving 200 volunteers and generous homeowners; part of the proceeds were donated to two local charities
- began implementing a landscape plan for all gateway monuments; beginning planting soon and looking for volunteers; updated monument lighting is also in the planning stage
- scheduled quarterly meetings that provided speakers from city departments of Planning & Development Services (zoning and permitting), Public Works (water and sewer management) and Parking; our council member, Lisset Hanewicz, spoke and addressed the redevelopment proposal for the Gas Plant District that includes a new stadium for the Tampa Bay Rays

The HONNA Board of Directors looks forward to another year filled with neighborhood-enhancing projects and events that make the Old Northeast the premier neighborhood of St. Petersburg. ●



New City Ordinance Prevents "Van Lifers" from Residing on Residential Streets

Traveling to different destinations in renovated, livable passenger vans and other vehicles has become very popular of late. There are numerous social media sites that document the "van life" lifestyle, and St. Petersburg is getting a reputation as a "van lifer paradise."

Van life vehicles have taken advantage of 24-hour parking on Old Northeast streets, especially those near the waterfront parks. Camping and parking RVs overnight in city parking lots is not allowed, so these vehicles had opted to turn streets into quasi-campgrounds. "Residents began complaining to the HONNA Board about the situation," says HONNA President Nick Bell. "There are sanitary and safety issues with these vehicles, so we worked with the city parking department and our city council member, Lisset Hanewicz, to address the situation."

After several months of meetings and discussions, the city council approved a measure recently that now classifies these types of vehicles as domestic equipment. As such, they will be limited to four-hour parking on residential streets Monday to Thursday. "This allows owners of these vehicles to enjoy all the benefits of our neighborhood parks but prevents them from setting up residence for days and weeks on end," Nick explains.



Stay Connected

HONNA invites and encourages you to stay connected and on top of programs, events, and other happenings in our neighborhood. It's a great way to learn more about the neighborhood, become involved, share ideas, learn about events and dates of porch parties, and provide feedback. Share/Like us at Facebook.com/honna.org.

Visit HONNA.org and become a HONNA member to receive periodic informative email announcements. Volunteer for a project, program, or event (such as the Candlelight Tour of Homes, Trunk or Treat and Porch Parties). ●



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Women in Tech Group Expands Horizons in St. Pete

Abby Baker

It's no secret that St. Petersburg, particularly downtown, is a growing hotspot for new-to-the-heat Floridians. Many of these transplants are young professionals, particularly tech professionals, including growing numbers of women in tech.

Traditionally, the technology industry isn't known to be the most inclusive for women, and that's the reason for the Tampa-born Women in Tech & Entrepreneurship (WTE) organization.

"I founded WTE in 2022 after witnessing the glaring gender disparities in tech and entrepreneurship," says Raechel Canipe, CEO of WTE. That year, WTE was a small community effort in Tampa – happy hour groups paired with business conversations about how to thrive in the industry. But then it grew like wildfire.

In 2024, WTE now supports branches in Tampa, Orlando, Fort Lauderdale, Jacksonville, and beginning in May, St. Pete. The WTE St. Pete group and all sister branches are dues-free for members, and all events and mentoring opportunities are free of charge.

"I wanted to eliminate financial barriers that might prevent talented women from accessing the support and resources they needed to succeed," Canipe explains, "and nearly 50 events and six chapters later, I'm proud to maintain a steadfast commitment to completely free membership and events."

Humble Beginnings

Canipe is originally from North Carolina, but her roots are deeply planted in the Tampa Bay area.

"My journey has led me from growing up in a one-bedroom trailer in Polk City to couch surfing in Ybor City while I bootstrapped WTE," Canipe said. "For nearly 14 years, I've called the Tampa Bay area home. This community not only shaped my journey but is also where WTE was born. It holds a special place in my heart, and I am deeply invested in its tech community and the boundless potential it offers."

The young CEO is far from her couch-surfing days, however. Canipe is the vice president of marketing and sales at RevStar, a Tampa consulting firm, and has often personally funded WTE operational costs and organized volunteer-run events. In the last year, WTE has begun to receive donations and funding, and Canipe hopes that in the next five years, the group will expand to more than just Florida.

"My vision ... is to take our successful Florida model, which thrives on community building, near-peer mentorship, access to industry-leading expertise, and providing our members with opportunities to take the stage, and expand it nationally," Canipe says.



Women in Tech & Entrepreneurship organization expanded to St. Pete last May. The nonprofit group is dedicated to elevating women in the technology industry.

Ladies in Tech

Like all WTE chapters, the St. Pete branch is run by a board of directors, all local, and all women in the tech industry.

JoJo Kalita is the St. Pete Events Chair and a former Old Northeast resident. These days, she lives just outside of the neighborhood and is the vice president of customer success at 4th Down Solutions, a tech company that specializes in providing platforms to the life science and pharmaceutical industries.

Kalita knows what it feels like to be the only woman in a room full of men. "I had to learn how to navigate these obstacles alone, and it was difficult. I often wished I had a community like WTE then to support me through those tough times," says Kalita. "That is why we are here now: Our community provides guidance, support, and the right connections to help women grow both professionally and personally."

Brooke Beeler, WTE co-chair, lives in Crescent Heights and is focused on bridging the gap between the local women in tech, and the money and opportunities in the St. Pete area.

"So many people are moving here right now ... there is a huge influx of wealth into St. Pete," Beeler said. "Right now, there is a huge disconnect between local tech startups and local capital – both human and financial. WTE is positioned to be the convener and connector between those groups."

The goal is to get more tech-oriented women in the game, which is why WTE's CEO actively mentors and recruits female STEM students at USF.

"My drive is to get local capital to fund local tech startups that hire local tech talent," Canipe says, "and WTE is building those relationships and connections monthly."



Raechel Canipe is the founder and CEO of Women in Tech & Entrepreneurship.

How to Get Involved

You don't have to be a full-blown coder or an app developer to be involved with WTE. Beeler herself entered the tech world by accident, by way of a marketing position where she found herself ghostwriting technical articles for a tech-based magazine.

All women who are interested in joining the family might want to start with an event, Beeler suggests. Each month, WTE holds both in-person happy hours connecting professionals, and online webinars from experts in the industry.

"One of the things that makes St. Pete so special is our love for our city and each other. That dedication to our community is one of the hallmarks of our organization too. Just like a new neighbor is made to feel 'home,'" Beeler said. "WTE welcomes transplants, remote tech workers, new founders, recent grads, and anyone with an innovation mindset. We are eclectic." ●



WTE holds events every month, as well as online webinars and tech mentoring, always free of charge.

Learn more about WTE and its coming events at wte.network.

AROUND TOWN

Woman's Club Announces Winner of Arts & Crafts Contest



The St. Petersburg Woman's Club held their annual Arts & Crafts contest January 11 with the winners announced at the club's monthly meeting January 12. This year there were 28 entries and nine first-place winners. Manjula Kemp won a first place and Best in Show with her "2nd Home; away from all" piece.


Manjula used acrylic and oil paints, wood chips, a crystal bead for the light on the house, bamboo sticks for roof, door, and window frame. She made the flowers, trees, butterflies two-dimensional and attached them to the drawing sheets. This creative piece was a "hands down" winner of Best in Show. Manjula said it took her almost a year to create and finish the piece. ● ~ Mary Fletcher

Manjula Kemp's crafted piece was the "hands down" winner of Best in Show.

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Native Plants: Finding the ‘Real’ Florida in Your Yard



The twinberry, or Simpson’s stopper, was used as a medicinal plant by indigenous Floridians.

Courtesy of the Florida Wildflower Foundation



The Atala butterfly was once considered extinct, but its numbers are still threatened.

Photo via the National Parks Service



Privet senna with a cloudless sulphur caterpillar

Courtesy of the Florida Wildflower Foundation

Amanda Hagood

When you picture your favorite Florida landscapes, what plants do you see? Redolent plumerias? Bold, heart-shaped elephant ears? The traffic-cone orange plumes of bird of paradise or graceful fronds of coconut palms? These iconic flora have all found their way into Florida’s greenscapes. And, despite the fact that they come from across the world – hailing from Central America and the Caribbean, Asia, South Africa, and Oceania, respectively – they have come, over time, to evoke that special Florida feeling: verdant, tropical, and wild. In a word, paradise.

More Than Beauty

Yet for all their appeal, lush tropical plantings can bring more than just beauty to the landscape. They can also bring problems. For instance, one species of

elephant ear, *Colocasia esculenta* or wild taro, has been classified by the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) as invasive. This “aggressive weed,” whose starchy tuber once attracted attention as a potential substitute for potatoes, can crowd out other waterline species that Florida animals depend on. It can break loose to form large floating islands that block navigation and raise risk for flooding. The romantic coconut palm is on the same watch list due to its sneaky (or, depending on your perspective, quite adaptive) habit of dropping nuts into canals, where they can float away and establish themselves elsewhere.

Then there’s the question of pollinators. Jen Tyson, education coordinator at St. Pete’s Sunken Gardens, explains that many of Florida’s native pollinators (which include a whopping 300 species of bees) struggle when exotic plants replace their favored species for

nectaring and hosting caterpillars, or when those native plant species are removed to make way for development. Consider the Atala butterfly (otherwise known as the coontie hairstreak): this shimmering blue-and-black-winged marvel nests in native coontie palm plants in south Florida. But when coontie was over-harvested for its starchy root at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Atalas disappeared; in fact, it was considered extinct from 1937 until 1959. Not until coontie came back into fashion as a landscaping plant did these mysterious butterflies reemerge – and even now, they remain imperiled. This same problem is playing out throughout Florida as insects fine-tuned by evolution for a particular plant community face loss of habitat, landscapes transformed.

Another important factor in the question of what plants should be growing where is, of course, climate – a baseline that is shifting. This past November, the

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USDA reissued its famous Plant Hardiness Zone Map, the multicolored diagram on the back of seed packets that charts out the averages of the lowest annual winter temperatures in a given location (across a 30-year interval). It's a gardeners' standby for judging what plants are likely to thrive where. The newest edition shows a change for much of Pinellas County from Zone 10A to Zone 10B, representing a 5-degree Fahrenheit rise in annual low temperatures.

At Sunken Gardens, Tyson sees this warming playing out in real time. Plants that might have thrived five years ago don't grow as well, and others are blooming earlier than usual. This can create a different challenge for pollinators. For instance, the southeastern blueberry bee, a Florida native, nests in the ground and emerges in February – just in time for blueberries to blossom. But this long-established symbiotic dance falls apart when the seasonal plant progression shifts.

"We may be able to adapt to these changes," explains Tyson, "but the pollinators we depend on may not be able to."

Planting Hope

Invasive species, warming climate, struggling pollinators. These are, in part, the legacy of those visions of tropical beauty that Florida gardeners have brought to their landscapes over the last century. Sunken Gardens, opened by George and Eula Turner in 1936 and famous for its collection of exotic plants and birds, is a great example of this conundrum. Tyson reflects: "The Turners planted lots of natives, trees especially. They understood the value of native plants, but they also created what people wanted to see in Florida."

Yet that same power to transform landscapes may also hold the key to helping repair Florida's damaged ecosystems, which is why the Gardens are now adding additional natives. For instance, the median along 4th Street was recently replanted with beach sunflower and muhly grass. As Horticultural Foreman Sean Farrell points out, these two Florida natives require less water



Live oaks are a keystone species, providing a habitat for myriad species, as well as plentiful shade in the Old Northeast.

and fertilizer than many more conventional border plant choices. They also showcase the unique beauty of Florida natives: beach sunflower's cheery, sun-worshiping blooms are a favorite of many pollinator species, while muhly grass's feathery top blazes a dramatic pink when the plant flowers in the fall.

The Gardens also boasts a dedicated pollinator garden where you can see many Florida native plants doing their thing: privet senna with its buttery yellow blossoms, tea bush with lush swags of delicate purple flowers, and swamp-dwelling mist flower with its clouds of violet blooms – just to name a few. While they may lack the big colors and bold shapes of favorite tropicals, Florida natives bring a different kind of beauty to the landscape, harboring new winged visitors and reflecting the progression of the seasons. "When you start incorporating native plants into your landscape," reflects Tyson, "you start to see the real Florida. You embrace what's really unique about our state."

Getting to know native plants can even teach you something about longstanding cultures of Tampa Bay. Tyson points out several trees and plants used by

indigenous peoples for a variety of purposes: rouge plant for decorating your skin, beautyberry for mosquito repellent, and Simpson's stopper for digestive troubles. Nature's medicine cabinet!

Consider the Live Oak

With so many benefits to growing native plants, you may be wondering how to get started. Tyson says think in terms of pollinator pathways: not just large plots dedicated to natives but an assembly of pocket plantings, container gardens, and median strips that together provide a pesticide-free corridor of nutrition and habitat. These "in between" spaces are vital for helping pollinators navigate between traditional strongholds such as parks and less developed lands, Tyson explains. Especially as it becomes clearer that existing greenspaces aren't enough to sustain them.

Our dry winters can be a good time to plan or start seeds indoors, while our wet summers help larger plants get established. Combining plants with a decorative element (like stones or a pathway) can offset natives that go dormant during the winter. Most importantly, says Tyson, get to know your local Facebook groups and native plant societies, which can be a wealth of information as you are learning your way around new plants. And be sure to patronize native plant nurseries rather than big box stores to help you make sure you're getting the proper varieties; many common Florida plants, such as lantana and porterweed, have non-native cousins that can become invasive.

Lastly, we might consider another iconic Florida species and one that is plentiful among the shaded sidewalks of the Old Northeast: the live oak. While the casual observer might appreciate its graceful, spreading limbs and evocative Spanish moss, there's a lot more going on than meets the eye. As a keystone species, oaks play host to multiple types of caterpillars and to the birds who eat those caterpillars. Their value goes far beyond their unique appearance. It's the beauty of an integrated, interconnected ecosystem – right in your own backyard. ●

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Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks and likely responsible for the mysterious Elks' flag that flew on the Benoist airboat, the first airliner, on its first flight between St. Petersburg and Tampa. Lathan bought one of the Benoist airboats after it ceased operation. Another celebrated early local pilot was Johnny Green. A colorful character, he provided sky rides over the city, operated a flight school near the pier, and was involved in gun running to Cuba. For a time, he also operated the Green Lantern Dance Pavilion on the approach to the Municipal Pier.

The city's best-known pilot was James Albert Whitted, who came from a pioneer St. Pete family. His father, T. A. Whitted, served on the town council in 1894 and 1895. Albert, as he was known, was born in 1893. He enlisted in the Aviation Corps in 1917 and was one of the first 250 flyers in the U.S. Navy; his pilot's number was 179. Albert was commissioned a first lieutenant in 1918 and served as a chief instructor of advanced flying at Pensacola. He began commercial flying in St. Pete in 1919, flying hundreds of residents and tourists. With his brother, Clarence, he designed and built a pusher-type seaplane christened the *Bluebird*. In 1921 he built the *Falcon*. Two years later, while flying near Pensacola, he and four passengers were killed when the propeller of the *Falcon* broke.

It was in 1928 that the city council authorized construction of an airfield at the eastern end of 7th Avenue South, named in honor of Albert Whitted. While the airport occupied approximately 110 acres, it was a modest facility with only one runway. The airport was dedicated on February 25-26, 1929, but Albert Whitted was not the city's first airport. That distinction goes to Piper-Fuller Airport, located on the site of today's Walter Fuller Park in west St. Petersburg, which opened three years earlier and operated until the beginning of World War II. A third airport, Grand Central located on Weeden Island, opened in 1929 and continued until about 1937. It was later renamed Sky Harbor and struggled to operate, finally closing for good in 1948. Amazingly, the small town of St. Petersburg boasted three airports in the 1930s. In 1941, St. Petersburg-Clearwater International (PIE) got underway and continues to thrive to this today.

Shortly after Albert Whitted opened, Chamber of Commerce Publicity Director John Lodwick came up with one of his many brainstorming for promoting the city: Goodyear blimps. He arranged for the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company to locate a blimp at the new Albert Whitted Airport and got the city to pay for construction of a necessarily large hangar. On December 11, 1929, the blimp *Vigilant of St. Petersburg* was christened and gave rides to VIPs over the city. The blimp *Reliance* paid a visit in 1932, and in 1933 the dirigible *Akron* paid a visit. Blimps were stationed at the airport until 1939.

Various New Deal programs in the 1930s provided substantial improvements for the airport, including funding for a seaplane hangar capable of housing five "huge amphibians" as part of the construction of a Coast Guard Air Station (CGAS). CGAS St. Petersburg was one of the original 10 Coast Guard air stations in the country. One of the first Coast Guard pilots stationed at St. Petersburg was R. T. "Pop" Cupples who had the distinction of being the Navy's first pilot. His pilot's license was awarded in 1906 – a mere three years after the Wright brothers' first flight.

G.T. "Ted" Baker founded National Airlines in 1934, which was headquartered at Albert Whitted and flew between St. Petersburg and Daytona Beach. The airline began with two single-engine, second-hand Ryan monoplanes. These were a



The airport's namesake, James Albert Whitted, was an early Navy pilot and operated an aerial sight-seeing business in St. Petersburg, image 1917.

Courtesy of St. Petersburg Museum of History



Envelope commemorating the 146th anniversary of the U.S. Coast Guard with the St. Petersburg Coast Guard Air Station at Albert Whitted.

Courtesy of Michaels Family Collection



National Airlines founder George "Ted" Baker is second from right with the first flight attendant, Charlotte Georgia, in front of a 10-passenger Stinson aircraft.



Current aerial view of Albert Whitted Airport. The Coast Guard Station is in the forefront.

Courtesy of Michaels Family Collection

passenger version of Lindberg's "Spirit of St. Louis." In its first year, it flew just 400 passengers, but it also had a U. S. airmail contract. For the first four months of the airline's operation, the only passengers were the mail pouches. But then things began to grow. Soon there were more passengers than seats available, and the line added three additional (second-hand) planes. One-way fare was \$10.60 (less than \$250 in today's dollars, but likely a precious amount in the midst of the Great Depression). At one point Baker even considered reestablishing the first airline route between St. Petersburg and Tampa using Tampa's Davis Island Field, but the proposed 10-minute shuttle service across the bay never came about. National Airlines moved its headquarters from St. Petersburg to Jacksonville in 1939 due, at least in part, to a lack of support from St. Pete city government. However, the airline continued to operate out of St. Petersburg until the end of World War II. It finally ceased operation in 1980, when it was acquired by Pan American.

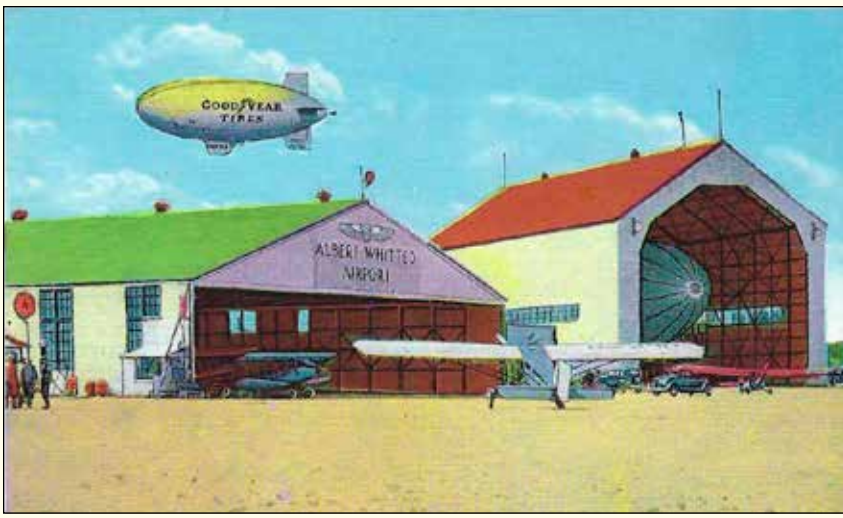
During World War II, Albert Whitted served as a training station for hundreds of naval aviators and war allies. In 1942 a contingent of Russian sailors attended minesweeping training at Whitted. Their vehicle flipped while traveling in a station wagon across the Gandy Bridge. Police arrested them thinking they were Germans.

Aircraft at the CGAS St. Petersburg were part of a valiant but inadequate deterrent to the German submarine campaign in the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico. As the submarine threat in the Gulf slowly abated, the air station concentrated on search-and-rescue activities. At the end of the war, Navy training ceased, civilian commercial and general aviation activity returned, and the Coast Guard remained the sole military aviation activity until its relocation in 1976. The Coast Guard's desire to add four large, land-based HC-130 Hercules aircraft in St. Petersburg made continued operations at Albert Whitted an impossibility because of its short runways. This prompted a move to the larger St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport and construction and establishment of a new air station, Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater. With the establishment of CGAS Clearwater, CGAS St. Petersburg was converted to a non-flying Coast Guard installation, home to several cutters and the current Coast Guard Sector St. Petersburg headquarters.

A second airline – Red Carpet Airlines, organized by Bill Phillips – opened in 1971. It began as a leasing program, but in 1972 the company acquired two DC-3s and began charter flights. The airline relocated to St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport in 1974, and later Linton P. Tibbetts became airline president. Tibbetts was a resident of St. Petersburg involved in a range of commercial enterprises including Cox Lumber, and later Tibbetts Lumber Co. The airline was later purchased by Key West interests and its name changed to Aerosun International, Inc.

In 2007, the city completed construction on a \$4-million, 10,600 sq/ft terminal building named after John Galbraith. Galbraith was a Marine Corps pilot during World War II, and later a commercial pilot and mutual fund entrepreneur. As a philanthropist, he generously supported Albert Whitted. A new \$3-million control tower and new taxiway were also built in 2010.

These days, in addition to its core general aviation operations, the airport is also home to businesses such as St. Pete Air, Tampa Bay Aviation, Sheltair Aviation Services, The Hangar Restaurant and Flight Lounge, Tampa Bay Air Charter, biplane tours, It's Time to Shine, FlyBuy, Advertising Air Force, and



Courtesy of Michaels Family Collection

Postcard depicting the Good Year blimp and hangar. A blimp was stationed at Albert Whitted from 1930 until 1939.

Hertz. The Civil Air Patrol has a small headquarters on site, and the Young Eagle Program has provided hundreds of young people with their first flight. Earlier this year, 19 students received \$75,000 in flight training scholarships through the Friends of Albert Whitted Airport advocacy group. The Albert Whitted Airport Preservation Society continues to document the airport's history and has provided educational services for the past 20 years.

Albert Whitted is a base for a range of emergency support flights and would serve as an important logistical base in the event of a hurricane causing significant storm surge. The airport is designated by the Federal Aviation Authority as one of the nation's critical reliever airports, easing congestion at commercial service hubs. In 2009, the Florida Department of Transportation named Albert Whitted the Florida General Aviation Airport of the Year. In 2021, Atlas Evaluation and Inspection Services undertook an economic impact study of Albert Whitted documenting a payroll of nearly \$43 million, 948 jobs, and a local economic impact of \$128 million. City council recently approved a 20-year Airport Master Plan.

Over the years there has been discussion of closing Albert Whitted and using it for residential purposes or as a new waterfront park. As early as 1940, the *St. Petersburg Times* began a campaign to get rid of the airport. In 1958, the city manager tried to close the airport and allow development of the land. A local pilots' association defeated that plan.

In 2002, Mayor Rick Baker proposed building an "urban village" at the airport site. This was rejected unanimously by the city council. The following year a group called Citizens for a New Waterfront Park collected some 15,000 signatures to get a question on the city ballot that would have closed Albert Whitted and turned it into an extension of the downtown waterfront parks. The city drew up alternative ballot questions in support of the airport. One asked, "Should Albert Whitted Airport remain open forever by amending the City Charter to require retention of an airport?" Voters approved the question at nearly 73%; the proposal to convert the airport to parkland failed with 78% voting no. However, a new waterfront park at Albert Whitted was not entirely out of the picture. In 2008, the city opened Albert Whitted Park on the north side of the airport. The seven-acre park has observation areas overlooking the airport and an aviation-themed playground.

In 2022, Mayor Ken Welch called for another look at Albert Whitted and possible alternative uses, noting again possible expansion of the downtown waterfront parks, but ruling out high rises or condos. "I want to see what value the airport is bringing right now and come to a decision of what the best use is for that property going forward."

History does repeat itself.

Mayor Welch provided the following updated statement for this article: "It's important to ensure our administration is in touch and inclusive with all of our communities in St. Pete when looking long-term, 50 to 100 years into the future, and considering the most impactful community and economic benefit for Albert Whitted Airport. Those principles are at the foundation of our commitment to accountable and responsive government. As the city began reviewing and updating the airport's master plan, which was required by the Federal Aviation Administration and ultimately approved by city council last year, our priority was to be forward-looking as an administration while listening to the input and feedback from constituents and continuing this conversation. When you couple informed St. Pete residents and city staff with data-driven decision-making, it's all but assured that the overall outcome for this city-owned property will be in the community's best interest." ●

Will Michaels is a former director of the St. Petersburg Museum of History and the author of The Making of St. Petersburg and The Hidden History of St. Petersburg. Contact him at wmichaels2222@gmail.com or 727-420-9195.

"I want to see what value the airport is bringing right now and come to a decision of what the best use is for that property going forward."



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diagnosis was totally mind-blowing. The doctors would not even let me go home. I had surgery to remove a 1.3-lb. tumor from my brain,” said Jim, still sounding in disbelief at the thought of such a large tumor.

“I had lost my sense of smell and taste, and I had lost my balance twice, but I thought it might be symptoms of long-COVID,” Jim told me when I visited with the couple recently. In fact, he said he had scheduled an appointment at a clinic to check it out. That he might have a life-altering diagnosis of brain cancer was not even imaginable.

Jim and Mimi’s journey into the frightening territory of surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, and many side effects, has been a roller coaster of emotions. But in his book, *Cancer Be Not Proud*, Jim writes that despite everything “his interactions with friends, family, healthcare providers, neighbors and others have led to a conclusion that I could never have imagined. My terrifying diagnosis has been one of the most inspiring periods of my life, restoring a great deal of faith in human nature during these increasingly fractious times.”

It had been only two and a half years since the couple retired from their respective careers. Jim had been on the faculty at Cleveland State for 35 years, which included two years on an exchange program in England teaching English constitutional law. Before that, he practiced law with the Legal Society in Louisville, Kentucky, and in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Mimi started out as a reporter and has a master’s degree in journalism, but later, went back to school and received her PhD in management from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. She worked as a stock analyst doing research and then as the chief investment officer at an investment firm.

Their children – Lee, a software engineer, and Nathan, a musician – were grown, and living and working in

San Diego. So, after the death of both of their mothers, they decided to sell their home in Cleveland and move to sunny St. Petersburg. Their move just happened to coincide with Halloween, and as anyone who lives in St. Pete knows all too well, the Old Northeast is the ultimate destination for trick-or-treating, with thousands of kids descending on the neighborhood. For Jim and Mimi, the timing was the perfect introduction to the sense of community for which the Old Northeast is known. “We were fortunate to be invited to a Halloween party, and from there we got invited to more parties,” said Jim.

Over time, their circle just kept growing, especially thanks to regular walks in the neighborhood with Nina, a mixed-breed rescue who was their constant lovable companion. Then

Jim and Mimi’s – and the person who shared the couple’s inspirational story with the *Northeast Journal*. “Family, friends, dogs, sports, sticking together and growing closer over time in a beautiful neighborhood by the water. It’s very much an Historic Old Northeast story,” Slavin wrote to me.

News of Jim’s diagnosis spread quickly and “brought an outpouring of help and support from so many friends and neighbors,” said Mimi. Much of that support came in the form of comfort food. “In the first three months of my treatment we must have had 50-60 home-cooked meals delivered to us,” said Jim.

It reminds me of Dr. Gary Chapman’s book, *The 5 Love Languages*. Food is certainly one of the love languages and a generous act of service. So many people wanted to bring meals

community’s love and support, Jim and Mimi hosted an appreciation party in their backyard. “We had 35 people and it was wonderful,” said Jim. “We wanted to reciprocate for all the amazing gourmet meals.” Mimi invited those attending to send their favorite songs in advance so they would have a playlist at the party. Photos of the home-cooked meals they had received were strung out over the patio.

But initially, while the couple was still recovering from the shock of the diagnosis, they weren’t thinking about celebrating. In fact, after all they had experienced, there was still one more loss – the death of their beloved dog, Nina. “She died [of cancer] three weeks after Jim returned home from Tampa General,” said Mimi. “It was really rough.”

To stay strong physically, emotionally, and mentally – and to



Jim with daughter Lee and the manatee she knitted for him



Jim and Mimi on vacation in 2021, before Jim's diagnosis

there were the early morning gatherings at neighbor Warren Alessi’s bench by the bay, where everyone watched the sunrise and talked. Informal porch parties, a regular part of community life in the Old Northeast, brought even more new friends.

“Jim built a strong network of neighbors and friends by practicing ‘front porch diplomacy’ by simply sitting on his front porch and saying hello to people as they walked by,” said Lois Slavin, a neighbor and friend of

that Alicia Reyes, their close friend and neighbor across the street, stepped in to help schedule deliveries so multiple meals wouldn’t arrive on the same day. “Alicia and her husband Rob [Shapiro] took us under their wing when we first arrived in St. Pete and gave us all kinds of tips and recommendations,” said Mimi. “During COVID, Jim, Nina and I, spent countless hours on their expansive porch, perfect for social distancing.”

To show their gratitude for the

help improve his prognosis, Jim changed his diet, gave up sugar, and started weekly at-home massages, as well as exercise sessions with a fitness trainer. The couple also began referring to their house as Fort Wilord, a “cheerful blend of our surnames,” said Jim. “My doctor told me I had one major thing going for me – my wife of 45 years; my caregiver, Mimi.” A plaque with the inscription “Welcome to Fort Wilord, where determined hopefulness reigns,” a gift from their

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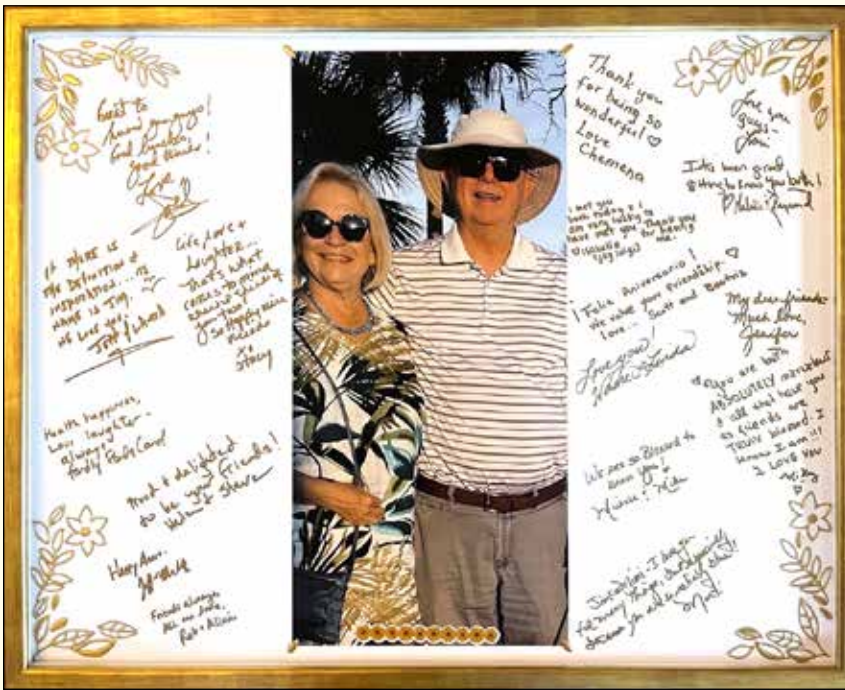
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A treasured memory from friends and neighbors



Jim and Mimi in front of their house

friend Michelle Gray, now hangs above their front door.

Jim continued to rely on his regular 20-year meditation practice to keep the emotional lows in check, and he reached out to his former Tai Chi teacher in Ohio, who sent videos to help Jim remember how to perform each step. To keep his mind sharp, he started sharing reflections about his cancer journey through a series of newsletters posted online on substack.com under the title "Cancer, Be Not Proud." His wit and sense of humor shine through with chapters like, "Chicken Little," "Bucket List," and



Fort Wilord hangs by the front door

"Topsy Turvy." With Mimi's help, he published the collection of articles as a book with the same title.

Unfortunately, Jim and Mimi's journey isn't over. Last November, an MRI showed a recurrence of the cancer. More chemotherapy and radiation followed, along with new side effects. But Fort Wilord is staying strong. As Jim wrote in one of his first newsletters, "This will not always be comforting reading; I have been abiding too long in the shadow of the Valley of Death. But where there is death, there is life. Where there is life, there is love and kindness." ●



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Get Out, Get Inspired



Animal Attraction artist Stacey Holloway's piece, "Shed Some Light."

Brandy Stark

St. Pete is bursting with art as we head into spring! From mermaids and pop art to airplanes and animal attractions, it's a feast for the eyes and the soul from March all the way to Mainsail.

Art Centers

Florida CraftArt: Animal Attraction. 510 Central Ave. March 22 – May 12. Mon-Sat, 10am-5:30pm; Sun, noon-5pm. floridacraftart.org

Contemporary artists use animal themes to explore complex ideas, including society, gender and sexuality.

Morean Arts Center: Four Decades: PCCA Faculty + Alumni Exhibition. 719 Central Ave. Through March 28. Daily, 10am-5pm. moreanartscenter.org

Featuring nearly 100 works by current/former faculty and students of the Pinellas County Center for the Arts, guests can reminisce over the early careers of local rising artists and see where they are today.

Fresh Squeezed 8: Emerging Artists in Florida: April through June, experience this year's annual showcase of new artists in Florida, featuring Jayde Archbold of Dade City, Brittani Brown, Orlando, Camilla Byrd, Tampa, Alexis Childress, St. Petersburg, Emily Martinez, Tampa, and Karina Yanes, Gainesville.

Fairgrounds St. Pete: Mystical Mermaids of March. 2606 Fairfield Ave. S. fairgrounds.art

The immersive art experience that is Fairgrounds St. Pete goes aquatic for March with myriad mermaid events each Saturday of the month, including meet and greets and panel discussions, as well as portrait and face painting.

St. Pete ArtWorks: The Art of Lettering and Other Paintings. 2604 Central Ave. Through March 31.

Tues-Sat, 11am-7pm; Sun/Mon, noon-4pm. stpeteartworks-onlinestore.com

Explore St. Pete artist James Eric Hartzell's love of visual storytelling and hand-painted lettering. "I believe that fonts each have their own sacred geometry and moods," says Hartzell, "like instruments adding to the song of a design."

Spots About Town

Albert Whitted Airport: Visual Approaches: The Art of Aviation. 107 8th Ave. SE. April 13, 5-9pm. 727-893-7657

This is a special pop-up show featuring the power of flight featuring live painting demonstrations as well as the work of 10 artists on display for the night.

Artlofts: Illuminations. 10 5th St. N., second floor to Florida CraftArt. Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm; Saturday, noon-4pm; Second Saturday, 5-9pm. 727-504-8788

The 24 Hands Printmakers Collective are passionate about exploring various printing techniques. This show invites the viewer to examine the various processes used in the art of printmaking including intaglio, relief, lithography, and mono printing.

The SPIRITS of St. Petersburg is also hosting two upcoming paranormal investigation classes at the Creative Lofts in ArtLofts. For information and tickets, visit spiritsofstpete.com.

Woodfield Fine Art Gallery: True Colors: The Conceptual Pop Art of Mark Mitchell. 2323 Central Ave. Through April 14. woodfieldfineart.com

Check out the "mind-expanding" work of award-winning conceptual pop painter Mark Mitchell who uses eye-popping color, iconic imagery, powerful themes, and compelling social commentary to "see beyond the surface of the everyday." More on the artist at markmitchellstudio.com.

Shapiro's Gallery: 26th Anniversary Celebration. 300 Beach Dr. NE #112. March 30, 10am-9pm. Special reception at 6pm. shapirogallery.com



True Colors features the art of Mark Mitchell.

Courtesy of Woodfield Fine Art Gallery

This longtime gallery is celebrating 26 years in downtown St. Petersburg. Meet some of the gallery artists, experience a special jewelry trunk show, and celebrate as they say thank you to the community.

Art Events

Vinoy Park: Mainsail Art Festival. April 20, 9am-6pm; April 21, 10am-5pm. mainsailart.org

Don't miss the 48th Annual Mainsail Art Festival, one of the premier cultural events on St. Petersburg's outdoor calendar. Each year, more than 100,000 visitors attend to enjoy and buy quality art, listen to live music, and much more.

Palladium Side Door: Mauricio Rodriguez & The MJR Latin Project. 253 5th Ave N. April 3, 7:30pm. mypalladium.org

This performance mixes original work composed by Mauricio J. Rodriguez with new Cuban contemporary music and some Latin jazz staples. Bassist, composer, producer, and educator Mauricio J Rodriguez is one of the finest musicians of his generation in Cuba. This is one of the events for the St. Petersburg Jazz Festival, April 1-6. For more on other events, visit stpetejazzfest.com.

St. Pete ArtWorks: Artsy Rummage Sale. 2604 Central Ave. March 23, 10am-3pm. gcaa-fl.org or 727-485-8655

Need more art supplies? The Gulf Coast Artists' Alliance is holding its annual sale of gently used supplies, including paint, colored pencils, canvas, beads, shells, wood cutouts, fabric, and more. There will also be art, prints, frames, mats, books, equipment, jewelry, and displays – come browse the sidewalk and classroom for bargains! ●



Artist Joyce Ely Walker's work will appear in the Four Decades exhibit.



"GivePeace a Chance" letterart by James Eric Hartzell.



Visual Approaches at Albert Whitted Airport will showcase aviation art at a pop-up event.



The Artsy Rummage Sale will offer gently used arts and crafts supplies of all kinds, as well as books, prints and more.

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MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS



Laura Flint
Northeast Journal
writer

Where are you from originally?
Memphis, Tennessee.

Favorite place to visit in St. Pete.

Anywhere on the water, but I love going to Fort Desoto, Shell Key, and Egmont Key.

Most interesting/enjoyable/exotic vacation you've taken.

Petit St. Vincent, south of the Grenadine Islands, is the most enjoyable place I have ever visited. Edinburgh, Scotland is a close second.

Top two places in the world on your bucket list.

South Africa and Italy. I took a South African literature course in grad school, and it has been a dream ever since to visit. And who doesn't want to go to Italy?!

What famous person would you like to meet, and why?

I took two courses on Tennessee Williams, and my professor's enthusiasm toward Williams and his works was contagious. This led me to attending a Tennessee

Williams festival in New Orleans (which is the best way to visit New Orleans in my opinion). Williams wrote about every emotional topic out there, and it would be fascinating to have a discussion with him about his work.

Favorite sport, recreational activity, or hobby.

My favorite sports are soccer and tennis. My favorite activities are reading and spending the day on the boat.

A great movie you'd recommend, or current TV series you are watching.

Midnight in Paris

If you were a dog, what breed would you be?

Labrador Retriever, specifically mine – he is crazy and foolish and loved all the more for it!

Tell us about a situation or a person who has inspired you.

My father. He was a fire chief and flew as an engineer in the Air Force. He worked like crazy but loved to be with his family. He wholeheartedly believed in treating others with respect, fairness, and kindness, and he seemed to follow through with ease.

Current book you've read and would recommend.

In the Lake of the Woods, by Tim O'Brien

Tell us about an accomplishment of which you are proud.

Playing soccer at the University of Mississippi

Something people might not know about you.

I've run one marathon. I highly doubt I will ever do that again!

What do you do for a living?

I started working as the director of a recreation center for school-age children in Memphis. I then went on to become the director of coaching for a club soccer program as well as the head coach for a high school girls soccer team. When I moved to St. Petersburg, I completely shifted gears and began to work for Preserve the 'Burg. In the midst of COVID, I decided to stay home with my two boys and have been enjoying this time with them ever since.

Tell us something about your family and pets.

My husband, John, and I have two young boys, Bennett and Charlie, and a two-year-old goofy chocolate Lab named Avett. Between baseball, jiu jitsu, and theater, we try to squeeze in as much time on the water as possible.



Nick Hansen
18th Avenue NE

Where are you from originally?
Born and raised in St. Petersburg. I am a third generation St. Pete native.

Favorite place to visit in St. Pete.

Strolling around Mirror Lake due to my current work on the luxury condo development I am building there next to the Lyceum.

Most interesting/enjoyable/exotic vacation you've taken.

I spent Thanksgiving hiking the mountains and trails with my family and five kids in Swannanoa, NC and got to visit the Biltmore Estate built by the Vanderbilt family.

Top two places in the world on your bucket list.

Australia and Japan.

What famous person would you like to meet, and why?

Benjamin Franklin has always fascinated me – brilliant, and apparently funny. I imagine a dinner party with him and my favorite author, Ernest Hemingway, would be a lot of fun.

Favorite sport, recreational activity, or hobby.

Football. I also enjoy walking the Pinellas Trail or exploring downtown St. Petersburg with my family.

A great movie you'd recommend, or current TV series you are watching.

Crime and detective shows. Just finished season one of *Lincoln Lawyer* and all three seasons of *True Detective*.

If you were a dog, what breed would you be?

I would be an Australian sheep dog because herding and tracking people and projects, especially my five kids, is what I do the most.

Tell us about a situation or a person who has inspired you.

I find inspiration all around me. I was blessed with wonderful parents, siblings, and friends who I have overcome challenges and lead loving productive lives.

Current book you've read and would recommend.

While I mostly read bedtime stories to my kids, I did recently read *Horses Never Lie*. It subtly teaches how to have more patience and understanding with people through one man's true stories of working with horses.

Tell us about an accomplishment of which you are proud.

Currently I am part of the development team for the 18-story, 88-unit luxury condominium project on Mirror Lake in downtown St. Petersburg called REFLECTION. Also, we are breaking ground on a

264-unit, fully affordable housing complex next to Gibbs High School – Fairfield Avenue Apartments, a partnership with the City of St. Petersburg and Pinellas County. I am very proud to be able to provide much-needed housing of all types in my community.

Something people might not know about you.

My grandfather, Bob Pfeiffer, was known as "Mr. Green Devil" and served as St. Petersburg High School's mascot from the early '70s until he passed away in 2001. He cared so much for the school and its students and was a true character who worked tirelessly to raise money for the school's band, athletic teams, and historical preservation projects.

What do you do for a living?

I am a partner, and founder, at HP Capital Group, a real estate development firm specializing in multi-family and affordable multifamily housing, as well as lot development for single family-town home projects.

Tell us something about your family and pets.

We have two Aussie-doodles (brothers) named Smith and Wesson. During the pandemic I finally gave in and got two "guard dogs." They are wonderful additions to our family. My children are currently in negotiations with me for a cat, a snake, and a bearded dragon. With five kids and two dogs, I have told them that any additional pets may require a zoo permit from the city. ●



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Photos by Brandy Stark unless otherwise noted.



Lesley with Odessa, Crescent Heights



Christy with Lucy in the Old Northeast



Erica and Alan with Ethan and Lucy in Downtown St. Pete



Kevin with Sailor, Crescent Heights



Ruby and Diego with Bella, University Park-South



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Old Northeast Cressy House Gets Historic Designation

Laura Flint

When Sandra and Michael Taradash moved to St. Petersburg from Palos Verdes Estates, California they knew they wanted to live in the Old Northeast. They began touring homes, and after viewing the “Cressy House,” they made an offer within 24 hours. They had found their new home.

The Cressy House, situated at 625 20th Avenue NE, was built in 1922 by Hennessy and Taylor and designed by architect Edgar Ferdon. Ferdon was the city’s first professional architect and is credited with designing the Crisp Arcade as well as the First Congregational Church downtown.

The Cressy House was built in the classic craftsman style and has features customary of the “airplane” bungalow, which include a large first floor with a smaller second floor centered above with one or two rooms, said to resemble the cockpit of an airplane. The second story has many windows that allow cross ventilation and cool breezes; the houses wide eaves provide ample shade and resemble an airplane’s wings. Other prominent features include the shingle siding; decorative beams that run the full length of the home; a large, covered, wrap-around porch; and the unpainted clinker brick columns and chimney with yellow brick and accent caps.

Sandra and Michael knew they had found something special and began to investigate the history behind their new home. The Cressy House was built for Blanche Dayne Cressy and Will Cressy in 1922 during the height of the Florida land boom. The Cressys were popular vaudeville actors in the late 19th and early 20th century who traveled the world and even entertained troops during World War I. During this time Will Cressy was exposed to a gas that caused significant health complications and resulted in their decision to move to St. Petersburg. They spent summers in New Hampshire where Will was born and lived in the Cressy House during the winters. In St. Pete, Will gave speeches, wrote pamphlets and essays, and appeared in plays. Blanche also stayed active, serving as president of the Florida West Coast branch of the Women’s Overseas Service League for women who served overseas during World War I.

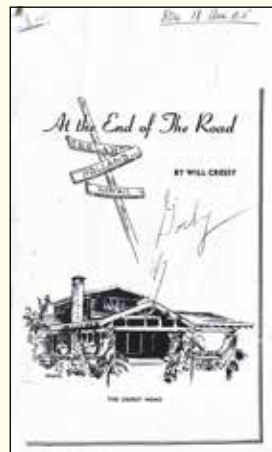
With information on their new home’s history, Sandra and Michael decided to apply for a local historic designation. “The house represents St. Petersburg’s cultural heritage through its design, construction, and because of its popular original owners, the entertainers, Blanche Dayne and Will Cressy,” says Sandra.



The Cressy House was built in 1922 and designed by St. Pete’s first professional architect, Edgar Ferdon.



Blanche Dayne Cressy and Will Cressy during the first world war



Cressy’s At the End of the Road includes a drawing of Cressy House.



The Sargent House on 18th Avenue NE is the sister of Cressy House and was designed by Edgar Ferdon in 1923.

This year, the application was approved and the Cressy House was awarded designation on February 15. It joins other landmarks in the Old Northeast, including its sister home on 18th Avenue, the Sargent House, another of Edgar Ferdon’s bungalows that mirrored the Cressy House, built a year later in 1923. The owners of the Sargent House, Sharon Winters and Kendall Reid, recently held a porch party at their home with Preserve the ’Burg. Sharon spoke to the attendees saying, “We take a lot of joy in the character that is retained in this house even though 15 families have lived here. It is amazing that nothing big has been ripped out!”

She went on to speak of the Cressy House and its impending designation saying, “It is the stories behind these houses that lend a lot of the character to it.”

House and its impending designation saying, “It is the stories behind these houses that lend a lot of the character to it.”

The Old Northeast is home to more than 10 local landmarks and was also listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003. In 1988, Granada Terrace was designated a Local Historic District within the Old Northeast, and the neighborhood is now home to three, one-block areas designated as historic districts in recent years. These include the 200 block of 10th Avenue NE, the 700 block of 18th Avenue NE, and the 100 block of 19th Avenue NE, also known as Mediterranean Row.

Why does the neighborhood find the designation of these homes and districts important? According to the Historic Old Northeast Neighborhood Association website, “These districts and individual properties can be significant to the history of St. Petersburg in several ways: they are reminders of the cultural heritage of the city, are identified with people who contributed significantly to our city, were designed by noted architects, and are examples of a particular architectural style, or feature particular construction materials.”

Sandra and Michael Taradash are most certainly continuing the tradition of preservation in the Old Northeast. When asked why she felt it was important to have the Cressy House designated as a historic landmark, Sandra said, “We want to contribute to city founders’, Snell’s and Stroud’s vision, and the exemplary efforts of HONNA, Preserve the ’Burg, and the St. Petersburg Division of Urban Planning, Design, and Historic

Preservation. As Will Cressy wrote in his 1923 publication, *At the End of the Road*, ‘On the shores of the Coffee Pot Bayou, you will find the 7th and last Cressy home... and this address is PERMANENT.’” ●

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