



NORTHEAST JOURNAL

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St. Petersburg, FL
EST. SEPTEMBER 2004

Good People ∞ Good Places ∞ Good Things Happening

The Racquet Club of St. Petersburg Turns 50

Gary Smith

Last November, a small celebration of a pretty cool historic St. Petersburg event took place at the Baseline Bistro, the Racquet Club of St. Petersburg's excellent onsite restaurant. Members, staff, teaching pros, and their families celebrated the 50th birthday of the private family-oriented tennis and swim club at 170 47th Avenue NE.

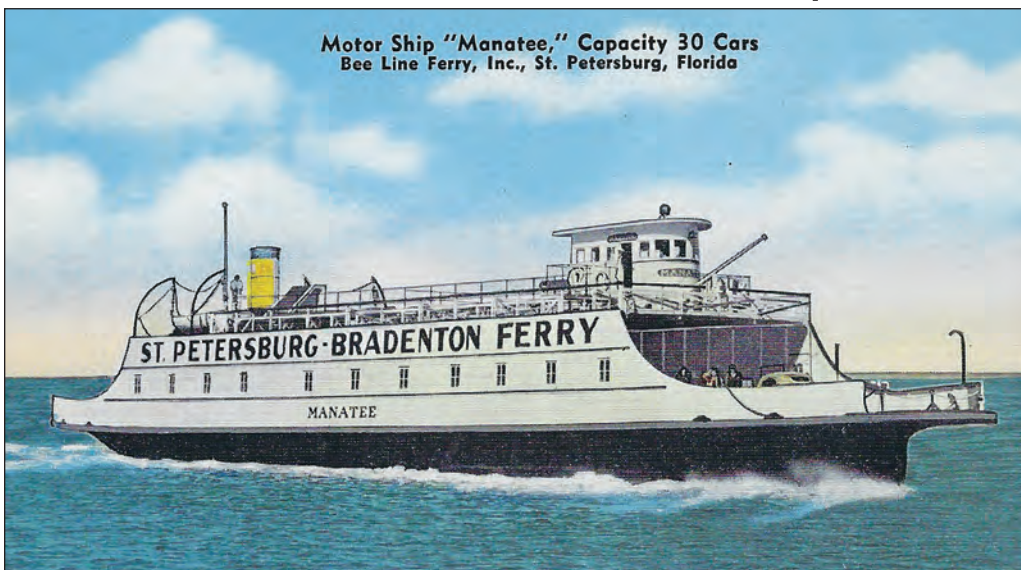
The history of the club and how the surrounding area of Northeast St. Petersburg developed is an interesting story. A half-century ago, this part of Northeast St. Petersburg looked very different than it does today. This was 16 years before the upscale, gated community of Placido Bayou went

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(From left) Tennis director Shikha Singh with members Katy Koperski, Gina Misenhelder, and Rich Tarrell during a recent tennis exhibition.

The Bee Line Ferry



The Manatee was the Bee Line's third ferry, added in 1932, with a capacity of 31 autos and 120 passengers.

Will Michaels

Much has been made of the success of the current ferry service operating between St. Petersburg and Tampa. But long before the current Cross-Bay Ferry, there was another ferry called the Bee Line Ferry.

St. Petersburg's development has long been tied to transportation. Our city was the result of the Orange Belt Railway being enticed by local property owner John C. Williams to come to what is now St. Petersburg. Our early streetcar grid did much to expand the city beyond

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Renaissance Man



Scott Neil at work making craft spirits

Janan Talafer

Scott Neil is one of those rare Floridians – a sixth generation native. His family has lived in Narcoossee, Florida, a tiny unincorporated town outside of Orlando, since the 1830s. "My grandfather started some of the first rodeos in the area," says Scott. That sense of adventure must have been passed down grandfather to grandson because Scott's life has been anything but ordinary.

A former Special Forces Green Beret master sergeant, Scott was a member of the elite team of Green Berets known as 'Horse Soldiers,' some of whom were portrayed in the movie *12 Strong*. He's also a resident of the Old Northeast with his wife Rhonda. I had the opportunity to talk with Scott about his extraordinary 25-year career in the Army, and his latest adventures which include co-founding a new craft-spirits distillery in St. Pete, and getting ready to parachute into Normandy with some of his fellow Green Berets for the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Spring is my favorite season in Florida. The scent of gardenias and jasmine fills the air, my big orange Ixora blooms look like pompoms, and butterflies are everywhere. I've even seen huge black bumblebees in my Allamanda bush. On weekends, Home Depot and Lowes are packed with gardeners like myself who love to dig in the dirt and spruce up the landscape before the heat and humidity of the summer takes over.

It's also the time of year when St. Pete comes alive with outdoor activities, from the athletes in town for the St. Anthony's Triathlon to outdoor concerts like the Tampa Bay Blues Festival with this year's major headliner Boz Scaggs. Mainsail Art Festival just completed its 45th year, an amazing accomplishment, and then there's the popular American Stage in the Park. Where else but St. Pete could you bring a picnic baskets to kick back and relax under the stars while watching outstanding professional theater? This year's *Mamma Mia* was by far one of the best. And for a completely different type of outdoor entertainment, Preserve the 'Burg hosts movies in North Straub Park every Thursday in May. If we ever wonder why St. Pete has become so popular, perhaps this line-up of family friendly events could be the answer.

I also want to give a shout-out to several secret Easter Bunnies, starting with the Junior League of St. Petersburg. For a nominal \$25, a few days before Easter in April, Junior League members discreetly delivered Easter Eggs filled with candy and prizes to the lawns of unsuspecting friends, family and neighbors – and grandchildren. It would have been fun to see the surprise on their faces as they looked out the window in early morning to see the lawn covered in colorful eggs.

A big thank you also to the board members and committee chairmen for the Snell Isle Homeowners Association who hosted an Easter Egg Hunt for Snell Isle families on April 18. After a visit by the Easter Bunny, dozens of enthusiastic young children burst through the doors of the St. Pete Woman's Club to eagerly search the lawn for hidden eggs. A good time was had by all.



Janan Talafer
Editor, *Northeast Journal*

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For more information, contact Janan Talafer,
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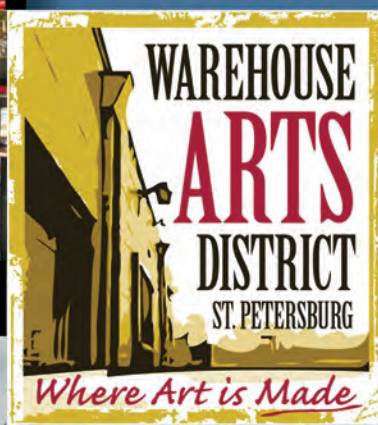
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MEET THE WRITERS

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.

Jeannie Carlson is a correspondent for Tampa Bay Newspapers, Inc. and an adjunct professor of English at local colleges in the area. A resident of the Old Northeast since 2000, she is the publicity/entertainment chair for the Suncoast Scandinavian Club. [carlburn@tampabay.rr.com]



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



Diana Krause Geegan, a UCF grad, taught school and later excelled in the financial services field. She found her passion in real estate and utilizes her skills and training as a successful realtor. She loves spending time with friends and family, studying God's Word and giving back to the St. Pete community.



Lynn Lotkowitz spent years in radio in NY, and in business dev/mgmt at *Florida Trend Magazine*. She volunteers at Tomlinson Adult Learning Center ESOL Program, and travels internationally. Lynn is the new *NEJ* Facebook roving reporter sharing photos and video about exciting events, people and places around town. facebook.com/NortheastJournalFL



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]



Howard Pollack has been a career attorney in New York for over 30 years. He moved to St. Petersburg to be closer to the rest of his family and has been writing for enjoyment for many years. Howard published his first novel a few years ago, a murder mystery entitled *Everywhere That Tommy Goes*.



Samantha Bond Richman relocated to the Old Northeast in 2014 after living in Tampa for 28 years. She owns Sam Bond Benefit Group, a downtown insurance agency. She and husband Tim enjoy fishing, golf, and supporting family-oriented charitable causes.



Gary Smith is a realtor in downtown St. Pete. He has a degree in Journalism from Colorado State University and has been a freelance writer for 30+ years. He covered the Tampa Bay Lightning for eight years for the *Bradenton Herald*, and has written about the Rays, Bucs and Bolts for the *Associated Press* and the *Herald*.



Janan Talafer A long-time Snell Isle resident, Janan is the editor of the *Northeast Journal* and 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]



Holly K. Walker has over 20 years of experience in speaking and writing both professionally and socially. She has been a resident of NE St. Petersburg since 1995. She is married and has two children. She also enjoys philanthropy and serves on several boards. [walker93@gte.net]



Gay Wasik-Zegel moved to St. Petersburg five years ago after retiring as a school media specialist. She is the author of a children's book *Stop Means Stop!* She enjoys gardening, yoga, biking, volunteering, and living in the best city in Florida. [gwzegel@gmail.com]



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Florida Sunshine Night Celebrating USAFA Cadets

Holly Walker

Florida parents bring bright sunshine to cold Colorado Springs, Colorado to honor and thank our United States Air Force Academy cadets and future military officers.

The majority of high school graduates attend local state universities. The few who decide to dedicate their lives serving our country as future military leaders have a unique educational experience with many sacrifices which are very different from the average college student.

We are very proud of our son Thomas (Trey) Walker and the 250 other Florida students who won an appointment to the US Air Force Academy (USAFA) in Colorado. Their summer after high school was a whirlwind: haircuts, uniforms, and boot camp. For the next year they faced rigorous training and discipline, culminating in 'recognition' in March as full-fledged cadets.

In exchange for this discipline and training, the students receive a free four-year college education which includes room and board, but perhaps most important to them, they also receive a paycheck. In four years, these young adults are turned into second lieutenants and the future leaders of our military.

Several years ago, parents of cadets from Texas got together and created a 'Texas Night' to let their cadets feel as they were back in their home state. Parents in California followed, and then Florida. February 26th of this year was 'Florida Sunshine Night.' The event was sponsored by the USAFA Florida Parent Clubs, which has chapters all over the state, including our local Gulf Coast Tampa Bay. The parent clubs are 501(c)(3) organizations which can accept tax-deductible donations. They exist to support the cadets from the day they are accepted into the USAFA until they graduate. The parent club principles are Integrity – Service – Excellence.

During Florida Sunshine Night, there were over 50 parent volunteers from Florida who flew to Colorado Springs at their own expense to help set up and host this amazing evening. The various parent clubs from throughout the state had started raising funds a year prior and had requested donations throughout the State of Florida. But the majority of the funds came from a \$100 donation from each family with a Florida cadet. There were also major sponsors, such as FloGrown, which donated hundreds of shirts with Florida logos, fishing scenes, and SPF protection which were given to each Florida cadet.

Another family sought donations from Stein Mart Corporation, headquartered in Jacksonville. Stein Mart provided hand-carved Florida wooden boards at their



Trey Walker (second from left) and fellow Florida cadets



Florida cadets participate in a group game activity.

cost, with the financial difference picked up by the family. The wooden boards were given to each Florida cadet to display in his or her dorm room, along with a State of Florida flag. These were just a few of the many other Florida-specific gifts, prizes, and souvenirs given to each cadet that night.

The event was held in Arnold Hall on the USAFA campus which was decorated with all-things Florida. State of Florida flags were hanging everywhere. There was a beach ball archway at the entry when each cadet came in to register that evening, and blow-up pool toys, including water rafts, dolphins, and fish. There were life-size posters of NASA astronauts and

other famous or known Florida persons, as well as palm trees and beach scenes.

Cadets enjoyed a traditional Florida Cuban meal with Key lime pie, along with entertainment and games. One of the most popular games was the money booth. Each cadet could enter a booth where \$1 bills were swirling around and attempt to collect as many as possible during a one-minute timed period. The Florida cadets also participated in group activities in which they could win valuable prizes such as Ray Ban sunglasses, scuba diving masks and fins, Avalanche electronic devices, and more. All

of the prizes were donated by parents or Florida merchants.

What an amazing time was had by all, even the volunteer parents (including myself). My son graduated from the International Baccalaureate Program at St. Petersburg High School and is now a junior at the USAFA. Like all of the cadets at the USAFA, he worked very hard to be accepted. Winning an appointment to one of the US military academies is highly competitive. Not only is there an application process, there are also background checks, drug testing, and interviews that go far beyond what you would expect with traditional colleges. A nomination by congressmen or senators is required, and the candidates are interviewed by the lawmakers' local and national staff. Our son received nominations from both Congressman David Jolly and Senator Bill Nelson.

It was a delightful to bring our big, bright sunshine to a white and snowy Colorado night in February and to recognize our Florida cadets. These fine young men and women will soon be the leaders of our military and in a position to protect each and every one of us. ●

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ARTIST PROFILE

'Lady and the Bard' in My Backyard

Gay Wasik-Zegel

Wesat on the porch, my neighbors and I – The stories grew wings, the time seemed to fly.

Shakespeare was a well-known bard, a storyteller intent on passing down traditions through the spoken word. My Northeast Park neighbors, Jimmy and Michelle Moore – a.k.a. Lady and the Bard – also use spoken words, along with their unique blend of folk, blues, and jazz to remind listeners of an oft-forgotten America. Oh, the stories I heard as we took a step back in time and spent a Sunday afternoon on the back porch...

MICHELLE'S STORY

Michelle began singing in her church choir at the age of nine. Under the leadership of the church's dynamic organist, Michelle was assigned as understudy to the soloist in Handel's *Let the Bright Seraphim*. Though she never imagined performing that solo on stage, a chain of events landed her in the starring role. Michelle remembers being sick the night of the concert. On stage, her voice cracked and faltered, then grew stronger. "It was an amazing feeling to feel the power in my voice," she says, and admits, "I was hooked on the joy of performing live."

Michelle joined the Florida Girls' Choir and was named Soloist of the Year. Then, during high school, she became an active member of the Clearwater Community Choir. Following graduation, and still not sure of her direction, a friend encouraged her to apply for the music program at Florida State University. There, Michelle concentrated on voice, touring with The University Singers. She also met Jimmy Moore, a doctoral student, and the rest is history. Following graduation, Jimmy and Michelle moved back to the Tampa Bay area where Michelle performed with Opera Tampa and the St. Petersburg Opera. Today, Michelle works a full-time job from home while managing many of the business details involved with the couple's continuing musical pursuits.

JIMMY'S TWO 'AHA MOMENTS'

Growing up, Jimmy's older sister loved her record collection. She had joined the Columbia House Record Club and was eagerly expecting a shipment of 12 vinyl LPs, which she had purchased for a grand total of 1 cent. At the age of 9, Jimmy arrived home from school first. "My one job was to take the box of LPs, without opening them, into the house and to put them in her bedroom," he says.

Jimmy was so impacted by this experience that he later wrote about it. He shared what he wrote in an email: "Having little self-control at that age, I opened



the box. Inside were recent releases by Bon Jovi, Duran Duran, U2, Culture Club, Journey, REO Speedwagon, and Tears for Fears. Then I saw the *Tribute* album." (The *Tribute* album, produced in 1987 by Ozzy Osbourne, featured his work with heavy metal guitarist Randy Rhoads. Rhoads had originally played in the group Quiet Riot before joining Osbourne. Tragically, he died in a plane accident in 1982.)

"I reached in for this record, and after holding it up to study the cover photo, I tore off the wrapper and curiously opened its book-like cover. Inside were large, colorful pictures of Randy Rhoads on stage playing his polka-dot Flying V and cream-white Les Paul guitars. I went on to

read the handwritten letter from Ozzy on the back cover and found out how young Randy was and how sorely missed he was by many."

Was Jimmy's sister upset? "No," smiles Jimmy. "She has always been a great, supportive older sister. I think she was secretly happy that I liked her music." As a result, Jimmy played heavy-metal guitar in bands all the way through high school.

Jimmy's second 'aha moment' came at the age of 18 when he was mesmerized by classical guitarist Paco De Lucia, who was performing at the Mahaffey Theater. Then and there, Jimmy knew it was time to leave the heavy metal bands and transition to classical guitar. He wasted no time, eventually earning a Doctor of Music degree in Classical Guitar from Florida State University's highly respected guitar program.

Jimmy (Dr. Moore) currently teaches guitar at both St. Petersburg College and Florida Southern College. He also teaches gives guitar lessons and performs classical guitar at various venues throughout the area.

LADY AND THE BARD

Together, Jimmy and Michelle are a dynamic couple, artfully balancing busy married life with their musical dreams and aspirations. Through their duo Lady and the Bard, they have found a special niche built around their shared interest in Americana from the Civil War to the 1940s. It's easy to see why Jimmy and Michelle refer to this work as their 'passion project.' The folk heroes they discover continue to fuel their inspiration to write original music, blog, record their first album, and fine-tune their tight vocal harmonies. As a result, their class-act musical performances are infused with lively and interactive storytelling. "We love the intimate concert setting," they both told me.

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longtime St. Pete resident Jon LaBudde

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The couple's mutual taste in favorite artists includes Woody Guthrie and Jean Ritchie, and they relish the task of digging for the roots of a favorite song. One of their favorites is a ballad called *The Unfortunate Rake* originating from a day when folksongs doubled as public service announcements. Often, these cautionary tales were sung as a warning to others. *The Unfortunate Rake* is the tale of a young soldier who lies in the hospital dying of a disease from a "woman who disordered me." It is believed that this song spread through barracks and ports,

showing up in Kentucky, Wyoming, and Texas before eventually being spun into a similar American folksong called *The Streets of Laredo*.

In case you haven't attended one of Lady and the Bard's performances, you can hear a sampling of their music at www.ladyandthebard.com Here on their blog, Michelle offers a wealth of information including video clips, playlists, and suggested websites. A recent post dedicated to Woody Guthrie provides background on his song *Pastures of Plenty*, and explores the plight of Dust Bowl workers during the Great Depression. There is so much interesting information on this site, in fact, that I could have spent an afternoon just reading and learning. Instead, I spent an afternoon on the porch, listening to stories from some of the finest neighbors around. I hope you have a chance to meet them soon. ◆



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RACQUET CLUB *Cont'd from page 1*
 up just east of the club; and five years before Winston Park, the large, over-55 complex of 700+ condos were constructed across from the club on 47th Avenue NE and 1st Street NE.

Credit for the area's development goes to an investment group led by well-known local businessman Robert (Bob) Crisp. Mr. Crisp held real estate interests in both Florida and North Carolina. He served on several bank boards and was very active in the Tampa and St. Petersburg business communities. At one time, he and his investment group owned all of the land from 4th Street North to the water between 22nd Avenue North to 54th Avenue North.

According to his son, Robert Crisp, Jr., Rob Sr. donated six acres of the land to build a new school for Shorecrest, which relocated from its previous location on North Shore Drive, where it had been in existence as the Shorecrest Outdoor School since 1923. The new school opened in 1967 and a year later, Rob, Sr. decided to develop the Racquet Club of St. Petersburg, which he owned until 1988 when the members bought it. According to his son, Mr. Crisp loved golf and tennis, "but he preferred spending his leisure time fishing, hunting, and gardening."

In the early days of the Racquet Club, Mr. Crisp's daughter Gail and husband Fred Razook took charge of the club's operation. It was a humble beginning with eight tennis courts (two lit for night play), a pool, and a snack bar that sold burgers, sandwiches, and cold beer.

With his daughter and son-in-law holding down operations at the Racquet Club, Mr. Crisp went on to serve as two-time president of the St. Pete Chamber of Commerce. He chaired the Pinellas County Sports Authority and was a Shorecrest Trustee for many years. He also served as a local president and board member of both the local and national Contractors and Builders Association. In 1973, he was named St. Petersburg's 'Mr. Sun.' At



Racquet Club members

the time, he was the youngest businessman to have earned that honor.

In the late '60s, the club's first tennis pro was a locally renowned guy in a straw hat named Dan Sullivan. "Dan was one of the first-ranked male tennis players in St. Pete," said Marshall Craig, a longtime member of the Racquet Club and the designated club historian. During the club's 50th anniversary celebration last year, Craig entertained the crowd with tales about the early days, when Dan and his family lived on the club's second floor. At the time, the second floor was connected by

a flight of stairs located in the corner of the dining room. Craig also gave recognition to Jack Prybyland, who was the swim coach at the time. "Jack and Dan taught generations of kids to swim and swing a racquet," said Craig.

Fifty years later, the Racquet Club is still going strong with a little over 200 members. There are now 14 clay courts, three hard courts and four pickleball courts. Pickleball? In case you've never heard of it, pickleball is an up-and-coming game played with paddles and a type of wiffle ball.

The Club also has five teaching professionals and a variety of programs for all ages, including interclub leagues, USTA Leagues, ladies leagues, tennis clinics, and junior programs. "We want to offer something for everyone," said Shikha Singh, the club's tennis director.

Singh came to the Racquet Club in 2014, after 12 years at Bartlett Park, now known as the St. Petersburg Tennis Center. A native of Mumbai, India, Singh was the #1-ranked junior tennis player in the country when he earned a scholarship to Eckerd College. At Eckerd, he led the Tritons Tennis Team to its most successful run in the college's history. "It's been an amazing experience," said Singh of his career as a tennis pro. "I came from a modest middle-class family in India. Coming from Mumbai to Eckerd College with such a beautiful campus was a wonderful educational experience."



Coach Jasa Pohara with the 10-and-under team after winning the local division junior team tennis championship

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Tennis director Shikha Singh



Racquet Club members



While he was at the St. Petersburg Tennis Center, Singh teamed up with international star tennis pro Jim Courier to develop a junior program to mentor young players. Their mission was not to turn the youth into professionals, but to help them get a tennis scholarship for college. Then in 2001 when Singh joined the Racquet Club, one of his first endeavors was to develop a junior program.

Today he and fellow Racquet Club pro Patrick Derr, the club's junior tennis coordinator, are teaching a new generation of young people to play. Their philosophy is while tennis can be challenging to learn and improve your skills, it's supposed to be fun. Quick Start is the tennis program they have developed

for the youngest players, kids 10 and younger. "It allows the kids to learn the game in a friendlier way with softer balls, smaller courts, and a game-based learning concept," says Singh.

It's a long stretch from watering down Har-Tru tennis courts by hand at night to the bustling private club that St. Pete Racquet Club is today with family-friendly programs, a loyal membership, and a popular restaurant that offers a Sunday brunch, which is open to the public. Thanks to great pros and a growing membership, the Racquet Club can look forward to the next 50 years of helping St. Pete families enjoy the game of tennis. ●

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For the Love of Dogs

Howard Pollack

Dogs, as well as many other pets, become part of the family in most households. They share time, shelter, food – and most importantly, love and companionship. And once you have had the opportunity to share all that with a loyal pet such as a dog, it brings you much joy and happiness and can help to cure depression among other afflictions. Just the simple act of petting your pooch can stimulate positive chemical reactions in your system that make you feel better.

Dogs are used in children's hospitals and senior centers alike to bring warmth and joy to the sick and infirm. They are also used quite frequently to aid those with special needs and help the blind to get around town. There are so many positive aspects to dog ownership, I cannot begin to fit them all in one article. And, while this article is actually about the loss of a special friend, and ultimately (when the time is right) the adoption of a new special friend – to truly understand the impact of that loss, one needs to be reminded of the many wonderful things a dog brings into the mix.

Over a year ago we suffered the loss of not one, but both of our dogs. Separately, we lost our two loyal, big, beautiful Newfoundlands, or 'Newfies' to those familiar with the breed. They had been with us for just about a decade each. Unfortunately, as they aged, their health deteriorated and our family watched as they grew older and more infirm. Non-dog people would insensitively ask us why would we bring such pets into our lives if they live such a short time? Why put yourselves through the agony of the loss with something so inevitable?

The time honored answer for me was: "Isn't it better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all?" Of course, we have all heard that phrase before, in a different context; but it fits here, too. In the end, everything dies in its own time as life runs its course. But it is the journey we look at and should focus on, not the end. After all, we know it will end, just not necessarily when, and so we should make the best of it while we can.

It is that way with dogs, too, of course. And since we know the time is shorter, we must relish it while we can. Certainly, many of us in our great city of St. Petersburg do so. Just look at the number of people walking their dogs around town, along the beach, and by the parks. Try and count the number of doggie parks, pet friendly beaches, and the like which pervade our community. We even have a dog bar here in St. Petersburg! No other community that I know of would even consider that concept.

So, after raising and caring for our two amazing dogs, they finally left this earth and when it was their time, we gave each of them the sweetest send off we could. We miss them dearly, but we were comforted in knowing that while they were with us, they lived great lives, they were loved and respected, and they gave us

their unquestionable love in return. And, while this is all sad, in fact, we move forward on a happy note: we adopted two new puppies, who have now grown to adult size, but are still puppies, nonetheless. Their names are Boulder and Dakota, adorable little Newfies. Well, not so little anymore.

When we first adopted Boulder, at two months old, he weighed 16 pounds. Now he is well over a year old and weighs in at 140 pounds, with an expected full-grown weight of about 160 pounds. Dakota came to us at about 20 pounds and is now over 120 with an expected full-grown weight of about 130 pounds. These playful,

mischievous little pups with all their antics have lightened the household mood and have brought sheer pleasure and utter joy back into our lives. So what if Boulder grabs a sock and takes off with it, begging us to chase him down? What's the big deal if he steps in his water bowl and spills it all over the kitchen floor?

We crack up laughing when we hear them in the other room wrestling with each other or chewing on a dog toy that makes squeaky sounds in rapid succession the faster they bite into it. And when they come into our bedroom at 7 a.m., one or both may just jump on the bed, or sit at the bedside urgently looking up at me. Boulder, with his sweet, golden, puppy-dog eyes, or Dakota pawing at me, both demanding a walk around the neighborhood is priceless.

Then again, when we call out "let's go bye-bye" and they bolt to the front door in anticipation of a ride in the car, or a trip to the park, it is magical. They are turning out to be two of the many great dogs we have had. They are extremely smart, they have learned and trained well, taking only a week or so to house break. And they are both now fully off-leash trained. They are great with people and other dogs, and have a blast when we take them to

the dog park behind the Vinoy Hotel. Both have even learned to swim. If you are familiar with the breed, you know Newfies are very strong swimmers. With their large muscles, giant paws, and webbed feet, they were originally bred as water-rescue dogs.

Of course, there are always drawbacks, but none we cannot handle. Sure their size can be daunting, especially to strangers who might fear them simply because of how big they are. And grooming is always an issue, as Newfies have double coats of very thick fur, so they shed quite a bit. But they are also called 'gentle giants' for good reason. Because of their temperament, they are great with children and seniors alike. They also get along wonderfully with large and small dogs. Our home is finally back to normal, and we are reminded that with all losses there will inevitably be gains, as the future brings brighter times and new adventures; however, we will never forget the past. There will always be a special place in our hearts for all the wonderful pets that have come and gone, and who have shared our lives. ●



Above: "Newfies" Boulder (left) and Dakota strike a pose. Below: Howard Pollack and his wife Cindy Cooperman.



AROUND THE BLOCK

PRESERVE THE BURG'S MAY MOVIES IN THE PARK

Most people know Preserve the 'Burg as a champion for historic neighborhood and building preservation, stepping up recently to be advocates for Driftwood, Historic Kenwood, Crescent Heights, the Historic Old Northeast and the Holiday Motel, among others. The group offers walking tours and a speaker series, as well as the popular community Movies in the Park, held every Thursdays evening May in North Straus Park.

Pack a picnic or purchase food and drink from local vendors, and bring a short lawn chair or blanket for seating. If you ride your bike, Coast Bike Share is offering secure onsite bicycle valet – quite the innovative idea to avoid the parking crunch downtown.

Each week will not only offer a different movie, but also live music starting at 7 p.m. Movies begin at dusk. The event

is free, but donations are accepted to support Preserve the 'Burg's mission. It's the 21st century version of the retro drive-in movies!

Raiders of the Lost Ark was the opening movie on May 2, followed by *Groundhog Day* on May 9. Here is the line-up for the rest of May:

May 16: *Ghost*, the 1990 romantic fantasy thriller starring Patrick Swayze, Demi Moore and Whoopi Goldberg.

May 23: *La La Land*, the 2016 award-winning romantic musical starring Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone.

May 30: *The Lorax*, the 2012 3D animated musical fantasy based on the book by Dr. Seuss. ●

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NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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ST. PETE'S JEWEL ON TAMPA BAY

Rick Carson, editor • nsnaeditor@aol.com



We want to share our neighbors' thoughts about what it means to be a neighbor and neighborly in the Historic Old Northeast. Send your thoughts (200 words or so) to NSNAeditor@aol.com.

HONNA HOLIDAYS

It was 9:50am on Saturday, April 20 at Coffee Pot Park. More than 80 children ranging from three months to 10 years old were gathered and anxiously awaiting the start of the annual HONNA Easter Egg Hunt. The Easter Bunny arrived and waved to the kids. Thanks to HONNA volunteers in collaboration with Mr. Bunny, over 1,000 plastic eggs were filled with small toys, stickers, erasers – and the occasional chocolate – and then hidden in the park. Some eggs



contained a message to collect a prize from the prize basket, and the biggest prizes went to those who found a treasured golden egg.

At exactly 10am, the hunt began. Children fanned out across the park to find eggs and search for the elusive golden eggs. Within 10 minutes most of the park had been scoured and all the eggs found. The kids brought the eggs back to their parents or guardians to go through them one-by-one to find out what treasures they had found. The golden-egg finders got their awesome prizes, and families stopped to pose

with the Easter Bunny. The day was now sunny, and the kids enjoyed the newly-renovated playground at Coffee Pot Park. Others grabbed a snack or a drink at the refreshment table while others headed off with their parents and elders to the next event on this beautiful holiday weekend. Everyone seemed happy and appreciative to be part of such a fun event and to be members of such a friendly and supportive neighborhood.

For more fun, HONNA will be sponsoring our annual 4th of July Children's Parade on that Thursday. So decorate your bicycles and wagons

and come to Coffee Pot Park. The parade starts at 10am and is just two blocks along Coffee Pot Boulevard and back to the park. ROTC (the Righteously Outrageous Twirling Corps, pictured center above) will be marching with us again this year, flags spinning! Check out the fire truck and maybe meet a local team mascot or two. Prizes will be given out for the most festive marchers, so make sure you dress up in your red, white, and blue! Join us for more Old Northeast neighborliness!

~ John Johnson, HONNA Vice President & Events Chair



PRESERVE THE 'BURG RECOGNITIONS

The Old Northeast and HONNA were well represented at the Preserve the 'Burg awards celebration at the Cathedral Church of St. Petersburg on March 19 where HONNA Board member Robin Reed was named Preservationist of the Year.

Robin has served as chair or co-chair of HONNA's Historic Preservation and Planning Committee for the past 13 years. A few of the many accomplishments recognized by Preserve the 'Burg include:

- Spearheading development and publication of *Souvenir of St. Petersburg, Florida: Views from the Vinoy* (2008), an 80-page paperback book highlighting St. Pete's history and produced by HONNA
- Leading the campaign to designate the Historic Old Northeast a Local Historic District (2006)
- Providing guidance and support to homeowners in the development of

'mini' Local Historic Districts within the ONE

- Researching and helping to lead and fund the creation of the Centennial Sundial at Vista Point in North Shore Park (2010)
- Overseeing the implementation of Acorn lighting in the neighborhood, funded, in part, by volunteer hours contributed by residents
- Fundraising for the Sunken Gardens Flamingos Forever effort to restore the flamingo population
- Raising funds to develop a Children's Garden within Sunken Gardens to allow a place for children to interact and learn about where their food comes from



Preserve the 'Burg honored the following homes and property owners for their work...

- Restoration, rehabilitation and stewardship:
 - Broshears residence, 226 17th Avenue NE;
 - Rudolph home, 300 15th Ave N;
 - Simon home, 235 12th Avenue NE;
 - Doyle home, 625 20th Avenue NE;
 - Myers/Dowd residence, 205 8th Avenue NE;
 - Public School Old North East (formerly known as the North Ward School)

QUARTERLY NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

The June evening's featured speaker was Laura Duvelot, Historic Preservationist for the City. She provided insights into the history of brick streets in the City, the first ones appearing in 1903 and considered a very modern innovation. At their height, there were 319 miles of brick streets in the City, but after World War II, asphalt became a cheaper alternative so by 1992 only 90 miles of brick streets were left. She commented that "there is a culture of appreciation" for the brick streets in the ONE, which are protected and, as necessary, are required to be re-leveled by the City. [More about our brick streets can be found in Laura's article which appeared

on page 34 in the March/April issue of the *Northeast Journal*.]

St. Pete Police Officer Josh Jordan shared that there had been negligible instances of recent vehicular and residential/commercial burglaries in the ONE and that the few car break-ins were on unlocked vehicles. He reported that there had been a large number of directed patrols within the neighborhood during the recent weeks. Audience comments included questions about dangerous pedestrian crossings on North Shore Drive, speeding on 1st Street N/NE between 22nd and 25th Avenues, and frustrating two-way traffic on 9th Avenue NE between Beach Drive and 1st Street.

A presentation was made to the Sunken Gardens Forever Foundation in the amount of \$8,300 from the proceeds of the Candlelight Tour. The contribution has gone to the acquisition of two flamingos, which cost \$3,000 each. The Foundation was selected by the Tour committee to be the local non-profit to receive a percentage of the net profit.

Board member Doug O'Dowd presented information on his survey of sidewalks and curb cuts in the neighborhood and their need to be in compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. Residents can report concerns – such as cracked hex

blocks being a trip hazard – to the City using SeeClickFix (www.seeclickfix.com/st-petersburg/report).

The upcoming neighborhood meeting will be Monday, June 17, at Westminster Church. All residents are invited to attend.

NEIGHBORHOOD-WIDE YARD SALE

It was a crisp sunny Saturday morning on March 23 with more than 50 neighbors spread across the Old Northeast officially registered for the big yard sale and marked on the locator map. By 7:30am, there were already bargain hunters ahead of the 8am start, cruising through the neighborhood in search of the small treasures to be found at such an event. With ads in multiple publications and posted online, the business transactions became brisk pretty quickly. More than 120 locator maps were passed out in just the first hour so at Westminster Church. Many participants across the neighborhood commented on the increased level of traffic for this year's popular event.

Meanwhile at the church parking lot, the not-for-profit Louise Graham Regeneration Center collected paper documents to be shredded, a complimentary service provided for the benefit of HONNA members. A Goodwill Industries semi-trailer pulled up at the church near the close of the yard sale to collect unsold items from residents. As the temperature rose, it turned into a beautiful Florida day with both buyers and sellers happy with deals across the neighborhood. Two large secure bins of paper were collected for shredding, and the Goodwill truck was filled with donated items – overall a productive spring morning for all.



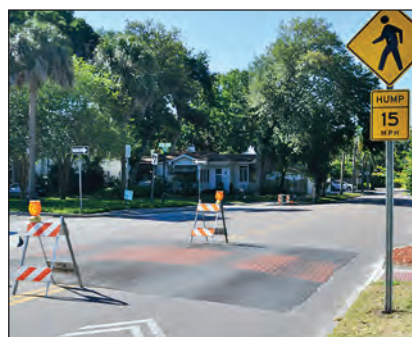
TIPS FOR USING SEECLICKFIX

HONNA board member Doug O'Dowd is noticing a lot of activity from the City in the ONE in terms of sidewalk and street repairs. HONNA has been documenting the various issues in our neighborhood, and the appropriate City departments are responding. We have been using the SeeClickFix app (www.seeclickfix.com/st-petersburg/report) to record and send the issues to the City, and if you would like to report issues through SeeClickFix there are few good things to consider:

- Please take a photo of the item you are reporting – and please try to provide a wide angle photo so the City departments can clearly identify where the issue is located.
- You can always submit anonymously, but if you are reporting a

code violation on a neighboring property, it cannot be anonymous. The only way the City can investigate and go onto the person's property is if they have photo/video evidence from a neighboring property, and they must disclose it to the potential violator.

- If you are reporting a code violation, as a courtesy you may want to contact the property owner before you submit it.
- Be patient. The City receives a lot of items through SeeClickFix. They have to determine the proper department and then it is given a priority. Because of the volume of activity it may take a few months.
- If you report an item through SeeClickFix, you will receive notice when it is fixed from the Mayor's action email. You will be given an opportunity to say thank you. Doing so is very much appreciated.



- The newly-installed raised crosswalks on 1st Street N/NE between 22nd and 30th avenues feature 'brick' imprinting; the pattern is similar to the pattern of the existing brick crosswalk at 25th Avenue. A yet-to-be-installed speed hump is also scheduled by the alley between 26th and 27th Avenues where drainage requirements preclude a raised crosswalk. HONNA had requested that raised crosswalks be installed where possible and selected the color and imprint pattern that were used. These speed calming measures had been requested by petitions from a majority of the property owners on 1st Avenue N/NE between 22nd and 30th Avenues N/NE and were supported by the HONNA Board.
- St. Petersburg Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of summer camps – including elementary and middle school camps, aquatics camps, tech camps, and a therapeutic recreation camp – which provide youth with a chance to experience something new at an affordable price. Summer camps run Monday June 3 through Friday August 9. Times for camps vary. Fee assistance is available for

those who qualify. Visit www.stpeteparksrec.org/camps to learn more and to view the summer camp guide. Come play, learn and explore!



- Notice the bougainvillea are gone on the two pergolas on Plaza Andalusia in Granada Terrace? The City will be refurbishing the structures: sand blasting and repainting them, replacing all wood trusses and replanting the bougainvillea. All improvements are being done by the City under the historic building/preservation guidelines, which HONNA has verified. Also receiving maintenance are the wishing well (at the north Granada Terrace roundabout) and the Venetian steps (at the seawall on Coffee Pot Bayou).

- The City of St. Petersburg Planning Team is inviting residents to participate in its current planning efforts. Vision 2050 is a community-wide conversation about the future of our City. Expect to hear about the kick-off of the conversation in the fall. Go to www.stpete2050.com to sign up now and share your ideas. An upcoming meeting on high-hazard-area zoning is scheduled for Tuesday May 21 from 6:30-8pm at the Main Library (3745 9th Avenue N).

On the Calendar

Check www.honna.org and watch social media for details on these and other upcoming events

Friday, May 17

Porch Party
7:30pm
[there are no Porch Parties in June or July]

Monday, June 17

Quarterly Neighborhood Association meeting
Westminster Church
6:45pm social
7pm meeting

Thursday, July 4

Annual 4th of July Children's Parade
Coffee Pot Park
10am

HONNA'S SHINING STARS – "BEFORE" AND "AFTER"

In an effort to honor Old Northeast homeowners for preserving or updating their home or property and investing the extra dollar to keep the character and history of their homes intact, HONNA has been recognizing them with the Neighborhood Star Award. Every month, yard signs will be placed on properties to indicate an award. Here are the Stars for April: 555 12th Avenue NE (Karen Kelly), and 101 26th Avenue NE (Cynthia Vlad).

Watch for new Stars in the neighborhood monthly, and you'll be able to find them posted on www.honna.org in addition to HONNA's Facebook



page. We invite you to be a part of this effort, so please feel free to nominate a neighbor or a refurbished property you admire in the Old Northeast. Have a home to honor? Send the information to Charleen McGrath at treasurer@honna.org.



APRIL: 555 12th Avenue NE "Before"



APRIL: 555 12th Avenue NE "After"



APRIL: 101 26th Avenue NE "Before"



APRIL: 101 26th Avenue NE "After"

Buna Dimineata: Good Morning Romania

Lynn Lotkowitz

On a sunny Friday afternoon in April, I left St. Petersburg for an amazing two-week volunteer experience of a lifetime in Romania with Global Volunteers, a St. Paul, Minn.-based non-profit group that places volunteers for one, two and three-week programs in more than fifteen countries and disadvantaged parts of the US.

Three flights and 20 exhausting hours later, I arrived in Bucharest, Romania's capital. Once there, I met the five teammates who would join me in this unique adventure. Coincidentally, one of my teammates – Karen Raihill, a retired corporate communications executive – is from the Northeast Park neighborhood. It was great to be there with a fellow St. Pete neighbor. In addition to Karen and myself, my other teammates included a retired anesthesiologist, a psychologist, a nanny, and a business professional. We were all looking forward to our assignments, which included teaching English to youth at a local high school to help them practice their pronunciation and conversational skills, and working with special-needs children at Elena Beldiman Municipal Hospital.

Although Romania was new to me, I was familiar with the goals of the program because this was my fourth Global Volunteers service program. Previously, I participated in three trips to the island of Crete in Greece, and one trip to Havana, Cuba. These programs offer a way to help a community, as well as provide a close-up look into another culture and country.

A former Eastern Bloc communist nation, Romania borders Hungary, Moldova, Ukraine, Bulgaria, and Serbia. Global Volunteers has been working in Romania since the 1990s, after the country transitioned from communist rule to its current status as a parliamentary democracy, member of the European Union, and part of NATO.

Bârlad, the city where we were to be stationed, is in eastern Romania and not too far from the Moldova border. It is the poorest region of the country with an average annual income of about \$500 per month and a population of about 55,000. It also is a hub of activity for the region with many working in the service sector, banking, retail, and a ball-bearing factory.

In Bârlad, the many Soviet-era buildings are in various stages of disrepair, but there are also buildings of traditional European architecture that have been handsomely restored. In addition, there are beautiful well-maintained Romanian Orthodox churches, the religion practiced by the majority of Romanians.

Daniel (our Romanian team leader's husband) and Doral (our driver) met us at the airport and took us to the hotel where Mihelia Cirjontu was waiting for us. Mihelia was a vice principal at a local high school and had been working with Global Volunteers for more than 20 years. She would be managing the program during our stay and was the 'go-to' person who helped with anything we needed.

Once we were all assembled, we took off on a five-hour van ride to Bârlad, our home for the next two weeks. The countryside we traveled through was flat with thousands of acres of farmland for potatoes, rye, and corn. We finally arrived at Hotel Moldova, a typical 1950s Soviet-era architectural building that was to be our



Saying goodbye to our enthusiastic fourth and fifth graders at Vasile Parvan School

home base. Not beautiful, but clean, functional, and conveniently located in the center of town.

GETTING SETTLED

On Sunday, our first full day in Romania, my teammate Barbara and I ventured out after breakfast on a walking tour of Bârlad. Lots of people were out and about heading to the expansive outdoor market that sold clothes, produce, meat, and just about anything you might want. Nearby was a beautiful tulip garden and we stopped to take a look. The owner noticed us, realized we were out-of-towners, and invited us in. It was a nice surprise to learn that the owner was a teacher in the local



Welcome-to-Romania dinner for our team



Looking out on the courtyard of Bran Castle, a national monument linked to the Dracula legend

school system and spoke English. In addition to the lovely tulip garden, she gave us a tour of her lovely traditional home, complete with a wine cellar. After a sample of her family's homemade wine, we thanked everyone and continued our exploration of the city.

With our walking tour complete and our jet lag nearly over, we settled down to learn about our work. Before dinner, we met as a group with our team leader Mihelia and discussed what we hoped to accomplish on the trip. What impresses me most about Global Volunteers is the organization's mission of promoting international friendship and understanding by helping foster a relationship with the people and the community. This humanitarian philosophy makes it possible to experience a country in a very authentic way.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

After breakfast and a brief coaching session from Mihelia, we were off to our assignments. My team went to Vasile Parvan School, a local public school. The second group went to Elena Beldiman Municipal Hospital. Vasile Parvan School serves about 500 students from first through eighth grades. The first morning we worked with 8- and 9-year-olds on basic English, colors, animals, and numbers. Romania – and particularly this region – gets very few American visitors, so it was as unique an experience for the students as it was for us. After lunch at our hotel, we returned to the school to work with a slightly older group of students in fifth grade. The students were fluent in basic English and were equally as enthusiastic for our lessons and eager to participate. We played Hangman, Word Bingo, and Simon Says.

By the third day, we settled into a comfortable routine working with the students in two sessions. During the morning, we focused on the younger students and in



the afternoon, the older ones. We played word games, practiced colors, numbers, the alphabet, and held short conversations. They were eager to share what they knew and seemed happy for the change of pace that the adult American volunteer ‘teachers’ brought to their world.

VOLUNTEERING AT THE HOSPITAL

I took time out from volunteering at the local school to experience what it was like to work with the children at Elena Beldiman Municipal Hospital. Many of the children being treated at the hospital were from the local orphanage and were waiting for adoption or foster care. The orphanage sends the children to the hospital for periodic checkups lasting for a week or two, depending on the children’s particular health needs.

Global Volunteers work in a section of the hospital that is designated for children from the orphanage with special needs, both physical and neurological. My second grandchild, Scarlett, was born this past Thanksgiving and thinking of her makes it all the more difficult to see a child who is sick and doesn’t have a family. The children at the hospital are receptive to the attention and physical contact. They love to play and be held. It’s a lot to take in, but it is also very rewarding to see a sick child smile or just look content while you hold them and give them one-on-one attention.

TRANSYLVANIA – THE LAND ACROSS THE FOREST

At the end of week one, we decided to take a fun weekend trip to Transylvania, a six-hour trip from Bârlad. The name comes from Latin ‘trans’ meaning ‘across’ and ‘silva’ meaning ‘forest.’ Our accommodation for the weekend was Villa Katharina Bran, a beautiful pensione with views of the Carpathian Mountains and its forests of pine, oak, spruce, and European beech trees. The locals still earn their living as shepherds, weavers, blacksmiths and skilled carpenters.

We also visited Bran Castle, the inspiration for Bran Stoker’s *Dracula*, and the nearby colorful city of Braşov with its baroque buildings, churches, cafes, and cobblestone streets. The rainy day made our trip to Bran Castle both eerie and fun.

After our weekend get-away, we returned to Bârlad ready to begin week two of our Romanian volunteer experience. My colleague Barbara and I managed the larger classes with more confidence. We asked students what they want to be after they complete their educations and got familiar answers: doctor, dancer, lawyer, teacher, detective, actor, and rapper. Yes, rapper, even in rural Romania. When we leave, the students ask, “Will you come back tomorrow?”

Although I am not a teacher, I’ve been a volunteer for the past three years in Michael Glenn’s English as a Second Language classes at the Tomlinson Adult Learning Center in downtown St. Pete. Because of that, I’ve picked up tips on what works and what doesn’t work when teaching English. This was invaluable in working with the youth in Romania. My co-volunteer teacher Barbara and I also incorporated the words and phrases the students learned watching English-language music videos and the many US television shows broadcast in English with Romanian subtitles.

WRAPPING UP OUR VISIT

Toward the end of the week, I made a video of our Romania experience with a focus on the children we met. The principal, Daniel Stefanicad, invited Barbara and me to attend a meeting with the teachers and parents, and we shared the video with them. (The video is posted on our *Northeast Journal* Facebook page). The parents loved the video and laughed along with us. We thanked them for sharing their children with us and told them how much we enjoyed our time at Vasile Parvan School.

Our entire team was also privileged to attend a special late afternoon assembly with the US ambassador to Romania, Hans Klemm. The assembly took place at the Bârlad high school where Mihelia, our Global Volunteers team leader, is vice principal. Mihelia was thrilled that we were able to join a large turnout of students and teachers to welcome the ambassador on his first visit to the city.

Karen, my St. Petersburg teammate, sums up our experience perfectly with this quote: “This volunteer trip allowed me to connect with exuberant students learning English and also children with profound special needs. I was able to split my time between an elementary school and a children’s hospital. It was easy to see how love and encouragement affected these youngsters.”

The trip had some rainy days and it was often a challenge to communicate, but few things are as satisfying as seeing a child happy to spend time with you, smile, and ask if will you be back tomorrow. ●

For more information about participating, contact GlobalVolunteers.org or email [Lynn Lotkowitz@gmail.com](mailto:Lynn.Lotkowitz@gmail.com).

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SCOTT NEIL *Continued from page 1*

“We’re like the lost boys in the *Adventures of Peter Pan*,” jokes Scott. “We just can’t shake our history. You talk to combat veterans and they’ll tell you they miss the teamwork and the camaraderie and the high adventure.”

Scott served the country with various counter-terrorism efforts. “We were one of the first to go in during the invasion of Iraq and then into Africa, which was a hideout for foreign fighters,” says Scott. He eventually ended up at Special Operations Command headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, where he served as a senior military advisor.

A NEW CHAPTER

After his retirement from the military, Scott continued to support veteran’s causes and worked for a while with the Green Beret Foundation helping fellow Green Berets make the transition to civilian life. But he was eager to start a business of his own, and he reached out to friends for advice. A fellow Green Beret, John Koko had several successful businesses. His wife Elizabeth Pritchard had a long career in the beauty industry branding and launching new products and bringing them to the marketplace. “I had a thousands questions for them about the business world that you don’t learn in the military,” says Scott. John, Elizabeth, and their children were vacationing out west at Yellowstone National Park and they invited Scott to join them. The month-long camping trip turned out to be a turning point for all three. “We rode through Yellowstone on horseback; it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience,” recalls Elizabeth. “We sat around the campfire at night and talked about business and our passions and our lives.”

On the way home, they spotted a sign along the side of the road for Grand Teton Distillery and decided to visit. That decision changed their lives. “It was



The American Freedom team at the Ohio distillery

a small craft spirit distillery where the husband and wife were making vodka,” says Elizabeth. “We thought, this is cool. We could do this.”

That was five years ago. Today, Scott is chief operating officer at American Freedom Distillery, a craft-spirits distillery soon to open in St. Petersburg. Scott is joined in the business by John and Elizabeth, as well as fellow Green Berets Rob Schaefer and Tyler Garner, all of whom now live in the Tampa Bay area. They’re proud to call themselves a veteran-owned business.

While American Freedom’s headquarters in the Warehouse Arts District won’t open until later this summer, the brand has already been producing small-batch craft spirits for a few years. “While we were scouting locations for our headquarters, we had an offer to start distilling bourbon in Ohio,” says Scott. “We didn’t want to waste any time. That’s what makes or breaks a small distillery.”

American Freedom’s bourbon is selling well, says Scott, and the team will continue making it in Ohio. In St. Pete, they’ll begin distilling and bottling rum, and then adding

vodka and gin. “With all of the botanicals that can be grown in Florida, we’ll be experimenting with flavors,” says Scott.

A NEW ADVENTURE

In March, American Freedom announced that the team would participate in the 75th anniversary celebration of D-Day in France this summer. They were invited to be the lead aircraft during an airborne reenactment that will take place on June 5.

To get ready, the team was up in Palatka, about two hours north of St. Pete, doing practice parachute jumps out of an historic C-47 Tico Belle, the same WWII aircraft the men jumped from during the Battle of Normandy. They were even using the same type of old-fashioned parachutes soldiers used back then.



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The WWII C-47 Tico Belle on the tarmac



Scott Neil at the 2018 Patriot Day Memorial Breakfast sponsored by Remember Honor Support

Why Palatka? “Palatka is home to the Round Canopy Parachuting Team,” says Scott. “They are helping us get back up to speed. Most of us are civilians now and some haven’t jumped in 15 years. The Palatka club put us through basic airborne training and got us recertified.”

Scott points out that one of the reasons Team American Freedom is going in first as the lead aircraft is because of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). “The OSS was a precursor to the CIA and Special Forces, says Scott. “They jumped behind the lines weeks before D-Day to help the French Resistance and conduct sabotage against the enemy, much like our mission in the Special Forces.”

“It’s a way to honor the history,” adds Scott. “It may be the last time one generation who was present on the battle field back then gets to participate with a younger generation of warriors.”

Scott also told me an interesting story about the bottling process for the bourbon. The glass for the bottles is pressed into molds made from a steel beam salvaged from the World Trade Center after 9-11. The beam was given to the American Freedom team.

Another piece of steel from Ground Zero – also given to members of the American Freedom team – will become part of a new monument planned for the corner of 5th Avenue South and 22nd Street South in the city’s Warehouse Arts District, right around the corner from American Freedom’s new distillery. American Freedom Distillery is partnering with the Warehouse Arts District and local sculptor Mark Aeling of MGA Sculpture Studios on the project. Titled *Rise St. Pete*, the monument symbolizes ‘remembrance and renewal’ and will include a 25-foot-tall wing made from copper recovered from a recent renovation of the Statue of Liberty.

Scott expects the distillery to be ready for a grand opening later this year, possibly late summer. In the spring, the team was in the early stages of renovating their new location – the former Genius Central building, perhaps best known for the large mural local artist Carrie Jadus painted on the side of the building of Nikola Tesla, the renowned engineer credited for designing the alternating-current (AC) electric system. The two-story building is perfect for what the distillery plans, but at the moment the team is busy replacing the roof, installing new AC, rearranging walls and adding a 25-foot stone fireplace, main bar, and distillery area. “We’re ramping it up a notch or two to make it attractive for special events and weddings,” says Elizabeth. “Think Restoration Hardware meets Craft Distillery.” ●



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AROUND THE BLOCK

THE BEST IN CONTEMPORARY CRAFT ART

Florida CraftArt in downtown St. Pete is the best place in the Tampa Bay region to see spectacular fine craft art. The nonprofit organization's annual showcase of the best work of its member artists is now on display through June 1. Thirty-six artists from around the state have created 114 pieces of original art, from jewelry to ceramic sculptures and wall hangings. There are several local artists whose work is included in the exhibition, including St. Petersburg artists Mark Noll, whose carved wood miniature ladies won first place, and Calan Ree, who received second place for *Star Gazer*, a ceramic sculpture in her quirky, signature style.



Jan Richardson's Bright Pockets; Below: Calan Ree's ceramic sculpture Star Gazer

Jan Richardson, also a St. Petersburg resident, won honorable mention for her creative ceramic sculptures titled *Bright Pockets*.

Several of the artists will speak about their work and practice on Wednesday, May 22 at 5:30 p.m. The show runs through June 1 when the People's Choice Award will be presented at the closing reception. Florida CraftArt is located at 501 Central Avenue and admission is free. For more info: www.FloridaCraftArt.org.



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AROUND THE BLOCK



Still life by Jan Davidsz de Heem Niche

NEWS FROM THE MFA
A Feast for the Eyes

The *Northeast Journal* had the opportunity to meet the Grasset family from Madrid, Spain, who generously loaned their private collection of 40 amazing Old Master paintings from the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, and Germany to the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg for the current exhibition *A Feast for the Eyes*. The still lifes, banquet scenes, and landscapes from the collection give us a glimpse into the life in the 1600s at a time when Holland was the center of world trade. As MFA Curator of Collections and Exhibitions Stanton Thomas points



out, "it was also a time of tulip-omania, when the wealthy were so crazy for tulips they would pay huge amounts of money for a single bulb." The exhibit will be on loan to the MFA until July 28.

St. Pete's Littlest Artists

From toddlers to tweens and in-betweens, kids and their families spent the afternoon visiting 13 art stations during The Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg's 12th Annual Painting in the Park. More than 1,500 people made creative crafts inspired by MFA collections, such as paper poppies based on Georgia O'Keefe's *Poppy*. Collaborative art projects included painting the popular NOMAD Art Bus and digging inside a sandpit to find pieces for a large mosaic mural. ●



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HISTORY *Continued from page 1*

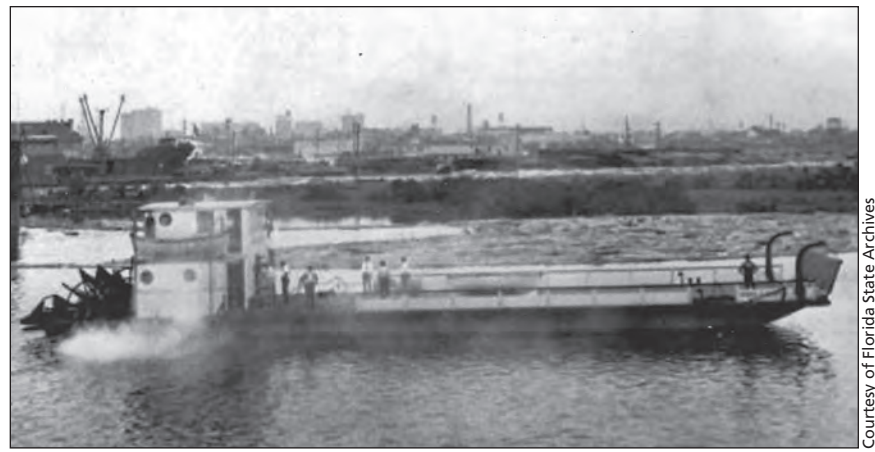
the downtown. In 1914, we experimented with an airline – the World’s first – between downtown St. Petersburg and downtown Tampa. (The airline still holds the record for getting between the two downtowns the fastest – 20 minutes.)

George Gandy constructed the Gandy Bridge between St. Petersburg and Tampa in 1924, spanning five-and-three-quarters miles including the causeways, making it the longest automobile bridge in the world at the time. The bridge did much to stimulate development in north St. Pete, particularly along 4th Street.

But in South St. Pete we had the Bee Line Ferry rather than a bridge. Development there appears also to have gone hand-in-hand with the establishment of ferry transportation between St. Petersburg and Manatee County. Lakewood Estates began development in 1924, the same year the Bee Line Ferry Company was incorporated. Pinellas Point was begun in 1925, and Alta Marina – now known as Bahama Shores – commenced in 1926. The bottom dropped out of all development in St. Petersburg in 1927 as the city plunged into economic depression.

Getting into and out of St. Petersburg by car in the early 1920s was a challenge. Prior to 1927, most tourists arrived by boat or rail. But, beginning in 1927, for the first time, over 50 percent of tourists arrived by car. And as St. Petersburg was a tourist economy, it was doubly important that everything be done to facilitate auto traffic to the city. Even with the Gandy Bridge, north-south traffic was discouraged, as there was no way to continue on south through St. Petersburg. Two cross-Florida highways were built traversing the state – one from Palm Beach to Sarasota, and the other, the still-important Tamiami Trail which opened in 1928. Before the Gandy Bridge was built, it was a ninety-mile drive from Bradenton to St. Pete by way of Tampa. The Gandy clipped 30 miles off the trip, but still left 60 miles. So, what could be done to get the tourist traveling by auto to drive to St. Pete? Another bridge was one idea, but too difficult and expensive at the time to undertake.

Then there was the idea of a ferry, which originated with J.G. ‘Jim’ Foley – an early St. Pete



The Fred D. Doty was one of the first two ferries, and was built in Tampa. Note the paddleboard. Image 1925.

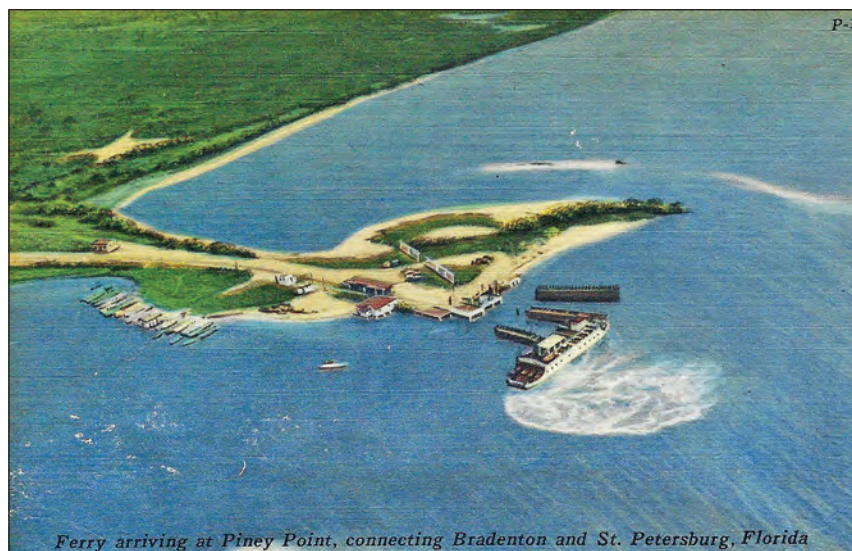
Courtesy of Florida State Archives



The Cross-Bay ferry Provincetown III now operates between downtown St. Petersburg North Yacht Basin and downtown Tampa.



S-138—Bee Line Ferry, Pinellas Point, St. Petersburg, Fla. Remnants of the old ferry dock still may be seen.



Ferry arriving at Piney Point, connecting Bradenton and St. Petersburg, Florida Piney Point, the southern terminal of the Bee Line Ferry

realtor – and his business partner Charles R. Carter. In 1924, they joined with attorney James E. Bussey to create the Bee Line Ferry Company. The name presumably was taken from the idiom ‘making a bee line,’ which refers to taking the shortest route between two points. The first crossing – from what is now Bay Vista Park at the end of 4th Street South to Piney Point on the Palmetto-Bradenton side of the bay – took place on March 7, 1927.

Initially there were two ferries. The first was the *Fred D. Doty*, built in Tampa. Then the *City of Wilmington* ferry was brought from Wilmington, North Carolina, and its name was later changed to the *Pinellas*. The trip took approximately 45 minutes, and five trips were made daily. A round trip cost \$3.00 and passengers without an automobile paid 25 cents each way. The boat captains earned \$1.15 per hour and deck hands made 65 cents. On opening day, an entourage of VIPs left St. Petersburg at 11 a.m. and arrived in Bradenton in less than two hours. Some 49 miles were clipped from the trip between Manatee County and St. Pete, and more importantly, the auto tourist could enjoy St. Petersburg and then move on to their next destination without having to double back.

Initially, the ferry was not profitable nor did its promoters expect it to be. Perhaps the most immediate effect of the new ferry was on real estate sales in South St. Petersburg. A typical ad read:

“A BEAUTY”

*This new home, 5 rooms and a bath,
Near the Bee Line Ferry and
adjoining beautiful Alta Marina
[now Bahama Shores].*

*Furnished as a real home should be. Everything new.
Two blocks from Tampa Bay.
Owner called east. See this.
Only \$7500. Fine Terms.
See Mr. Daily”*

In addition to the consideration of tourism, early ferry promoters also predicted a boon to farmers in Manatee County. As Manatee ferry board member Senator M.O. Harrison stated, “When the ferry line is in operation, it will add materially to the market for fruits, vegetables, and agricultural products... it will be possible for farmers to have their truckloads of provisions to St. Petersburg within an hour’s time after leaving the farms. The Bee Line Ferry, in providing a market for large quantities of our farm products, will, in so doing, provide an incentive for



1930s brochure extolling both the distance saved by the ferry and the glories of the scenery while making the short trip.

Courtesy of Michaels Family Collection unless otherwise noted

“Playful porpoise disport through the green waters, and beneath the surface can be seen great schools of fish. Overhead, hundreds of cat-calling sea gulls swoop and soar over the funnels of the ships begging for tidbits from the passengers.”

increased agricultural efforts.” These expectations for profitable farm produce transport were far overshadowed by the impact of tourism. With completion of the Tamiami Trail in 1928, tourism traffic began to generate a profit.

In 1932, a third ferry, the *Manatee*, was put into service replacing the *Doty*. The *Sarasota* was purchased and put into service in 1937. At that point, as many as 1,500 autos and their passengers were using the ferry daily. Ferries were then scheduled to depart every 30 minutes between 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. in the winter. In the summer, they departed every 45 minutes. Even so, at times traffic would be backed up on 4th Street South in St. Pete for hours as people waited to board.

Perhaps the ferry riders were seeking more than efficient transportation. A 1930s ferry brochure – in addition to extolling the 11-mile distance by ferry between St. Pete and Bradenton – waxed eloquent about the “delightful short boat ride.” “Playful porpoise disport through the green waters, and beneath the surface can be seen great schools of fish. Overhead, hundreds of cat-calling sea gulls swoop and soar over the funnels of the ships begging for tidbits from the passengers.” The deck hands not only tended the ferry, but also doubled as tour guides. “Courteous officers and members of the crews will gladly name the birds or the various species of fish you espy. They know their fish.”

In 1929, the Florida Legislature granted the Bee Line Ferry a 50-year franchise covering a seven-mile-wide strip across the bay. The St. Petersburg Port Authority bought the franchise from the ferry in 1944 in order to build a bridge across the bay. The bridge was to be located in the strip owned by the ferry. The Port Authority also later bought and operated the ferries. The Bee Line Ferry finally ceased operations when the first Skyway Bridge opened in 1954.

As we go to press, we again hear of the return of the ferry. “4-Stop Ferry Link Proposed,” reads the *Tampa Bay Times* headline. A “new bold vision” is being presented for the Cross-Bay Ferry. Not only will it continue to operate between St. Petersburg and downtown Tampa, but it is hoped that the ferry will extend to MacDill Air Force Base and Gibsonton in South Hillsborough. Some 1,500 average daily riders are projected. While the proposed ferry service is just for passengers and not autos, history does rather repeat itself. ●

Will Michaels is the author of The Making of St. Petersburg and The Hidden History of St. Petersburg. He may be reached at 727-420-9195 or wmichaels2222@gmail.com.

Sources: Karl H. Grismer, *The Story of St. Petersburg (1948)*; *St. Petersburg Times/Tampa Bay Times (various)*; Nevin B. Sitler & Richard N. Sitler, *The Sunshine Skyway Bridge (2013)*; and thanks to Nevin Sitler of the *St. Petersburg Museum of History* for assisting in researching this article.

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The Tale of a Rabbit

Samantha Bond Richman

In a time not long ago, in a land familiar, there once was a family who lived in the land of HONE (Historic Old Northeast). Their home was a fine two-story abode, lovingly cared for by the family, located on a busy thoroughfare known as Beach Drive. Surrounding the home were multiple other homes, though these were embedded inside larger, newer structures known as condominiums. The family's two-story house had been standing in the same spot for nearly 100 years, and refused to yield its space to the multi-housing units. It even kept a small yard, both front and back, bordered by an alley to the rear and busy Beach Drive in front.

One day, as Christmas approached, the husband was about, busying himself with a string of lights in the garage. As he approached the back door to the home, a small grey animal suddenly ran across his path. At first, he wasn't sure what he'd seen as it was gone just as quickly as it had appeared. Again, it showed itself later in the day, and this time he got a good look. It was a tiny, grey baby rabbit. It quickly hid again, running rapidly and disappearing on the ground covered by bushes. The husband was slightly sad, thinking the rabbit must have escaped from another family's home. Perhaps an early gift that slipped from a child's hands. The rabbit's coloring was not like that of the wild brown rabbits he sometimes saw at the golf course and along the roadside. He knew a pet rabbit would be easy prey for any number of larger creatures in the land. He kept the tale of what he had seen from his wife and their visiting grown children.

Days went by and the family continued to prepare for the Christmas holiday. Guests from four generations of the family would be coming together for a peaceful celebration. They would share food, drink, and much love, for it is a time of joy. As the family was fond of doing, they gathered on the front porch to enjoy the fine weather and sights. All day and into the night, neighbors and their guests traveled by the home toward downtown destinations on foot, bicycle, golf cart, and all manner of cars. Some of these even exceeded the 25 mile per hour speed limit by a little bit. Many of those on foot could be heard excitedly discussing their plans for the holiday season. The family enjoyed the spectacle of the traffic.

On a particular evening, the wife noticed movement on the lawn. "Look! A little rabbit!" she exclaimed to her husband. He admitted to seeing the rabbit earlier and expressed concern over its small, defenseless size. It could not be caught, nor did the family have any desire to cage the creature. They enjoyed seeing it scamper about on the lawn, barely visible among the flowers and bushes.



The Christmas season came and went, and the family's guests returned to their own homes. As the husband and wife sat on the porch one evening noting the cool breeze and short days, they saw that the rabbit had survived for yet another month. He had grown. The wife decided to name him, though she was still a bit sad thinking that he was a temporary pet of sorts. She called him H.T. – short for Happy Times Temporary Services, a name from a television program the couple would sometimes enjoy together. H.T. moved silently in the twilight, nibbling this and that, nearly invisible in his grey coat. The husband and wife thought he looked a bit like their house cat of a similar dark grey color, sort of a matched set and perhaps a good omen.

Weeks would go by and there was no sign of H.T. The family knew he would likely not come back one day. And yet, he continued to show up once in a while. Each appearance was a joy, especially to the wife, and she shared the news by telephone with her children. Even her sister, who visited from the nearby metropolis Downtown St. Pete, enjoyed occasional sightings while spending time on the porch.

Nearly three months had passed, and H.T. was now a good-sized rabbit, perhaps three or four pounds. He would appear most frequently when the sun was setting. The family enjoyed seeing their adopted, temporary pet. Neighbors started to notice him... neighbors with dogs. "Oh look! A bunny!" they would exclaim. Many took his picture. Once, while the wife was looking out the window toward the front lawn, a young

man started up the sidewalk toward the front door. She opened the window from the second story, looking quizzically down at the stranger, and the young man shouted up, "Do you know you have a bunny rabbit?" She found this quite comical, as the young man seemed rather grown up for that particular choice of words.

Of all the sights the family has enjoyed from the lovely front porch of their 100-year-old home on Beach Drive, H.T. is one of the most memorable. ●

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**Valerie
Norris**

Kirkwood Terrace North

How long have you lived in St. Pete and where are you from originally?

25 years in St. Pete. Originally from NYC.

Best hidden gems in St. Pete?

The museums, Sawgrass Lake Park, Shuffleboard court, and Haslam's Bookstore

Top two places in the world on your bucket list?

Iceland and Egypt

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

Helen Keller. She was a brilliant mind who lived an awe-inspiring life and exceeded expectations for a disabled woman in her era. Triumph over adversity is a beautiful thing.

Favorite sport, recreational activity, or hobby?

I have many: biking, golf, photography, billiards, writing poetry, and genealogy.

A great movie you'd recommend?

Lion is a fantastic movie about the human spirit.

If a teleporter existed, what time period and place would you go to first?

1970s, New York City. It was vibrant, edgy, and truly authentic!

What is the most encouraging word/statement you can receive?

I have two: 1) Discover the things that make you happy and repeat! 2) Never sell yourself short.

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

I'd be a German Shepard. They are intelligent, protective, and extremely loyal.

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

My friend, Bill Darling of the First Tee Program of St. Pete, has helped establish mentoring and educational programs for local kids through the game of golf. He's done an amazing job of partnering with community leaders to positively influence local kids.

Current book you've read and would recommend?

Michelle Obama's book *Becoming*. It is a candid and compelling story of her life before and after becoming First Lady. Understanding the complexities and struggles of her journey and overcoming obstacles I found to be inspiring and relatable to my own life's journey.

What St. Pete venues are on the must-see list for out-of-town guests?

Annual Blues Festival and Christmas Boat Parade

Tell us about an accomplishment, current or past, of which you are proud.

Being a single parent to my niece, who I raised from age 6. My proudest moment was the day I dropped her off at college.

Something people might not know about you?

I can juggle!

What do you do for a living – what do you enjoy about it?

I'm a Realtor with Century 21 Coast to Coast. I enjoy being independent. The fact that I'm my own boss means knowing that my success is solely based on the effort I put into my business. I love the unexpected: no two days are quite the same.



**Diana
Lipe**

St. Tropez Circle NE

How long have you lived in St. Pete and where are you from originally?

I have lived in St. Pete for 38 years; originally from Middlebury, Vermont.

Best hidden gem in St. Pete?

For myself, the best hidden gem has been First Unity Church, which I discovered in 1995.

Top two places in the world on your bucket list?

Antarctica and Victoria Island, British Columbia

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

I would like to meet Jesus to say hello and thank you.

Favorite sport, recreational activity or hobby?

I love to dance at the St. Pete Elks Lodge – live music, large dance floor, and special people.

A great movie you'd recommend?

Hidden Figures, about three brilliant African-American women at NASA who served as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in history: the launch of John Glenn into orbit.

If a teleporter existed, what time period and place would you go to first?

I would go 100 years into the future.

What is the most encouraging word/statement you can receive?

The most encouraging statement I can tell myself is "You Are Always Good Enough."

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

I would be a wolf dog howling at the moon.

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

Ruth Bader Ginsburg inspires me.

Current book you've read and would recommend?

I recently read *Small Great Things* by Jodi Picoult. It made me more aware of the subtle and not-so-subtle aspects of race relations in our country.

What St. Pete venues are on the must-see list for out-of-town guests?

Dali Museum and Imagine Museum.

Tell us about an accomplishment, current or past, of which you are proud.

I am most proud of being a mother to my own child and to all children I cared for as a pediatric nurse.

Something people might not know about you?

I am 100% French Canadian descent.

What do you do for a living – what do you enjoy about it?

I was a nurse educator for many years and loved it.



**Lore
Raymond**

Arrowhead Drive NE

How long have you lived in St. Pete and where are you from originally?

I've been in St. Pete for 37 years. I'm originally from Plattsburgh AFB, NY, though I've lived in many places as a former Air Force brat.

Best hidden gems in St. Pete?

Independent book stores like Haslam's and Wilson's Book World, plus the now-being-restored home of iconic novelist Jack Kerouac who lived and died in St. Pete (1969).

Top two places in the world on your bucket list?

Scotland and Ireland because I recently learned that I'm 70 percent Irish.

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

I'd like to experience the same title as Aloha Caldwell, the 'world's most widely traveled woman.' She was also the 'first woman to drive around the world' certified by Guinness World Records.

Favorite sport, recreational activity or hobby?

I was born without any sports DNA, so thrifting is my green-hobby.

A great movie you'd recommend?

The official film record of that first flight around the world made by Aloha Caldwell.

If a teleporter existed, what time period and place would you go to first?

The 'Roaring 1920s' starting in Paris

What is the most encouraging word/statement you can receive?

"To travel far, travel light and be sure to pack your journal and all your dreams."

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

My mom, who in 2011 made the fearless decision to have open heart surgery, and continues to thrive as an example of courage and grace.

Current book you've read and would recommend?

Sacred Contracts: Awakening Your Divine Potential by Caroline Myss because it's a template to use archetypes for a better understanding of myself and others.

What St. Pete venues are on the must-see list for out-of-town guests?

The Coliseum, Duncan McClellan Gallery, and Mirror Lake Library

Tell us about an accomplishment, current or past, of which you are proud.

I've contributed stories to eight books; five were ranked as #1 Amazon international bestsellers. My first solo book will be published this year: *Writing Medicine: The Must-Have Guide to Your Hero's Journey for Inner Healing*.

Something people might not know about you?

I'd like to flip and own houses to provide others with a second chance.

What do you do for a living – what do you enjoy about it?

It's a joy coaching people to express their authentic stories as a development editor/teacher who hosts creative writing circles, courses and retreats.



SPOTLIGHT ON THE ARTS

Whispering Waters' New Garden Mural Unveiled

Janan Talafer

Burt and Carol Kline were getting tired of looking out the window of their 5th floor condo at Whispering Waters on North Shore Blvd. NE and seeing the massive green concrete 'bunker' in the courtyard below. The 16-foot-by-24-foot room at one time housed the electrical transformers for the complex and was now used for storage. It was definitely time for a beautification project.

"We were brainstorming what to do with it, and Carol said, 'How about a mural?' Everyone loved the idea," says Burt. "We decided to go ahead and donate the funds to commission the project."

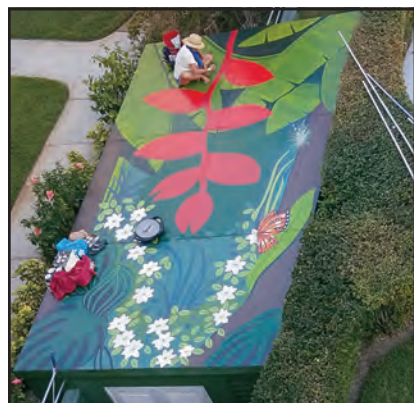
According to the St. Petersburg Arts Alliance, there are now more than 500 murals on the side of St. Petersburg buildings, primarily downtown, but also moving up along 4th Street and 9th Street North. The new mural at Whispering Waters might be the first one that isn't on the side of a building, but on top for a bird's eye view.

Carol began searching the Internet for design ideas, at first thinking that a mid-century modern style would reflect Whispering Water's vintage 1960s feel. But then as residents talked about how it would be nice if the courtyard landscaping had more colorful flowers, Carol thought a floral design would be the perfect solution. And it was.

The first step required Burt to prepare the surface of the bunker by scraping off the many layers of paint that had been applied over the years. Then, under Carol's direction, Belinda Mize Davis, a native Floridian and award-winning artist who lives in St. Pete, created a spectacular tropical garden scene with a giant red heliconia flower, also known as a false bird-of-paradise. To add a whimsical touch, there are three frogs sitting on flowers, as well as a butterfly and bumblebee, along with other tropical flowers and plants.

"The mural looks terrific and everyone here is very pleased with it," says Burt. "Carol and I are very happy to have added a little more color to the courtyard and to have added another great mural to St. Petersburg." ◆

The new mural at Whispering Waters might be the first one that isn't on the side of a building, but on top for a bird's eye view.



A work-in-progress as the Whispering Waters' mural comes alive.

Photos by Burt Kline

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ELENA, AGE 15

Elena is sweet and down to earth. In her free time, she likes to draw and go outside. She also loves to cook. Especially empanadas! She loves any kind of Hispanic food!

If Elena could have any pet it would be a husky! She thinks they are elegant dogs.

When Elena grows up, she wants to be a lawyer. Preferably one for the government. She wants to make a difference in this world.

With a loving family, she just might be able to do that!

YFA-102993723

Photos courtesy of Brandi Image Photography



Pinellas Pasco Heart Gallery Every Child Deserves a Home LSF-102993723 Brandi Image Photography

JORDAN, AGE 17

Jordan is bright, friendly and unique. For fun, Jordan likes all things basketball. He enjoys watching it and playing it! He looks up to Michael Jordan and hopes to play basketball like him one day. If Jordan doesn't make it the NBA, he is hoping to become a welder!

Jordan also likes to watch Netflix in his free time. Jordan's favorite music artist is *The Weekend*.

In school, Jordan's favorite subjects are earth science and biology. He is in the honors program!

When asked what Jordan's ideal family is like, he said he wanted a loving family and is happy and gets along. Having a dog, preferably a husky would be a bonus!

YFA-526940

Photos courtesy of Image Pro Photography



Pinellas Pasco Heart Gallery Every Child Deserves a Home Jordan YFA-526940 Photo by Imagine Pro Photography

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Skip Wilkinson with Tug the lizard hunter
7th Ave NE



Wendy LaTorre with Hugo and Prana
5th Avenue NE



Carol Swanick with Molly
Beach Drive NE



Megan Brown with Chesney
15th Avenue N



Sarah holds Briana
with Lucy and Butku



Chelsea Potthast with Sugar
Maple Street NE



Lily Grace, William & Jameson with Hope, Riley & Promise
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Suzy Tucker with Tommy (a rescue from Puerto Rico)
28th Avenue NE



Carmen Caudle with Bella
Beach Drive NE



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AROUND THE BLOCK

A PERSONAL ENCOUNTER WITH GLASS ART

St. Petersburg is the hub of the new 'Glass Coast' and recently hosted the international Glass Art Society Conference. The event brought in glass artists and collectors from all over the world for three days of workshops, demonstrations, tours and parties.

The glass art created and on display was stunning. It takes years to develop this skill, but novices who simply want to experience the excitement and challenge of creating a hand-blown piece of glass art can sign up for a hands-on opportunity.

The Morean Arts Center offers personal glass experiences at various days and times during the week. In May, participants are creating glass flowers. Now the Duncan McClellan Gallery, through the DMG School Project, is offering this opportunity as well. The price for either program is \$75. No experience is needed, and participants work under the guidance of experienced professional glass artists.

For more information, visit www.dmgproject.org/product/experience-glass-blowing.



Duncan McClellan Gallery Make Your Own Glass objects



Shore Acres residents Lon Ethington & Meg Gimme compete on their Martin 243 sailboat in a St. Pete Yacht Club race.

SAIL AWAY

Surrounded by water, St. Petersburg is a boater's paradise. To prepare novices boaters, the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flotilla 72, offers a nine-week boating-skills and seamanship class. Sessions are held every Tuesday from 7:30-9:30pm. The Coast Guard station is located at 1300 Beach Drive SE, just south of downtown. Completion of the program satisfies the State of Florida boater ID safety education requirements. Cost for books and materials is \$60. For information go to www.tampabaySAFEBOATING.com, or call 727-898-1324. Pre-register online at www.flotilla72registration.info. You can pay by check or cash on the first night you attend.

The *Northeast Journal* recently received an advance copy of *Three Sheets to the Wind*, an entertaining look at the nautical origin of common everyday expressions. Author Cynthia Barrett is an avid sailor whose great-grandfather was a whaler and father was part of the D-Day invasion in France. For example, according to the author, the phrase 'pitch in' refers to when sailors caulked the seams of the deck with hot pine tar – called pitch – in order to keep the deck watertight and preserve the wood. The crew had to pitch in to complete the task quickly while the tar was hot and malleable. 'Dressing down' refers to the time when worn and thin sails were treated with oil or wax to renew their strength. It was a tedious job that could be doled out as punishment. And 'scuttlebutt' is a reference to when ships carried large wooden drinking water casks called 'butts.' Sailors would gather round the butt to tell stories. On long voyages, water was rationed by boring a hole in the cask's side so that it could only be half filled. A cask with a hole was 'scuttled.' ♦

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