



NORTHEAST JOURNAL

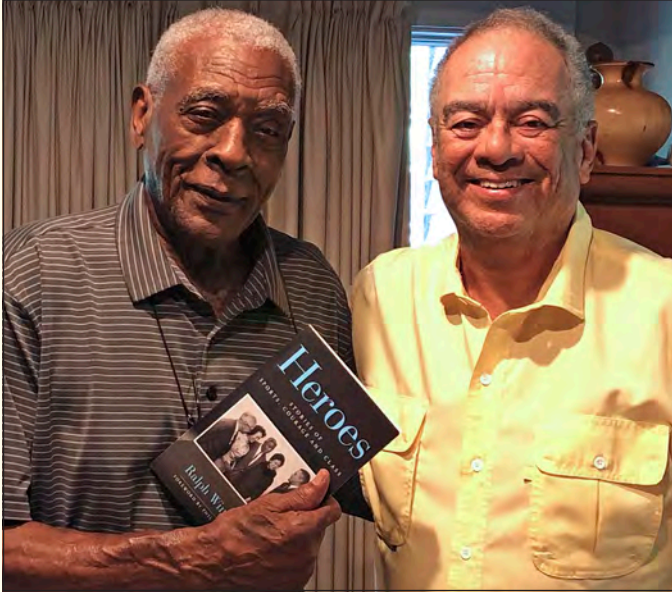
Good People ∞ Good Places ∞ Good Things Happening

St. Petersburg, FL

NOV/DEC 2021

EST. SEPTEMBER 2004

Heroes, History, and St. Pete



Ralph Wimbish Jr. (right) and Bill White (left), seven-time All Star who trained in St. Pete when he was with the Cardinals. He went on to become president of the National Baseball League.

— JON KILE —

In 1961, local Black civic leaders and civil rights activists Dr. Ralph Wimbish and Dr. Robert Swain sent shockwaves through the baseball world. They refused to continue the practice of opening their homes and hotels to Black players who were not permitted to stay with their white teammates in local St. Petersburg hotels.

Their actions weren't meant to discriminate against the Black players – just the opposite. Their stand effectively ended segregation of baseball's spring training, and brought on the integration of hotels in St. Petersburg, helping set in place a decade of

tremendous change and social upheaval in the pursuit of civil rights for Black Americans.

It's interesting to note that when Dr. Wimbish and Dr. Swain bucked the status quo of segregated accommodations for Black players, the story ran in every paper nationwide. But, the papers didn't mention that because the Yankee's first Black ballplayer, Elston Howard, couldn't stay at the team hotel, he slept in young Ralph Jr.'s bedroom at the Wimbish family home instead.

Dr. Wimbish's wife, C. Bette Wimbish, was equally prominent in the local fight for civil rights. She was St. Petersburg's first Black city councilperson, once held the highest position of any Black woman in state government, and made historic runs for statewide and national office.

Continued on page 16

Upzoning Our Neighborhoods

— WILL MICHAELS —

St. Petersburg is experiencing a building boom such as has not been seen since the 1920s and 1950s. Based on current growth rates, City planners project a need for between 1,000 and 1,500 new homes or 'dwelling units' per year. Mayor Kriseman has made recommendations for changing neighborhood zoning as part of an effort to meet this need. The proposals – a type of "upzoning" or increase in density – if approved by the City Council would be perhaps the most significant changes affecting neighborhood zoning in a decade.

There are basically two-types of neighborhoods in the city – Traditional Neighborhoods and Suburban Neighborhoods. Traditional Neighborhoods were developed generally in the 1920s and earlier, before the city had a zoning plan. These neighborhoods are characterized by narrow lots (often 45-60 x 135 feet) with front porches, sidewalks, and alleys. While predominantly single-family residential, they include accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and limited grandfathered multi-unit housing. Originally, many were supported by a trolley system precluding the need for automobiles.

Suburban Neighborhoods were developed largely post-World War II. They include larger lots (usually 75 x 100 feet or more), more extensive building setbacks, greater yard space, and frequently an attached garage. Many have no alleys and not all have sidewalks. The proposed zoning changes affect Suburban Neighborhoods more than they affect most Traditional Neighborhoods. In particular, most Traditional Neighborhoods now have accessory dwelling units (ADUs) which are not allowed



Type of Accessory Dwelling Unit

Credit: Florida Housing Coalition

Continued on page 30

Meet Elliot

A Horse of a Different Color

— JEANNIE CARLSON —

There aren't many horses that can whinny about how they became a Bay News 9 Everyday Hero, but Elliott, a four-year old quarter horse can. Just before the pandemic took off, Elliott was recognized for ponying up contributions, love, and kisses to children all around the Tampa Bay area.

From the time Elliott was a foal, he has been overflowing with personality, so much so that he never ceases to entertain. He creatively uses his nose and hooves to play with a beach ball, and enjoys galloping about with his dog friend, Sammie, a Doberman. When he is in the corral, he will kick over his water bucket just to run around with it on his head as a hat. These are the types of shenanigans he does in the real world that demonstrate his equine sense of humor.

Horse kisses are a unique experience, and Elliott's smooches are the best. Pucker up and lean in for a surprisingly gentle, fuzzy, tickly, rubbery-feeling, and sometimes wet canoodle. Elliott's breath is not bad considering all the healthy snacks he loves to eat, including apples, carrots, watermelon, and even peppermint. Getting groomed with a nice brushing also makes his day.

Elliott can attribute his celebrity to Sue Greenberg and Old Northeast resident Lisa Bohart. Sue is the pet parent of Elliott and the author of a series of books about him and his antics. Lisa, a professional artist, illustrated the books.

The first book, *Elliott's Tails: The Adventures of a Baby Horse* came out in 2018 and the second volume, *Elliott's Tails: Saddle Up for New Adventures* made it to print in 2019. A third book that was due out a year later has been on hold until the Covid outbreak subsides.

Both published *Elliott's Tails* books have won the Mom's Choice Awards for their educational benefits to children. But the books are an even bigger winner when it comes to being donated to sick kids at local hospitals like All Children's and Tampa General. Not only are the two books a favorite due to Elliott's escapades, but also because an 18" plush toy in Elliott's image is also given to the patients in the children's wards.

Elliott's Tails books are a clever combination of actual photos of Elliott incorporated in fictional illustrations with rhyming narratives of the imaginary tales. The stories in the first book depict Elliott learning how to do the typical things that toddlers and preschoolers get to know like teeth brushing, playing at the beach, napping, and eating healthy snacks. Then the stories in the second book include Elliott acquiring more knowledge that kindergarteners and early-elementary-school children would relate to such as helping mom cook, playing baseball, painting, and celebrating birthdays.

The creative mind behind the horse tales belongs to Sue. Born in Rochester, NY, Sue has lived in Tampa Bay since she



Sue Greenberg with a young Elliott

Continued on page 14



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BREAKING NEWS

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815 18TH AVE NE
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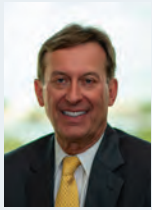
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EDITOR'S NOTE

A Time For Gratitude & Giving

The holidays are time of both gratitude and giving back. So it was especially timely that I learned about an amazing young man who is making a difference for those who are less fortunate. Miles Johnson is a member of the Boy Scout Troop 219 at St. Raphael's Catholic Church and a 10th grade student at Osceola Fundamental High School.

For his Eagle Scout project, Miles has decided to help transitional residents at the St. Vincent De Paul homeless shelter by providing them with bicycles as a mode of transportation and easy commute to jobs.

I asked Miles why he decided to tackle this project and here's what he had to say: "When I was in elementary school, I often fed the homeless breakfast once a month with my church. A young homeless man who recently moved to St. Pete was struggling to find a bike for transportation. My family gave him a bike, and that is when I recognized that people who lacked transportation might be barred them from getting a job."

With the support of his scout masters, Miles is asking for donations of bicycles to give to residents at the St. Vincent DePaul shelter. "If anyone has bicycles that are no longer needed at home, than I am more than happy to accept them!" he says.

Thank you to Snell Isle resident Bonnie Hargrett for bringing Miles and his project to my attention. Bonnie participates in the quarterly Coffee Pot Bayou Environmental Clean-Ups and so does Miles. At the last clean-up, Miles mentioned his Eagle Scout project, and Bonnie promised to help spread the word. So now, I am doing my part, too, by helping him reach an even wider audience. To reach Miles directly, send an email to miles.a.johnson@outlook.com. Miles also has a GoFundMe page for his project, www.gofund.me/db13d385.



Happy Holidays,
Janan Talafer
 Editor, Northeast Journal

Editor's Note: Our apologies to Curtis Cruise who was featured with his dog Marli in the Sept-Oct 2021 Northeast Journal. We not only had a typo in Mr. Cruise's name, but also had his address incorrect. Look for him again (correctly!) on the People & Pets page in this issue.

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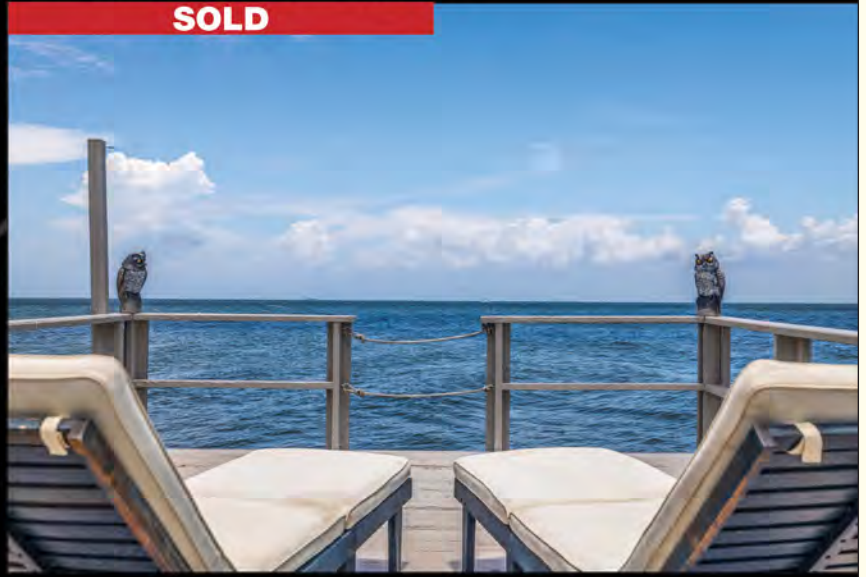
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2126 Bayou Grande Blvd NE (Shore Acres)
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7808 Causeway Blvd S (Yacht Club Estates)
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145 2nd Ave S #613 (Signature Place)
\$450,000** Rep seller and buyer



1508 Eden Isle Blvd NE (Snell Isle)
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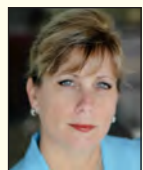
DEC 8, 2021 - JAN 2, 2022

AN 80'S PUNK TWIST
ON THE HOLIDAY TALE YOU KNOW AND LOVE!

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.

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.



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



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



Angie Conner was born and raised on the Space Coast of Florida, and moved to Crescent Heights with her husband and two children in 2006 after graduating from Penn State. Angie currently works in Public Affairs for a federal agency, and serves as president of the Crescent Heights Neighborhood Association.



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



Lynn Lotkowitz spent years in radio in New York, and in business development/management at *Florida Trend Magazine*. She volunteers and enjoys traveling 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]



Victoria Rogers and her husband Patrick moved back to Florida after 25 years in New England. She worked in outside sales, fundraising, and event-planning while raising her daughter Allison. These days, she describes herself as mostly a "victim of my enthusiasms!" [victoria.spofford.rogers@gmail.com]



Mila Salamone has lived in Taos, NM and Santa Cruz, CA. She has been lucky enough to travel all over the world when she was young. She loves the fulfilling joy of brave kindness between human beings. She's currently enrolled at Shorecrest.



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



Janan Talafer A long-time Snell Isle resident, Janan 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]



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CCC Offers IB to All Students

Carly Beliveau, Assistant Director of Communications and Marketing

As a lifelong Pinellas County resident, I grew up with the impression that the International Baccalaureate program (IB for short) – like those we see at St. Pete High, Palm Harbor University HS, and now Largo High – entailed a highly competitive, intensely rigorous academic setting, available to only the highest test-scorers and academic achievers. If you weren't prepared to dedicate all your waking hours (and perhaps some that shouldn't be waking) to studying, homework and research, then perhaps you need not even apply for admission. And that presumes your acceptance into this elite program, seemingly offering admission to only the smartest of the smart!

If you've had a similar impression about what it means to be an IB Student, you're not alone. However, this is neither the spirit nor the practice of most IB institutions. With a presence in over 150 countries and over 5,000 IB World Schools worldwide, the IB Program provides an education that crosses disciplinary, cultural, national and geographical boundaries, and champions critical engagement, stimulating ideas and meaningful relationships. Independent of political and commercial interests, IB programs are offered in a hugely diverse range of schools around the world, both state and private, national and international, large and small. The perception that IB is an exclusive, elite institution accessible by only the highest achievers is atypical, and frankly runs counter to IB's mission of creating an interconnected, global network of internationally-minded educators and students.

At Clearwater Central Catholic High School – an IB World School – we provide an IB For All approach, because we believe that every student in our halls can, and should, benefit from an IB Education. IB courses give students distinct advantages by building their critical thinking skills, nurturing their curiosity and their ability to solve complex problems. IB students develop strong academic, social and emotional characteristics. They are also likely to perform well academically – often better than students on other curricula. In fact,

research indicates that IB Diploma Program graduates complete college faster than their peers, feel more prepared for college-level coursework involving research, and are better able to cope with demanding workloads and time-management challenges.

Therefore, each student at CCC spends 9th and 10th grade developing these critical thinking and learning skills to academically prepare for IB level courses, with many choosing at the end of their sophomore year to pursue the full IB Diploma Program. In fact, 75% of our current Junior class (Class of 2023) chose to enroll in the IB Diploma Program this year! And among our Diploma Program students, nearly every single one actively participates in Co-curriculars, including athletics, theater, clubs and student council. This past Spring, 70% of our IB test-takers earned a 4 or higher on their final IB score, qualifying them for college credit within the Florida State University System, among others.

We also recognize that the full IB Diploma Program is not the right fit for every student, but we still believe they can benefit from attending an IB World School. All upperclassmen at CCC take two to three IB courses, including Mathematics, English Language/Literature, and typically a science, providing them both an increased GPA as well as the ability to earn college credit. Students outside of the Diploma Program decide themselves whether they want to pursue IB certificates for each individual course by completing all examinations. Even if they don't pursue college credit, each of our IB students gains the knowledge, skills, and sense of purpose needed to thrive throughout their lives and contribute to making the world a better place.

Globally, IB programs aim to provide an education that enables students to make sense of the complexities of the world around them, as well as equipping them with the skills and dispositions needed for taking responsible action for the future. CCC deftly blends the IB Learner Profile with the advantages of a Catholic education, producing graduates who are active in their communities, respectful of their neighbors near and far, mindful of their planet, and committed to lifelong learning beyond the classroom. And we believe that every student here is worthy, qualified and capable of being an "IB Student." ■



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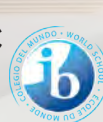


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Where Possibility & Opportunity Meet



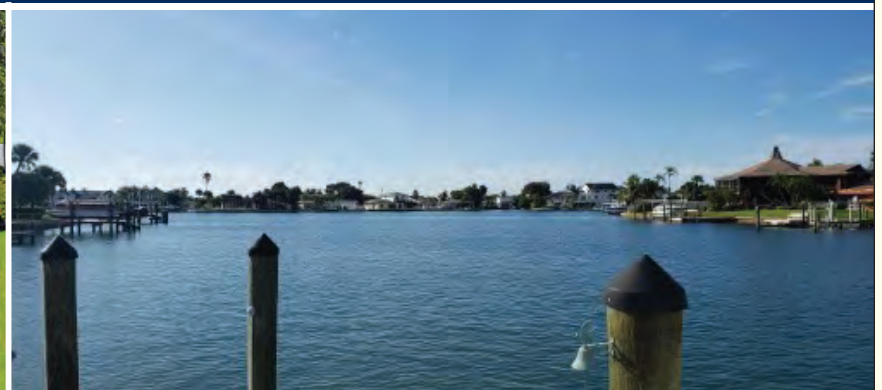
Judy Sells St. Petersburg



NEW PRICE | 1100 Monterey Boulevard NE | Snell Isle | Luxurious waterfront estate
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NEW LISTING | 582 53rd Avenue N | St. Petersburg | Colonnade gated townhome
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GOODNESS INDEED

Historic Woman's Club Still Going Strong



St. Pete Woman's Club members dressed for the Mystery Dinner Theater



The historic St. Petersburg Woman's Club building

— GAIL BRAZZELL —

Back in 1913 when the St Petersburg Woman's Club was formed, the 14 charter members had no idea of what a force they would become. They wanted a community gathering place. There was no television then, so town meetings, singing, plays, and performances were the entertainment.

According to a history written by the late Clare Brown Williams Shank, who was president of the club from 1974-1976, the club began attracting quite a following, and by 1923 there were 400 members. During those early years, members championed many social causes including the Susan B. Anthony Amendment promoting women's suffrage.

At first the group met at the First Baptist Church downtown. Then, in 1928, St. Petersburg developer Perry Snell graciously donated a piece of rough, thick, primitive waterfront property on Snell Isle. The land was beyond the streetcar line in what was then considered the 'jungle.' There was little access other than a rickety wooden-plank bridge. According to

the club's history, after much debate, Snell's offer was finally accepted.

A few years later, the beautiful pink Mediterranean Building on Snell Isle Blvd. came to life. The new clubhouse was officially dedicated in November 1929. Not surprisingly, a few years later, the club members convinced the city to build a new, safer bridge over Coffee Bayou.

Today, more than a century later, the St. Petersburg Woman's Club continues to be a successful women's organization. The group is incorporated as a 501c3 organization and is part of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), one of the largest women's volunteer service organizations in the world. Members uphold the Club's mission: "community service, civic participation, educational programs, and preservation of our historical clubhouse."

The beautiful waterfront clubhouse is now a St. Petersburg historic landmark and on the list of National Historic Sites. Club members continue to meet there monthly, but the building is also

rented for special events. It's a popular site for weddings, corporate events, and parties. Proceeds from the rentals help support the upkeep of the building and fund some of the many charities the club sponsors.

Club members participate in many community outreach activities. Projects are divided into 5 Focus Community Service Programs: arts and culture, civic engagement and outreach, environment, health and wellness, and education and libraries. The Wednesday Sewing Group is one of the popular service programs. The women make pillows for Hospice, quilts for Bay Pines Veteran's Hospital, bibs for nursing homes, and items for children at Sallie House.

Members also meet for fun social activities such as Monday Mahjong, monthly Bunco, board games, field trips, and ladies night out. There is something for everyone! New members are always welcome. There are no requirements other than the group being a woman-only organization. For more information, visit www.stpetersburgwomensclub.org.



Left: Monday Mah Jongg. Center: Erna Virts and Linda Kremkau at the Octoberfest Celebration demonstrating German Folk Dance.



Right: Mary Kay Heraty, left, (St. Pete Woman's Club member), Gina Wilson (The Kind Mouse), and Cathy Allen (president of the St. Pete Woman's Club) during a canned goods food drive for The Kind Mouse.



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Dogs Are People, Too

— HOWARD POLLACK —
 There is a love and obsession for dogs on Snell Isle, and in St. Petersburg in general. Now, don't get me wrong, I love dogs, too. In fact, I am the proud owner of a pair of adorable Newfoundland's ('Newfies' to those familiar with the breed). They are large, hairy, and slobbery creatures often mistaken for bears; wonderful dogs who are not very popular in the heat of St. Petersburg and more suited to the cold of the North.

But I digress. The real point of this article – and the idea that spawned it – came to me as I jogged by the beach along the path through the Old Northeast and down past Vinoy Park. This popular walking, running, and bicycling path runs from Snell Isle to Downtown St. Petersburg and attracts people from all around. It is scenic, safe, and a melting pot where anyone can come, drop a blanket or a beach chair, snooze, fish, play volleyball, or people watch all day long. Most often, you'll see people walking their dogs – and there are dozens of them at any given time – flaunting all manner of breeds. There are also many young couples pushing strollers, some even riding bicycles with child seats attached behind them.

The atmosphere is idyllic and one of the main reasons I decided to relocate here from New York. And, having lived in New York all my life, there is little that surprises me, or makes my head turn and do a double take. However, on this particular occasion, I was taken off guard. The sun blazed above as I passed a gymnast doing flips on a tightrope tied between two trees. I continued on by a weathered old man, sporting an impressive grey beard, fishing by the shore.



Dakota, Howard and Boulder hang out in the shade

That's when, coming straight at me, a young girl approached on a bicycle towing a covered cart carriage. As she passed, I turned, expecting to see a baby inside. Nope! To my surprise, the carriage contained two small dogs, gleefully taking in the scenery and enjoying the ride as they engaged in their own form of people watching.

Soon I learned that this is a local norm. More and more, it seems that we are treating dogs like people, taking them along while exercising, shopping and even dining. Many dogs are even dressed in shirts, hats, and bandannas. As full-fledged family

members, they are often called by human names, pampered at doggie spas, given a place setting at the dinner table, and afforded a comfortable bed with fresh linens. Soon enough, I suspect that we will be adorning them with the latest technology. I'm willing to bet that there is a secret R&D division at Apple presently working on the iCollar, which will keep track of the dog's location if it wanders off, and will also contain a feature that will enable us to call Buddy home when it's time for the family dinner. ●

Editor's note: Howard moved to Snell Isle with his family six years ago. He loves the outdoor healthy lifestyle that St. Petersburg offers, and you may see him just about every day at the Vinoy Dog Park with his two best friends, Boulder and Dakota. He's also an author and has penned a number of crime thriller novels. His first, Everywhere That Tommy Goes, was published a few years ago and won Mystery Book of the Year and is available on Amazon. He also recently completed his latest novel, Unmasked, which takes place in St. Petersburg and was inspired by actual events surrounding the pandemic. His agent is presently shopping the book for a publisher.



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A HORSE OF A DIFFERENT COLOR *Continued from page 1*

was 12 years old. The eldest of five siblings, Sue grew up around horses because her father raised and raced quarter horses as a lifelong hobby. When her dad passed away eight years ago, Sue decided to continue his legacy by keeping the horse farm going in Seminole.

Coming from a big family it was natural that Sue loved working with children, so she began her career in nursing by studying for her Registered Nurse degree at St. Petersburg (Junior) College. She completed her studies and began employment at the University of Florida's Shands Hospital in Gainesville, working with premature babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Sue's job as a pediatric nurse brought her to Tampa General Hospital where she worked in the NICU for 25 years, making her a healthcare hero long before it was fashionable.

Here is where her love for children and her love for horses intersected. Elliott was born in 2017 in Sue's barn in Seminole and it was clearly love at first sight for both of them. Sue began writing about Elliott when he was a year old, and he seems to delight in regaling her with his antics to this day.

Lisa, a professional illustrator, and longtime friend of Sue's approached Sue about collaborating on a children's book. "Lisa is a horse enthusiast and she owns horses, too," said Sue. It was a match made in heaven, and the rest – as they say – is history.

Sue was used to giving regular talks about Elliott at various schools, 4-H groups, Girl Scout troops, groups of home-schooled and foster children, but found that Covid-19 shut down most of those opportunities. Prospects of doing group visits at the stable – where Elliott lives with his mother, Ellie, and five other horse friends – also dried up while the epidemic was in full swing. In spite of the

obstacles, Sue was able to make a recent visit to a Gingerbread School as well as conduct a Harley Davidson Fundraiser.

As a 4-H leader herself for eight years, Sue has enjoyed bringing 4-H children to the barn to meet Elliott in person. "Elliott is a special friend; kids can relate to Elliott," said Sue.

In the past, Sue has held fundraisers to raise enough money to buy the books and plush toys she donates and distributes to sick children at the local hospitals. One of the things she missed during the height of the pandemic was getting to distribute all the sets of books and plush toys personally to each child. She could only drop off her donations in the lobby, missing the look of pleasure on the children's faces.

But that is changing. Group venues are opening up again. Sue looks forward to reading to kids in schools and houses of worship. "All you have to do is ask," said Sue. "Just send me an email."

"When I see a child with an Elliott plush (toy) reading one of Elliott's books, (I see) the difference (Elliott) is making, and I love it!" said Sue. "Elliott helps children learn and learn to love reading."

"Moms tell me that Elliott does great appearances at Show and Tell, too."

Elliott continues to be a star. He is a frequent guest with Dawn Reese from Hollywood Connection on the Tan Talk Radio Network (1340-AM and 106.1-FM) studio out of Clearwater. He has his own Facebook page, so his fans can keep up with his horsing around: www.facebook.com/elliottstail. ●



If you would like Sue Greenberg to read Elliott's Tails at schools, community groups, churches or temples, are interested in sponsoring a fundraiser to support free books and plush toys to hospitalized children, or would like to purchase Elliott's Tails books or plush toys, email Sue at suegreenbrg@aol.com.





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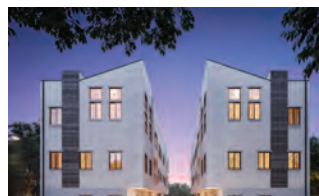
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HEROES, HISTORY, AND ST. PETE *Continued from page 1*

These stories and more have been chronicled in a new book by Dr. Wimbish's son, Ralph Wimbish, Jr., a sports journalist and author whose childhood in St. Pete put him on the front lines of civil rights activism in the 1960s. *Heroes: Stories of Sports, Courage and Class*, is a collection of Wimbish Jr.'s experiences from his incredible upbringing, and the storied journalism career that took him around the world and allowed him to meet many prominent athletes.

Wimbish recounts starting his career in the Midwest where he found himself on the picket line in a workers' strike, and then spent time cutting his teeth in a gritty, smoke-filled newsroom with big personalities in Pittsburgh. His journey to his dream job, assistant sports editor at the *New York Post*, included some unusual posts, including a stint in Rome where his office was bombed for political reasons. He also landed a position with *Golf Digest* where he met some of his heroes, made an impression on a young Tiger Woods, and honed his love for the game that his father fought to play when St. Pete's golf courses were still segregated.

A book tour in September brought Wimbish Jr. on a victory lap of his hometown, where he spoke on successive nights at The Carter G. Woodson Museum, Tombolo Books, and the St. Pete Museum of History. I caught up with him by phone between rounds on his annual golf trip to Virginia Beach to talk about his book, growing up in St. Pete, and his parents' legacy.

We talked about the irony that I-375 is prominently named the "C. Bette Wimbish" highway in honor of his mother when she had her own fight over the construction of I-275.



1961 photo of Dr. Ralph Wimbish Sr., at a St. Pete lunch counter sit-in.

Photo courtesy of Tampa Bay Times

In the mid-1970s, many homes in St. Pete's predominantly Black neighborhoods – including the home Wimbish Jr.'s father built on 15th Avenue South – stood in the path of the new highway. Homeowners complained that they were not offered enough money to allow them to find similar homes elsewhere in the city. Mrs. Wimbish sued the state arguing that it was unfair for homeowners to receive

less compensation because their homes were in low-income areas when they were forced to live in that area because of the color of their skin.

Wimbish Jr. recalls that Black businesses along 22nd Street also suffered from the disruption the highway caused. He told me that his mother argued that Black property owners weren't being compensated fairly as they had been economically depressed for years because of segregationist practices. An all-white jury ruled against her.

Dr. Wimbish, a physician and towering figure in St. Petersburg's Black community, was the leader of the local NAACP. He not only challenged the segregation of hotels, but was among the leaders of the lunch counter sit-ins in St. Petersburg, at the height of civil rights activism in the '60s.

"I remember early in my life wanting to go to McDonalds or Biff Burger and my mom would say you had to be a member," said Wimbish Jr. Eventually his parent's activism paid off, allowing Black families to enjoy movies at the Florida Theater and dine on Central Avenue, or anywhere else in town. Wimbish Jr. himself was the first Black player at Lake Maggiore Little League.



Ralph Wimbish is interviewed by Jonathan Tallon in the courtyard of Tombolo Books

Photo courtesy of Tombolo Books

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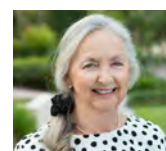
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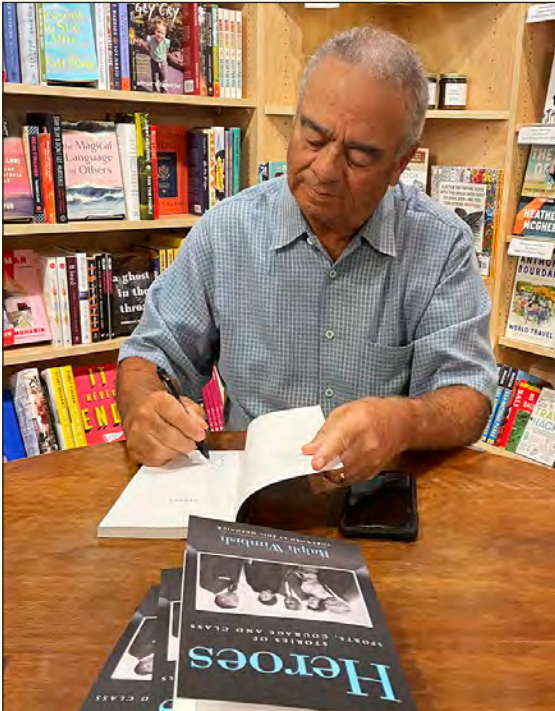
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After his talk at the Carter Woodson Museum, Ralph Wimbish Jr. met retired teacher Mordecai Walker, 97, a friend of his parents and revered member of the community

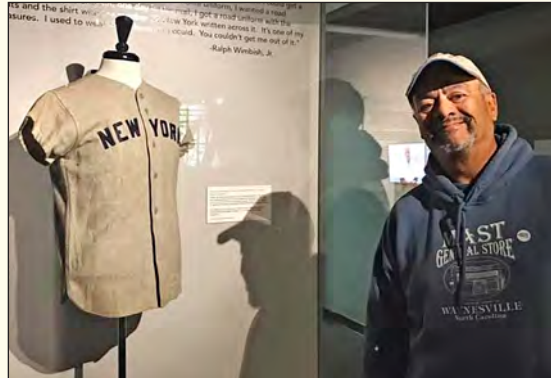
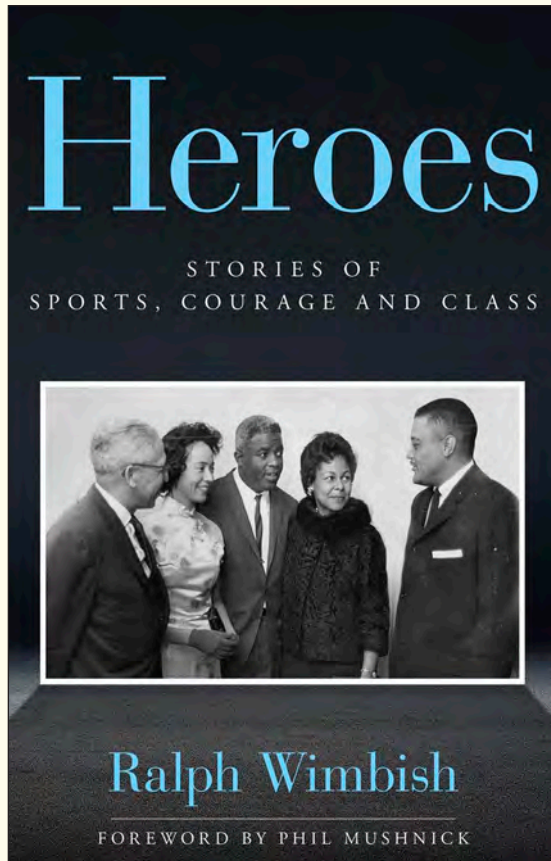
While his mother has been recognized by the City of St. Petersburg, you won't find Dr. Ralph Wimbish, Sr.'s name on anything locally. When I asked Wimbish Jr. how he'd like to see his father recognized, he said he wasn't sure, but he'd like to see it happen, adding, "My mom has her own Wikipedia page, but my dad doesn't."

Heroes has forty-four chapters of Ralph Wimbish



Ralph Wimbish signing at Tombolo Books

Photo courtesy of Tombolo Books



Ralph Wimbish Jr., with the New York Yankees jersey given to him by Elston Howard – on display at the St. Museum of History. Photo courtesy Ralph Wimbish, Jr.

Jr.'s tales, from watching baseball on TV with Jackie Robinson as a child, to seeing Magic Johnson play in the NCAA Tournament, and Diego Maradona's last World Cup. He witnessed remarkable local history and some of the sports world's most famous moments. You can find his book at Tombolo Books on 22nd Street and 1st Avenue South, just a stone's throw from where he lived history. ♦

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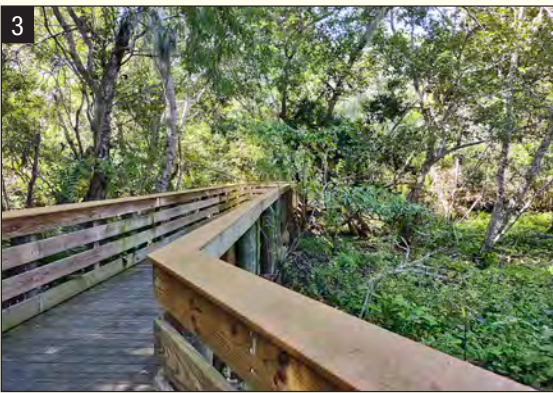
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Boyd Hill, A Hidden Southside Gem



— SAMANTHA BOND RICHMAN —

Hundreds of acres of natural parks located nearby offer residents and visitors the opportunity to experience differing terrain, ecosystems, and wildlife. One of these local gems is the Boyd Hill Nature Preserve. Located in South St. Pete, Boyd Hill Nature Preserve is a sprawling, 450-acre park with a diverse array of activities supported by the surrounding natural landscapes, including 360-acre Lake Maggiore Park.

The preserve is a short 15-20 minute drive from Northeast St. Pete. It is bordered by Dr. MLK Street South and 31st Street South as its east and west boundaries respectively, and Lake Maggiore to the north, with Country Club Drive South along the southern border.

Visitors will likely note that Boyd Hill is not a hill. In fact, Mr. Boyd Hill was a 1950s park superintendent with a zeal for plants and nature. He was an early adopter of keeping things natural and wild. Tragically, he died young of a heart attack at age 56 in 1957. A year later, he was honored by having the park named for him. Ironically, the latest development to the park, the Terry Tomalin Campground, has some similarities with this early history. An avid outdoorsman and local legend, Terry Tomalin was the outdoor editor for the *Tampa Bay Times* for 25 years. He passed away unexpectedly in 2016 at age 55 of a heart attack. The new campground at Boyd Hill is named in his honor.

To begin an exploration of the preserve, start at the eastern shores of Lake Maggiore, where there is ample parking and tables for picnicking, a small boat ramp, and expansive waterfront views. The lake itself provides a beautiful oasis-like backdrop, where breezes wave the lakefront grasses, creating a moving blanket of plants hiding wildlife. Watch for eagles, otters, and large softshell turtles nearly as round as a sewer lid with paddles for feet. There are gators, too, and the City Parks Department prohibits swimming or wading. Some animals in the park are shy, and show

themselves only in the quiet of morning or near sunset to those who sit still. The waterfront's otter families are in this category, and they are adorable to watch energetically fishing the shoreline and lake bottom. There are larger covered picnic pavilions, complete with bring your own charcoal grill cook stations which may require reservations. Playgrounds surround the picnic areas, and tall, long needle pine trees provide areas of shade where woodpeckers flit about, calling to each other in short bursts.

Further along the southern park boundary, heading west to 1101 Country Club Way South from the Lake Maggiore Park area, the entrance to the Boyd Hill Nature Preserve Visitor Center is on the right (north) side of the street and houses the Lake Maggiore Environmental Education Center. Butterfly gardens create a soothing environmental Zen at the entrance to the cool interior of the structure with its classrooms, gift shop, educational nature displays and park cashier.

Among the first residents to greet visitors are the birds who reside in the park aviary and raptor centers. All have been injured or otherwise orphaned and can't make it on their own in the wild. There are about 20 birds of prey, including the majestic bald eagle who retains his cool even under the less-than-ideal circumstances he finds himself.

The Environmental Education & Visitor Center hosts numerous seasonal talks, walks, camps, and even daily tram rides except for Mondays when the preserve is closed. For the less adventuresome and for those who want to learn before they visit, the park now has YouTube videos available online featuring Ranger Christine who introduces the flora and fauna of the Boyd Hill Nature Preserve in the series *All Things Nature*.

From the Visitor Center, the adventures begin. Hundreds of acres of park land include distinct areas that vary widely, from marshy expanses along Lake Maggiore, to trails leading through cactus-covered

sand. There are over 165 species of birds, so bring your binoculars to this designated Great Florida Birding Trail. Trail options for exploration include two boardwalk selections: the longer Center Loop trail at 1.2 miles, and the Uplands Trail at .60 miles, where visitors may encounter armadillos or gopher tortoise.

None of the trails represent significant climbing requirements, and many are navigable by those with mobility limitations. Non-motorized bikes are welcome, pets are not, and feeding or harassing the resident animals is strictly prohibited. Wear comfortable shoes, and of course seasonally appropriate clothing. Water or other non-alcoholic beverages are always a good idea for outdoor activities. There are guided tours scheduled throughout of the day (and sometimes night). Topics are adjusted seasonally to reflect the sights and sounds visitors are likely to encounter. These include kayak tours, astronomy nights, camps for kids, and animal shows.

At the western border of the contiguous park areas, visitors will find the Pioneer Settlement and the newly dedicated Terry Tomalin Campground areas. The gated area is accessible during planned events and is located at 2900 31st Street South. The pioneer settlement is operated in conjunction with a private nonprofit and features a small community of structures, including the Brantley Building (built in 1888) and Endicott House (built in 1898). Other structures recreate the challenging lifestyle of self-sufficiency led by early pioneers of West Central Florida in the late 19th century. During special events, volunteers dressed in period clothing are on hand for a more realistic presentation of the historic re-creations. Camps and events programming schedules are available online, and include the availability of an authentic Pole Barn for group rental.

The campground is open for reservations and is also accessible via the 31st Street South entrance. The 12 campsites created in part using funds from



Penny for Pinellas further honor the memory of Terry Tomalin by being low impact to the surrounding woodland. While the campsites are described as primitive, they are actually small, raised wooden structures resembling cabins and feature central fire pits, picnic tables, and nearby restroom facilities. They allow campers to feel like they are getting away from it all without leaving town. Hammock Hall, a nearby multipurpose building, provides a rental space and offers additional programming. Terry Tomalin was a friend to the Parks, and supported Boyd Hill Preserve with numerous volunteer service projects. His memory is well represented by these newer developments. ●

www.stpeteparksrec.org/boydhillpreserve.
Closed Mondays.

- 1) Trails at Boyd Hill Nature Preserve
- 2) One of Boyd Hill's armadillo sculptures created by local artist Paul Eppling
- 3) Boardwalk through nature trail
- 4) A volunteer holds a bird of prey in the aviary
- 5) Lake Maggiore at Boyd Hill Nature Preserve
- 6) Cabin camping at Boyd Hill
- 7) Alligator skeleton in the Boyd Hill Nature Center
- 8) An eagle in the aviary
- 9) A northern Crested Caracara in the aviary
- 10) A red-tailed hawk in the Boyd Hill Nature Center aviary
- 11) A great horned owl in the aviary



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NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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*We hope to see you on the Tour!
Help spread the word!*

Candlelight Tour of Homes Has Returned

Mark your calendar for this year's Annual Candlelight Tour of Homes to be held on Sunday, December 12, between 3-8pm in the Historic Old Northeast – a widely popular tradition now in its 23rd year.

We are excited about this year's Tour as the homes we have lined up are a great

blend of new, old, and renovated – with a fun twist! In addition to the home tours, we have a few surprises in the works that will hopefully bring you holiday cheer, like live music and the trolley ride to enhance your overall experience during these unusual times.

This is a great opportunity to stroll your neighborhood with family, friends, and neighbors and enjoy the assortment of beautiful homes with their different architectural styles, interior design, and

decor. Visit us at HONNA.org for more details and to purchase tickets. Your admission (\$25 in advance and \$30 on the day of the Tour) will go to supporting your neighborhood association's largest fundraiser, and a portion of the proceeds will go to a local charity.

Watch social media for more info as the date approaches. Thank you in advance for helping us spread the word. Hope to see you on the Tour!

~Sharon Kantner



Upcoming Events

The last quarterly neighborhood meeting of the year will be held on Monday, November 15, at 7pm. The featured speaker is Liz Abernethy, who heads the City's Planning and Development Services office, on the topic of major zoning changes that are being considered. Election of the new Board for the coming year is also on the agenda. This will be an in-person meeting that will be held at Westminster Palms (939 Beach Drive NE). It will also be watchable online (go to www.honna.org to obtain the Zoom link).

The annual Candlelight Tour of Homes returns this year after having to skip 2020, and will be held on Sunday, December 12, between 3-8pm. This is always a really enjoyable treat that attracts tour-goers from near and far. Plan to make this event a part of your holiday schedule – and it's a great early Christmas gift for family and friends.

Popular social events are back. The next Porch Party will be held on Friday evening, November 19. Plans are underway for the annual December neighborhood holiday party. Look for details on social media and in HONNA eblasts.



Coastal Clean Up

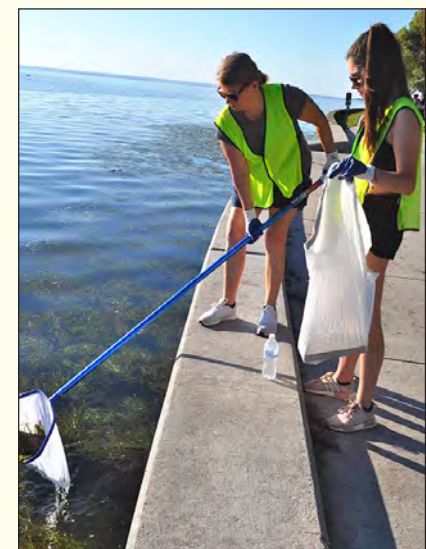
On Saturday October 16 from 9am to noon, a dozen volunteers came out to North Shore Park in support of International Coastal Cleanup Day. The event was supported by HONNA, the Exchange Club of the 'Burg, and Keep Pinellas Beautiful (KPB) which supplied us with all the needed items so we could safely walk along the shoreline.

The group found a number of unusual items, such as a jeans jacket and a pair of shoes. While we have such a beautiful park right here in downtown St. Pete, the group was still able to pick up over 140 pounds of trash in the water along the seawall and litter embedded in the mangroves. We will be doing this each October going forward. Watch for our next clean-up date in the spring, when we will go through the Old Northeast streets and alleyways to collect trash and debris.

~Doug O'Dowd

Major Zoning Changes Proposed for Neighborhoods

As part of an effort to provide much-needed affordable-and-middle-income housing, the City is considering increasing density along high-frequency transit routes and future major streets. At a recent Housing, Land Use, and Transportation (HLUT) committee meeting, City Council members voted unanimously to pursue zoning changes which would allow duplexes/triplexes/fourplexes, row houses, and townhouses up to a half-mile into neighborhoods adjacent to these high transit routes. According to a map included in the



presentation, a change of this magnitude would eliminate single family housing in many neighborhoods. It has been suggested that an incremental approach would lessen possible adverse and unintended consequences.

Following is a link to the recorded HLUT meeting which includes additional details of the proposal: www.stpete.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=14&clip_id=5410.

HONNA has invited Liz Abernethy, head of Planning and Development Services for the City, to present the proposal to residents at the upcoming quarterly HONNA neighborhood meeting on Monday, November 15, at 7pm.

The HONNA Board is urging residents to attend, ask questions, and become informed as the proposed changes could affect almost all property owners in the Historic Old Northeast.

~Robin Reed

OUR MISSION

To promote, preserve and protect the quality of life in our unique corner of the world



Trunk or Treat

Kids got to practice Halloween skills at the annual HONNA Trunk or Treat fun time on Saturday, October 30. There were skill games and lots of smiles – and candy! Thanks to Westminster Palms for hosting and the volunteers who made it all possible.



Porch Party

The highly anticipated HONNA Halloween Porch Party hosted by Steve Deal and Frank Hay brought out the wild and crazy side of party-goers.

HONNA Flags

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



What We Do

We are a volunteer-driven nonprofit organization focused on our community interests:

- Represent Neighbors' interests before City Council and Departments
- Beautify Old Northeast public spaces, monuments, and tree canopy
- Promote the historic character of the Old Northeast
- Provide and promote neighborhood events
- Inform residents on day-to-day interests, issues, events
- Assist with the safety and security of our residents and community
- Support Community and City strategic goals

Representing over 2,500 residents, HONNA's diverse leaders, members, and volunteers serve as custodians of neighborhood resources and are stewards for the local area.



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

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

Ways To Stay Connected:

- Visit www.honna.org
- Become a HONNA member. You'll receive periodic informative email announcements. honna.org/get-involved
- Volunteer for a project, program, or event (the Candlelight Tour of Homes, Trunk or Treat, Porch Parties, Crime Watch). Contact Anna Broshears at abroshe56@gmail.com.
- Follow Historic Old Northeast Forever at www.historicoldnortheastforever.org. HONF works "to preserve and protect our special neighborhood" (HONF is not affiliated with HONNA).
- HONNA offers a variety of flags that you can purchase to display your love for the Old Northeast. The four choices come in several color combinations: hunter green, burgundy, patriotic, and diversity. You can find them at honna.org/shop.

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The Power of Women's Stories

— JANAN TALAHER —

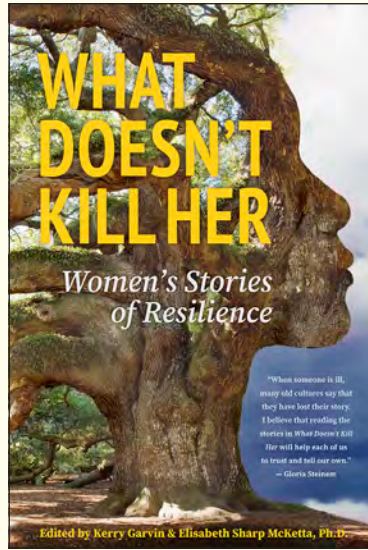
As a teenager, Kerry Garvin delved into the world of books, especially philosophy and the classics. She was inspired by what she read and hoped that she, too, could someday make an impact on the world through her writing. Now Kerry, a third generation St. Pete native, has fulfilled her dream. She and Elisabeth Sharp McKetta, Ph.D., are the co-editors of the newly published book, *What Doesn't Kill Her: Women's Stories of Resilience*.

The book is a collection of essays written by 60 women, all of whom have confronted tremendous challenges and found the inner strength to move on. Kerry admits that the stories can be heavy. Chronic illness, miscarriage, assault, abuse, tremendous loss. But each has an important message about the power of overcoming adversity.

Kerry is no stranger to adversity herself. As a teen, she suffered from debilitating chronic illness that often kept her homebound and isolated from peers. She was homeschooled and attended classes online. But despite everything, she decided to take a big leap of faith and after graduating from high school, set her sights on an Ivy League college. Kerry was accepted at Harvard, graduating in 2017 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. She then continued on to receive a master's degree in creative writing and literature, graduating summa cum laude in May of last year.

It was while she was working as a faculty aide for Dr. McKetta, one of her writing instructors, that the impetus for the book was born. "It was 2018 and right on the heels of the 'Me Too' movement. We thought that might be a good platform for us," said Kerry. "We had been sharing our own experiences with each other and thought wouldn't it be incredible to publish a book where we put together many women's stories. We wanted the stories to reflect the idea of bottoming out and then ascending from the ashes."

Kerry relates how the two decided to send an email to their circle of women colleagues, who in turn sent it out to their circles. "We didn't know what to expect, but then the stories just started coming in," said Kerry. "It was amazing to be on the receiving end of these powerful stories. The women said they were sharing their stories with



the hope that they might help just one woman who was going through what they went through."

In the introduction of the book, the two women write: *We asked the women not to focus on the descent to their lowest point so much as their ascent back up. We wanted to understand how they were able to grow stronger, wiser and more resilient in the face of adversity. Not a task for the faint of heart.*

Kerry grew up in several St. Pete neighborhoods, including Allendale and Patrician Point, but she now lives in the mountains of Western North Carolina where she teaches creative writing at Haywood Community College. She is also helping women veterans write their stories through a program offered by the Asheville, NC Veterans Administration. In addition, she is an instructor in environmental storytelling and eco-fiction at Unity College in Maine.

Kerry's family has deep roots in St. Pete, dating back to 1900 when her great grandfather Percival Lee Miller moved to St. Pete and purchased 50-to-75 acres in Northeast St. Petersburg. According to Kerry's father, Terry Miller, Percival was a real estate developer and entrepreneur who opened the very first, large-scale dairy farm in St. Pete, called the St. Petersburg Dairy. He also had one of the first ice companies in the area. There wasn't refrigeration at the time, of course, and the company would deliver ice in bulk to customers. The family's business enterprises included offering lodging to seasonal visitors by renting out rooms in their large family home, creating what we would now call a bed-and-breakfast.

The entrepreneurial spirit continued with CK Miller, Kerry's grandfather. CK bought property on 28th Avenue and 17th Street North, where he operated the Pine City Tourist Camp. Tourists without the money to stay in hotels or boarding houses could rent a space in the camp where they could set up a tent on a wooden platform. In the 1930s, his father bought an entire block on 16th Street and opened a small grocery store. Then after World War II, he took advantage of the residential building boom and constructed dozens of small homes for the scores of retirees who were moving to St. Pete. ♦



Kerry Garvin, author and educator

For more information about Kerry and the book, *What Doesn't Kill Her: Women's Stories of Resilience*, go to www.facebook.com/whatdoesntkillher.

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Celebrating Local Artists This Holiday Season

— BRANDY STARK —

The weather is a bit cooler and less humid: it's a sure sign that winter has come to St. Petersburg. The city is getting ready for the holidays. Lights are blossoming from lamp posts, the candy cane walk returns to the park, and anticipation for wonderful gatherings is in the air.

But are you ready for the upcoming holidays? If not, don't worry; we live in one of the most prolific artsy cities in the world. The local creative community has you covered!

The *Northeast Journal* talked to three local arts experts – Katie Deits, director of Florida CraftArt, a nonprofit organization representing Florida fine craft artists; Amanda Cooper, curator of Exhibitions at the Morean Arts Center, a community-based arts organization; and Ester Venouziou, LocalShops1 founder and a champion for St. Pete small businesses – for some advice on how we can support local artists and find great holiday gifts.

Why support St. Pete artists and creatives?

Amanda: There is nothing as meaningful as giving someone you care about a unique, handmade item, which is what you do when you buy art from our local talented artists.

Ester: There's a story behind every piece of art, so when you give a piece of art, you are not giving just a 'thing.' You are sharing the artist's story.

Katie: It means a lot to artists whose livelihood depends on people purchasing their work, and you can't find one-of-a-kind work like this in the big box stores.

What kind of art should one consider purchasing?

Ester: This depends on who you are shopping for, really. If you're buying for a co-worker or distant cousin, or someone else you don't know very well, you might want to consider functional art, such as a handcrafted mug, a ceramic vase, or a colorful quilt. For your best friend or your mom or someone else you're close to, you might want to consider art that's purely decorative: a painting with their favorite colors, an abstract sculpture from a local artist, a whimsical print, for example. Also, is it important to you (or the person receiving the gift) to support a minority artist, LGBTQ, or female?

Amanda: People purchase all kinds of artwork as gifts. We definitely sell a lot of functional pottery, glass jewelry, and works on paper, but we do have the occasional buyer who will select a high-end painting or sculpture for someone special (or for themselves!). So much of the work for sale is timeless and not just seasonal.

Katie: Our gallery staff can advise shoppers with questions, such as: What is their design style? Contemporary, Mid-Century Modern, Coastal/Beach, or Traditional? Do they have any specific interests like pets, wild animals, cooking, gardening, or wine? Holiday ornaments are a way to remember each special season, the birth of a child, a marriage or anniversary. If the person is religious, we have beautiful menorahs, angels, and Christmas-themed ornaments. For newlyweds, a colorful salad set in sustainable bamboo is popular.

What other advice would you offer?

Katie: It's important to know that we have art to meet all price ranges.

Ester: As far as prices, remember that department stores don't negotiate their prices, so please don't try to negotiate with small businesses or artists either. I don't recommend asking the artist to drop the price on his or her artwork. It's better to ask if they have any pieces that are in your budget.

Ester: Will you be mailing the gift? If so, consider getting something that will fit in a standard-sized box or envelope. Don't forget to include the artist's card with the gift!



Shopapalooza: some of the many local artisans in 2019



Shopapalooza: vendor Jacaranda Hill



Florida CraftArt: a Menorah by artist Terry Andrews



Florida CraftArt: artwork by Judy Freeman



Morean Art Center: gallery store



Morean Art Ctr: quilled paper ornaments by Denise Kennedy

Where are some of the best places to find local art?

Ester: Shopapalooza Festival, a two-day community celebration November 27-28 in Vinoy Park kicks off the holiday season. This is the largest Small Business Saturday (and Sunday) celebration in Florida! This year the festival features 300 local makers, artists, and small businesses, as well as outdoor food halls, live entertainment, children's activities, a Christmas Village, and even a Victorian tiny home!

Katie: The Florida CraftArt Exhibition Gallery is transformed into a holiday wonderland and visiting will get anyone in the spirit. Some companies and organizations hold their holiday parties in the gallery and the guests really love it.

Amanda: At the Morean on Central, *Sweet Seasons* is the name of our holiday show this year. In addition, the gallery store at the Chihuly Collection features work from our local artists, as well as plenty of items with Chihuly's images on them. Our glass studio and

Morean Center for Clay also offer a host of handmade works from local artists.

As a final thought, Ester adds: We have so many talented people here in St. Pete and throughout the Tampa Bay region! I'm not sure who originally came up with this quote, but it's something I always keep in mind: 'Support living artists. The dead ones don't need it!'

Florida CraftArt: Holiday Show November 5 – December 29, 2021. 501 Central Avenue. www.floridacraftart.org.

Morean Arts Center: Sweet Seasons Holiday Show November 12 – December 31. 701 Central Avenue. www.moreanartscenter.org.

Shopapalooza November 27-28, 10am–5pm at Vinoy Park in downtown St. Pete. www.shopapaloozafestival.com. ●

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SPOTLIGHT ON THE ARTS

A Unique Canvas for a Beautiful Mural



Kevin and Stacie Steinke with artist Anna Ayres

— STACIE STEINKE —
What did you do with the 'blank spaces' in your life during Covid restrictions? When the pandemic first hit and we were all socially isolating, it seemed like the perfect time for my husband Kevin and I to start clearing out the backyard at our home in the Old Northeast. We removed plants to open

up the space, and added a fresh coat of paint to the wall that borders the backyard and the pool. After that, we wondered, what's next? What else should we do with it? It's a large space with good lighting and it needed something more to make it look complete. Then we had an interesting idea - what about a mural? St. Pete has amazing murals all over

town. Wouldn't it be fun to commission one for our home? Kevin and I aren't artists, and at first we weren't sure who could tackle the project for us. We talked to a few artists but nothing really came of it. Then one evening, while walking along 3rd Street NE, we saw a woman painting a mural on an exterior wall of a home. As we approached, she turned around and I

immediately said, "Hey, I know you." She responded, "Yeah, I know you, too." She turned out to be Anna Ayres, a local artist. I had written a feature story about Anna for the Northeast Journal in 2018 when she was teaching painting at Creative Clay. (See northeastjournal.org/celebrating-the-artist-in-everyone.) I hadn't seen her in three years, and now here she was. It felt like an amazing

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serendipity. I knew that she'd be the perfect artist to turn our vision into a beautiful piece of art on the 26-foot-long canvas of our backyard wall.

After many years as a studio artist, taking on mural project was a courageous step for Anna. In 2020, she joined the group of artists represented by the Brenda McMahon Gallery in Gulfport, and not long after, the owner asked her to paint two columns on the exterior of the gallery. That led to a mural project on the business next door – the Custom Home Décor – and then a commission at the home of a client of the Brenda McMahon Gallery. Our home was her fifth mural project.

We were a little nervous about picking the right theme for the mural given the wall's prominence in our backyard. After moving here four years ago, we know that the area's natural beauty, combined with the city's energetic vibe make it the perfect community for us to work and play in. We wanted that joyful energy captured in the mural.

Anna did a great job guiding us to the concept that would work best with the space and her style. We are thrilled with the results and hosted a special 'unveiling' for friends and neighbors this past summer. Anna's mural has turned our backyard space into a sanctuary that transports us to the tropical beauty of the area, with just the right colors, bird life, mangroves, shallow waters, and so much more.

It was fun to collaborate with such a talented artist and fascinating to be

part of the creative process. I thought readers of the *Northeast Journal* might enjoy learning more about the project from Anna's perspective so we sat down for an interesting Q&A.

How do you get started on a project of this size?

"When I first meet with a client, the conversation may be very general but as I listen, there are hints and clues regarding the direction of the project. Once the direction is set and the necessary elements are established, I start to sketch. Then, ideas start to develop organically."

We offered you so many ideas... how do you sort through everything?

"I came away understanding that you loved the feeling of immersion in nature and being surrounded by it as you kayaked on the water. I went kayaking myself through the mangrove tunnels at Weedon Island. When I was able to see the mangroves up close and get a sense of their layering, branches and details, the vision took flight. As I was working on the mural, the way that the natural elements of the backyard played with the elements of the mural was an unexpected surprise. The color of the pool extends seamlessly into the water of the mural, and in daylight, the light reflects off the water of the pool and dances across the mural. Even the canopy of trees in the mural seem to merge right into the 'live' trees that hang from the neighbor's yard.

Was it difficult to move from studio art to mural painting?

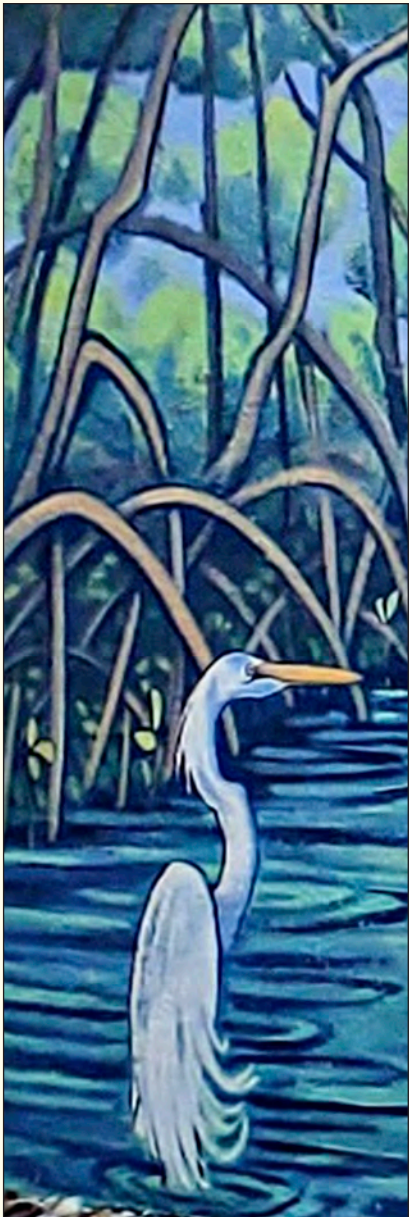
I love the solitude of studio work, where I get into the 'flow' state: a place of deep focus and concentration that feels utterly divine and connects me to a strong sense of joy and even sadness, a connection to our inner knowing.

It's been an adjustment learning how to paint in a more public capacity. I never realized the power of a mural until I was on the street painting one. Nearly everyone who passed by let me know that they appreciated it.

It's a bit more challenging when working outdoors with interruptions, as appreciative and polite as they might be. I still think like a painter rather than a muralist and perhaps that makes the process more challenging for me. I enjoy painting my murals free-hand versus projecting and tracing. It feels more painterly and organic this way.

Are there any additional artistic insights you can share with us?

Murals are really expanding my understanding of what art can be. Murals involve the writing of stories. Perhaps because of their scale, they can incorporate stories very powerfully and communicate truths to the audience. This can be said for paintings as well, but for me, creating murals has inspired me to go beyond merely painting a beautiful scene to using symbolism and different elements as a means to reflect more deeply on nature and our unique purpose here in this lifetime. ●



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Crazy Quilt (detail), c. 1890, Various textiles, On loan from the collection of William and Norma Roth



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Jerry Uelsmann, *Leaf Over Water* (detail), 1977, Gelatin silver print, Extended loan from Collection of Carol A. Upham

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MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS ST. PETE

Saving St. Pete's Historic Landmarks



YMCA musical band at the Melrose Clubhouse

— MANNY LETO,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PRESERVE THE 'BURG —

In the 1960s, the Polish American Society of St. Petersburg – anchored in their clubhouse at 1343 Beach Drive SE – welcomed Polish-American baseball players in town for Spring Training. Over on 13th Avenue South, the Melrose Clubhouse was home to the 'Colored YMCA,' a meeting place for the first Black Boy Scout troop and the local NAACP.

Though their stories are very different – one a social club for immigrants who migrated south from the industrial Northeast during a post-WWII wave of Sunbelt relocations, the other created when places in the South were separate and definitely not equal – each reveals a chapter in the story of St. Petersburg.

In the four months since joining Preserve the 'Burg as executive director, it's stories like these that resonate. I have daily conversations with our enthusiastic board about zoning, land use ordinances,

community character, and neighborhood plans. I've presented at City Council, attended neighborhood meetings, and met with elected officials, developers, and other nonprofit leaders.

With Covid on the wane, we've launched our 11th year of Movies in the Park, resumed our downtown walking tours of First Block and the Waterfront, and hosted historian Bruce Stephenson for a look at the development of Mirror Lake. But I always come back to the stories.

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The historic Melrose Clubhouse on the Melrose Elementary School campus



The Melrose Clubhouse sits adjacent to Melrose Elementary

The Melrose Clubhouse

In 1942, African American residents—specifically local civic activist Fannye A. Ponder, built a meeting hall. The Melrose Clubhouse served St. Pete’s Black residents during a time when just sitting on a bench in downtown could land you in jail. The clubhouse was a meeting place for Black women’s clubs, a recreation center for Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, a nursery for African American children in WWII, and a planning site for local chapters of the NAACP.

Shuttered in 1965, the Clubhouse was listed as a local landmark in 1993. The Clubhouse is located on the campus of Melrose Elementary School. Today, Preserve the 'Burg is just one of several community groups working with Pinellas County Schools and the City of St. Petersburg to make sure this story – this place – is not erased. Plans to restore the property and make it accessible to the public are slowly progressing.

Polish American Society Clubhouse

Over the summer, board member Emily Elwyn worked with the Polish American Society to research and file a landmark designation for the Society’s clubhouse. Constructed in 1956 on the city’s south waterfront, it was the first Polish American club in Florida. Situated among nondescript warehouses, the building is not an architectural wonder. If you drive too fast, you might miss it. There are no grand columns, no float glass windows, wrought iron balustrades, or iconic façade. But within its walls, there is a history that needs to be shared, a place that needs to be venerated. With the help of Preserve the 'Burg, City Council voted unanimously to approve the club’s local landmark designation.

Preserve the 'Burg often weighs in on aesthetics: building heights, windows, and architectural details. We also have lots of data on the economics of historic preservation: That old homes and commercial buildings retain and hold their values more so than those that aren’t designated; that they offer affordable, adaptable options for small local businesses; contribute to neighborhood walkability; and drive heritage tourism.

But underneath those exterior things, behind the building materials and number crunching, are stories that need telling and, in turn, tell us who we are. ●

For more information about Preserve the 'Burg’s mission and public programs, and to learn how you can get involved, visit www.preservetheburg.org.



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Club members decked out in traditional Polish folk costumes



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UPZONING *Continued from page 1*

in most Suburban Neighborhoods. These ADUs often provide rental income for home owners. The two types of neighborhoods have very different character and offer a distinct choice of life style.

The proposed zoning changes include options for newly allowed multi-unit housing along major streets, and likely up to a half-mile into adjacent neighborhoods; expansion of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) into neighborhoods which do not presently allow them; expansion of dense Economic Activity Centers into adjacent neighborhoods; and extension of the existing Residential High (RH) Zoning Category to transit corridors throughout the city.

In addition to increasing the supply of housing generally, the stated rationale for these changes includes increasing the walkability of neighborhoods as the new housing may be adjacent to public transit; augmenting the variety of housing available; and possibly increasing use of public transit. Some concerns regarding the proposals include compatibility with neighborhood character; adequacy of parking; lack of infrastructure to support increased density ('Complete Neighborhoods'); and risk of flood in low-lying areas.

Much of the discussion to date regarding these proposals anticipates that they would increase affordable housing, but that is unlikely and not the stated expectation of the Mayor. The cost of building the new recommended housing likely would not result in sale or rentals that would be affordable to low-income individuals or families.

Multi-Unit Housing

Presently, multi-unit housing is not permitted in neighborhoods zoned for single-family homes. The City proposals call for increasing density by permitting multi-unit housing – sometimes referred to as “missing



Multi-Unit Dwelling next to a single-family residence. Pending zoning change proposals have not yet established criteria for determining the compatibility of proposed multi-unit housing and accessory dwelling units with neighborhood character.

middle housing” – along high-frequency transit routes and/or future major streets in order to increase the supply of affordable and middle-income housing. These are streets used by public buses among other vehicles. Many such streets are two-lanes at this time, but it is anticipated they will be widened into four-lanes or greater at some future date. Specifically under consideration are duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, rowhouses, and town houses with up to four units

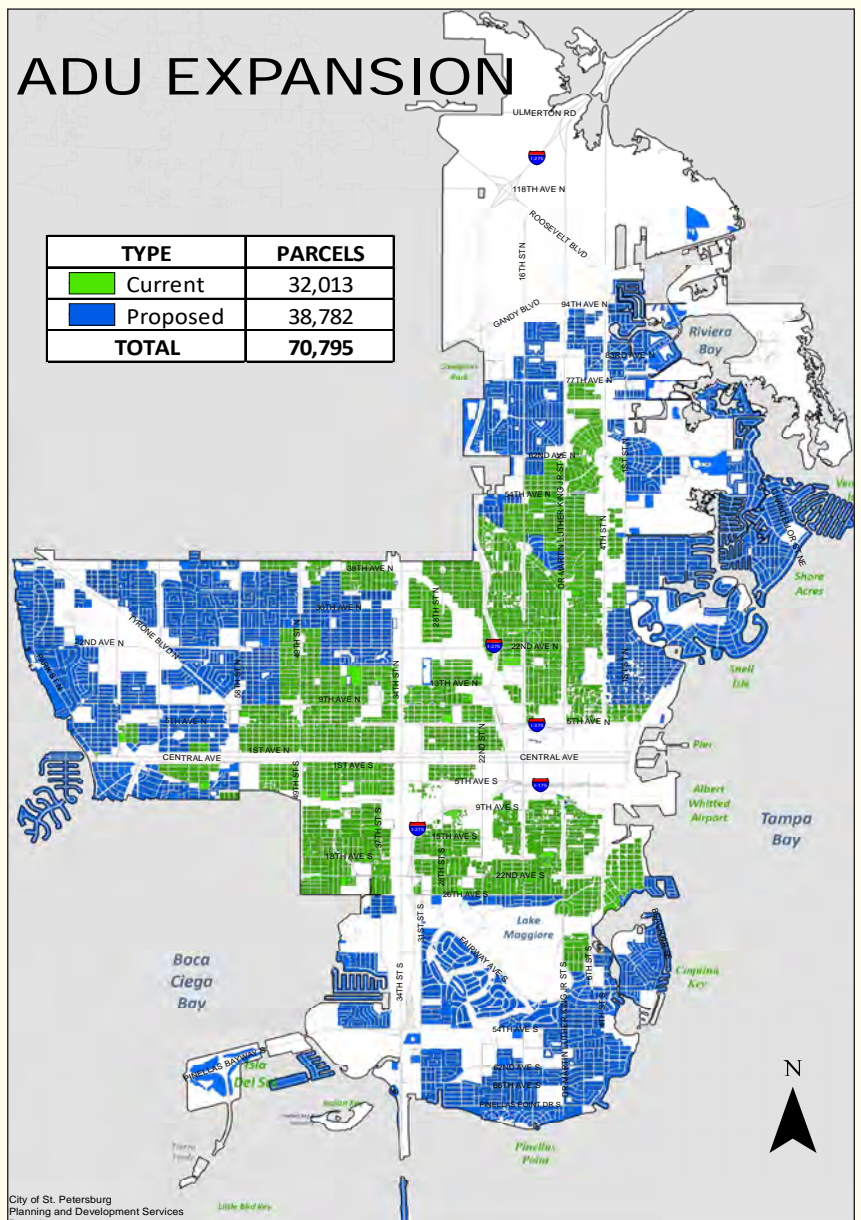
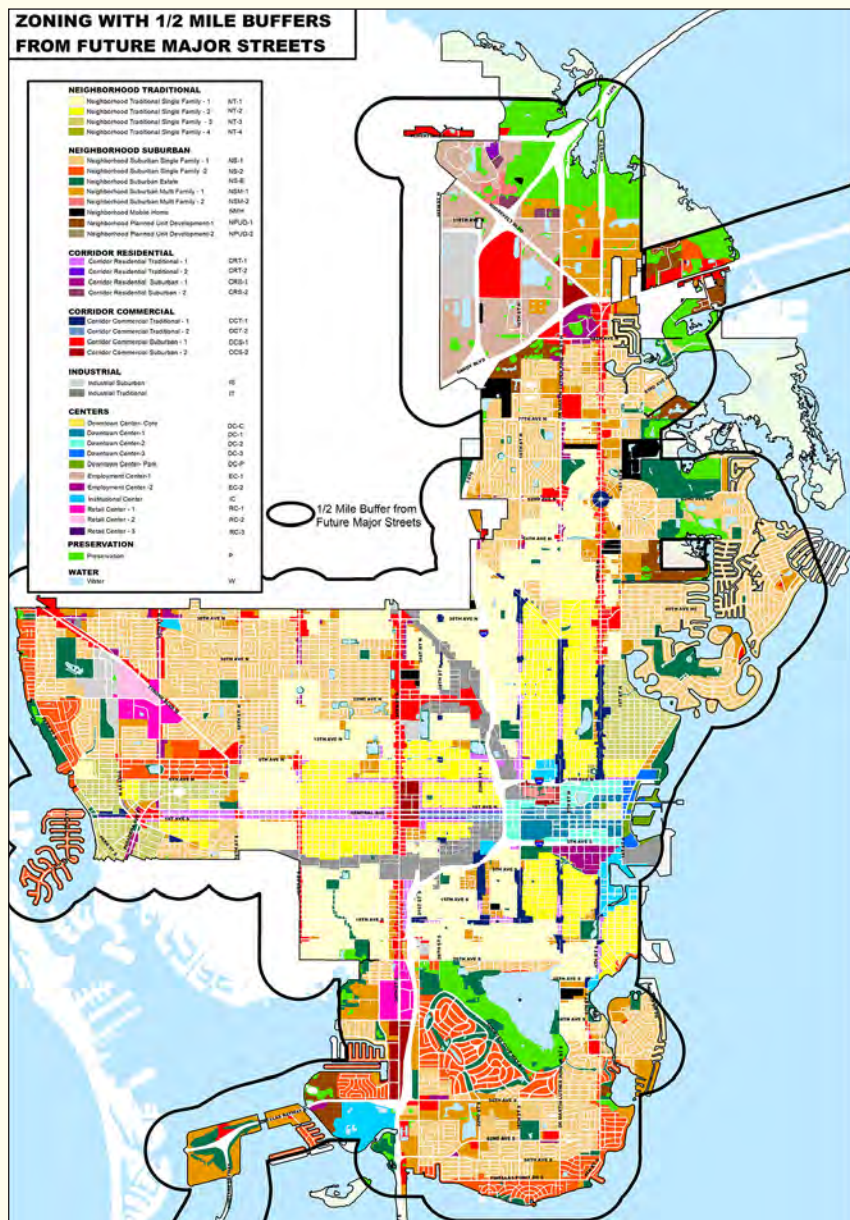
(maximum of 30 units an acre compared with the present limit of 2-7 units per acre in Suburban Neighborhoods). These structures when built would replace the existing single-family housing on a lot.

An option discussed but not recommended was to limit housing expansion to Complete Neighborhoods (neighborhoods that are within walking distance of public transit, healthy food stores, and other commercial services, bicycle facilities, parks, and schools).

The Mayor recommends permitting multi-family housing adjacent to major streets, and that such housing not be extended into adjacent neighborhoods in order to maintain neighborhood character. However, the City Council Housing Committee, composed of five council members, recently recommended that multi-unit housing (up to 4 units per lot) be allowed along future major streets and that building of such structures be allowed to extend one-half mile into adjacent neighborhoods. This virtually covers the entire city. Also, whether this would include the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) is unclear, although the Mayor has recommended that the CHHA be excluded, except for Accessory Dwelling Units.

Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are small self-contained living units that have their own kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom space. They include guest houses and garage apartments up to a maximum of 750 square feet, and can be attached to the principal residence or free-standing. ADUs are now permitted in most Traditional Neighborhoods, but not in most Suburban Neighborhoods. The Mayor proposes to expand permitting of ADUs into additional Traditional Neighborhoods (“NT-3” zoning) and the Suburban Neighborhoods. For Suburban





Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are now largely limited to Traditional Neighborhoods, most of which have alleys. Many ADUs are garage apartments which are rented.

Neighborhoods, the Mayor recommends location on lots with alleys, or a minimum lot size of 7,500 square feet with a minimum width of 75 feet (NS-2 and NSE Zoning); increasing the maximum square footage (up to 900 square feet has been discussed); and reducing or eliminating parking requirements when the ADUs are located in proximity to public transit.

The number of stories of an ADU would not exceed the number of stories of the principal residence except on an alley. In Traditional Neighborhoods, two ADUs would be allowed on a lot in addition to the principal home where the home is 50 years of age or older. The expansion of ADUs would be permitted in the Coastal High Hazard Areas. The rationale for allowing ADUs in the CHHA but not multi-unit buildings is unknown.

Should the City Housing Committee recommendation allowing up to four units on any lot receive approval by the full Council, the Mayor's proposals for expansion of ADUs would not go forward since that option would be allowed as part

of the four-unit maximum proposal. Under this arrangement, a triplex would be allowed one accessory dwelling unit. A lot with a single-family home would be allowed up to three accessory units. This would apply to both Traditional and Suburban Neighborhoods.

Compatibility with Neighborhood Character

It is stated by the City that provision would be made for these structures to be compatible with existing neighborhood character. However there is presently no definition of what constitutes neighborhood character, and what specific criteria would be used to determine that (such as architectural style, density/number of units per acre, minimum lot size, lot width, setbacks, height, mass and scale of buildings, parking requirements, and shared green space). There also have been recommendations made that a Neighborhoods or Community Character Master Plan be implemented, but no action has been taken yet by the City to do that.

Expansion of Activity Centers

There are seven special Economic Activity Centers now in the city: the Gateway, Downtown/Intown, Innovation District, Central Plaza, Central Avenue Corridor, Skyway Marina, and Tyrone. These Activity Centers generally permit higher densities and different uses than in the surrounding neighborhoods. Consideration is being given to expansion of some Activity Centers as yet unspecified into surrounding neighborhoods.

The City Council Housing Committee Meeting considering neighborhood upzoning may be accessed at www.stpete.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=14&clip_id=5410.



Contrary to many Suburban Neighborhoods, most Traditional Neighborhoods have alleys with adjacent Accessory Dwelling Units.

Residential High (RH) Zoning

Presently there is a 'Residential High' (high density) category permitting 30 units per acre in or abutting dense 'Economic Activity' zones (Gateway, Tyrone, Innovation District, etc.). While not part of the multi-unit and ADU discussion, the Mayor proposes to extend this type of zoning to 'Multimodal Corridors or Future Transit Corridors' which are also adjacent to many neighborhoods. There is no limit on the extent to which this zoning would reach into an adjacent neighborhood. A developer would apply to the City to upzone the existing lower density residential zoning to the Residential High (RH) zoning. The City Council is scheduled to hold public hearings on this change in the near future. Also, the Council recently approved by-passing neighborhood zoning requirements in the case of developments on one-acre or more in the case of proposed developments limited to persons earning up to 120% of Area Median Income (\$89,000 for a family of four).

Continued on page 32



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UPZONING Continued from page 31

What other proposals might be considered to accommodate expected population growth yet preserve neighborhood character? One approach would be to extend the current Corridor Residential Traditional Zoning to adjacent major roadways. This zoning encourages development of townhomes, condominiums, apartment buildings and mixed-use buildings that are appropriately scaled to the context of the corridor and to facilitate conversion of remaining single-family homes to offices or limited retail uses. These uses can provide affordable workforce housing units and buffer the adjacent interior single-family neighborhoods from the high volumes of traffic on present major streets. Another would be to increase density along Central Avenue and adjacent 1st Avenues South and North. A third would offer City-owned vacant land to developers at no cost or below market to reduce

development cost.

Exactly when the City Council will act on the pending proposals is unknown. Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA) President Tom Lally recently sent a letter to the Mayor and City Council asking that action be deferred until CONA has had time to inform its member associations. He also recommended the City make presentations to each neighborhood on how the proposals would affect them specifically. He noted that a particular concern is how the introduction of multi-unit housing and accessory dwelling units into some neighborhoods would affect the neighborhood character.

A previous zoning change limited to Traditional Neighborhoods was enacted in 2019 allowing multi-unit housing along major streets, but never implemented. Lally suggested this ordinance should be tried first before extending the concept to the entire city. ●

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Literary Nonprofit Celebrates Jack Kerouac

— ANGIE CONNER —

On October 21st, I ventured out to Studio@620 for a Día de los Muertos event honoring the poetry of Jack Kerouac, held on the 52nd anniversary of the iconic author's death. The local literary nonprofit Friends of Jack Kerouac organized the event, titled *Kerouac in Azul: A Celebration of Mexico City Blues*.

There was a colorful Day of the Dead altar at the front of the room, with woven Mexican blankets, brightly-painted skulls, golden marigolds in small pots, and artistic renderings of Jack Kerouac (photos, paintings, and neon sculpture). In front of the altar was the stage where the invited readers (local poets, activists, teachers, and scholars) selected and read a chorus – or canto – from the book of poems, and also read a creative work of their own. Johnny White, musical guest, played poignant musical sounds from his personally-made, hand-carved flute, muted trumpet, and ocarina while the twelve poets read and sang with fervor.

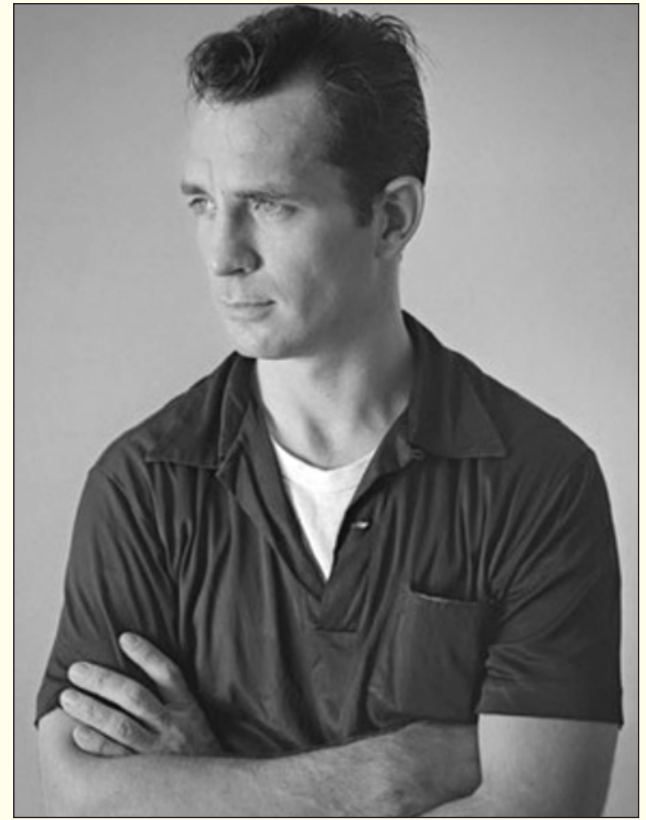
Jack Kerouac, of course, is the legendary writer who was part of the Beat Generation of the '50s and '60. Kerouac wrote the play *Beat Generation* and popular books that included *On the Road* and *Big Sur*. He lived for several years in St. Pete before his death, and was known for hanging out at many local venues, from Haslam's Bookstore to the Flamingo Sports Bar at 1230 9th Street North.

Now Friends of Jack Kerouac – led by James Hartzell and Monica Drake – is keeping the writer's memory alive. The St. Petersburg-based nonprofit was founded in 2013. The group's official first name was The Friends of Jack Kerouac House. That's when their efforts were focused on helping raise awareness of the historical significance of Kerouac's last residence at 5169 19th Avenue North in the Disston Heights neighborhood of St. Petersburg.

For a long time, the group hoped to acquire and preserve Jack's single-story ranch-style home, which is typical of the neighborhood. Disston Heights is actually the largest neighborhood in St. Pete, and stretches roughly from 34th Street North to 66th Street North, and 5th Avenue North to 40th Avenue North.

The author's home was sold in 2020, and now the nonprofit group is simply known as Friends of Jack Kerouac. Their focus has turned toward public outreach, community exploration through arts and cultural events, and positive social engagement. Their goal is to "bring to life the literary legacy of Jack Kerouac" in ways that "spark the creative spirit within us all."

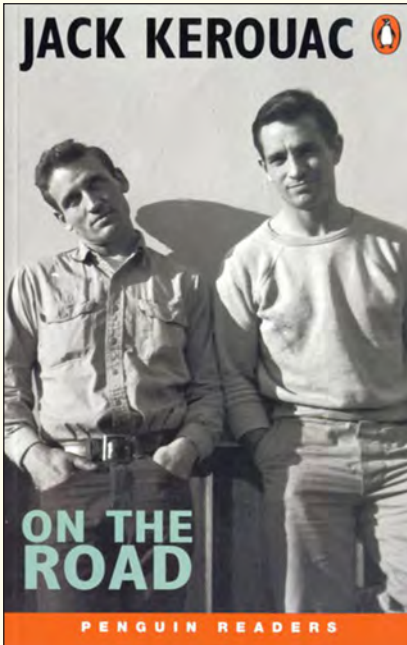
In the past year, the organization has collaborated with Studio@620, Wordier Than Thou, Green Light Cinema, Hops and Props, and the St. Pete Bike Cooperative. They have hosted online events that included postcard tutorials, Zoom panels, and reading events, and in-person events such as film screenings and poetry readings. They recently won a grant from the Florida Humanities Council in support of their *Tour de Kerouac*, a series of biking, walking, and driving tours focused on Kerouac's time living and working in St.



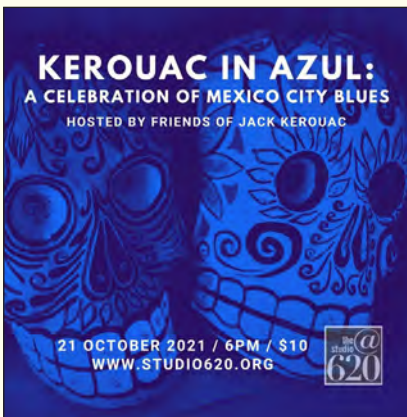
Petersburg. The tours delve into our city's history of art and culture, from the power of jazz to the unique contributions the *Beat Generation* made to shape 20th-century America.

The group meets every third Thursday at the Flamingo Sports Bar for poetry readings. In March 2022, they'll celebrate Kerouac's 100th birthday with the return of *The Spirit of Kerouac Festival*, a community art and film festival.

For more information, go to www.facebook.com/FriendsofJackKerouac or visit www.bit.ly/3jsioBf. ●



One of many book covers for Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*



"I saw that my life was a vast glowing empty page and I could do anything I wanted."

~ Jack Kerouac

"[...]the only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars and in the middle you see the blue centerlight pop and everybody goes 'Awww!'"

~ Jack Kerouac, *On the Road*



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Gail Brazzell

Date Palm Court NE

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

I have lived in St Petersburg since 1981. I am originally from Atlanta, Georgia.

Favorite place in St. Pete?

The waterfront parks are my favorite places to visit in St. Petersburg. They are a treasure, and I hope we can continue to protect our beautiful waterfront parks.

Most interesting, enjoyable, or exotic vacation you've taken?

I have traveled a lot, so one favorite trip is a hard one. But one of my favorites was a New Zealand and Australia cruise/tour. Tremendous diversity between the two. If you go, visit both!

Top two places in the world on your bucket list?

The Baltic is on my bucket list. And I would like to see our national parks I haven't seen on skiing and other trips.

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

The famous person of the past I would most like to meet would be Mother Teresa. I cannot imagine a person as selfless as she was, to truly devote her entire life to the needs of the poor.

Favorite sport, recreational activity, or hobby?

My favorite sport, recreational activity 'today' would be hiking the mountains and waterfalls in North Carolina.

A great movie you'd recommend, or current TV series you're watching?

I haven't seen too many movies lately, but the series I've enjoyed most for years is *Blue Bloods*. I like that it portrays a realistic healthy family. They have different personalities, strongly disagree, and argue. But they respect and support one another at all times.

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

A Cocker Spaniel – my 1st love as a child. They are described as bundles of joy that are both cuddly and playful. I think we could use more of that today.

Tell us about a person who inspired you.

My father actually inspired me the most in my personal life. He never preached. But he was a wonderful example of living a good meaningful life. Dad positively influenced and helped so many people, in so many different walks of life.

Current book you've read and would recommend?

I would recommend *The Other Einstein*. It was interesting to learn how brilliant, amazing, and instrumental his wife, Mileva, was in Einstein's success.

Tell us about an accomplishment of which you are proud.

The accomplishment I am most proud of will be boring to most. But my goal in life was always having a family as nice as the one I grew up in. My family – husband, Rod; adult son, Brian, and daughter, Natalie – are my proudest accomplishments.



Tom Mullins

Coffee Pot Blvd

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

I grew up in Chicago, but my wife Andi is homegrown St. Pete. We've lived in the Granada Terrace historical neighborhood for 14 years now, and we lived in Feather Sound prior to moving to Old Northeast.

Favorite place to visit in St. Pete?

Kayaking with our kids at Weedon Island, followed by grub at Casita Taqueria, Bodega, Floribbean, Bavaro's, or any Greek restaurant.

Most interesting, enjoyable, or exotic vacation you've taken?

South Africa in 1997, a couple years after Nelson Mandela took over and the country was re-engaging with the rest of the world. There was a mood of optimism, and the natural beauty of the country is astonishing... just watch out for the lions!

Top two places in the world on your bucket list?

Australia, and the Patagonia region of Argentina

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

As a semester-abroad student, I witnessed firsthand how badly Britain was in the ditch when Margaret Thatcher took over. She led an improbable turn-around in just 10 years against massive opposition, including nearly all my former British classmates.

Favorite sport, recreational activity, or hobby?

It was basketball, but I've noticed how golf leaves you a lot less sore afterwards. Leaning toward more golf.

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

Eagerly awaiting the next season of *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*.

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

A Black Lab. Great with people of all ages. Need to check to see if they are Covid-resistant.

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

I'm spoiled – my job has me interacting regularly with teams of very creative, high-energy people that are building the type of growth companies for which Raymond James raises capital. It is professionally satisfying to support these businesses, and doubly satisfying when our expectations are realized and they go on to become big successful enterprises.

Current book you've read and would recommend?

Red Notice by Bill Browder, a true story about trying to do business in Russia.

Tell us about an accomplishment of which you are proud.

In 2004, Allegiant Airlines hired me to raise growth capital when they were very small and looking to move into Florida. The business plan was crazy: offer flights from ghost-town airports like St. Pete/Clearwater to obscure little cities in the Midwest and Northeast, and only fly twice a week. We raised the money, Allegiant became a huge national success, and practically everyone we know in St. Pete now flies them multiple times a year.



Cathy Allen

Placido Bayou

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

I've lived in St. Pete for six years, moving here from Lakeland after 31 years. Also lived in Indiana, Illinois, Alabama, and Texas.

Favorite place to visit in St. Pete?

I love to walk in Straub Park. It's always fun to walk my dog, people watch, and the view of the downtown skyline at night is gorgeous.

Most interesting, enjoyable or exotic vacation you've taken?

My hubby and I vacationed in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. We saw the Great Wall, Terracotta Soldiers, Forbidden City, Emperor Tombs, Summer Palace, and so much more. We also were blessed to tour Europe on several occasions.

Top two places in the world on your bucket list?

My father's parents were from Sweden, so I would love to visit there, and Alaska is on my bucket list also.

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

My great-great-aunt was Edith Boling Wilson, second wife of Woodrow Wilson. It would be wonderful to ask her all about 'running the country' while the president was ill.

Favorite sport, recreational activity or hobby?

I love to walk, garden, and travel.

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

There are so many great movies I watch over and over, but my latest fun TV series is *Ted Lasso*... His management style is something to behold.

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

I would have to be a poodle. I love how smart they are, and they love a good hair-do!

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

I have so much respect for our first responders, police, and health care workers. Their job is often unrewarding and difficult, but they are so willing to do what they need to do to keep us safe and healthy.

Current book you've read and would recommend?

I love books, and one of the most interesting to me was *Devil and the White City* about Chicago in the early 1900s. I was raised in NW Indiana, and Chicago was our go-to place for entertainment. Reading the history of the Chicago World's Fair was fascinating, as many of the areas and buildings talked about are still there and I visited as a child. I was born in Jackson Park Hospital, and Jackson Park was developed just for the Fair.

Tell us about an accomplishment of which you are proud.

My most recent accomplishment was being named president of the St. Petersburg Woman's Club and also Member of the Year. It was a great honor and I am blessed to be a part of such a loving and friendly group of women.

LITERARY CORNER

Beach Drive Murder Mystery, Part 3

— MILA SALAMONE —
(Part 1 and 2 of this story appeared in the May-June and July-August issues of the Northeast Journal.)

Anna Jones stands, scratching her shoe on the sidewalk of a very steep hill. It's been 20 minutes. He's 20 minutes late. "Anna?" She turns. Ah, there he is. Ren approaches with his hands in his pockets and a brown satchel dangling on one side and across his chest, bouncing against his leg with each step.

The ocean breeze is like a very obnoxious air conditioner swooshing so loudly that he had to almost scream her name for her to hear him. Now he approaches, stopping only a few feet away, squinting his eyes against the bright sun and smiling at her. She stares, frowning – not for irritation at seeing him, simply with lack of reasonable alternative. He checks behind his shoulder, brings his gaze back.

"I wasn't sure you'd come." Anna scoffs at this, considering that she was here early and he took his time.

"Yeah, well, I'm here."

"I can see that."

"Hard to see much of anything in this sunlight."

"Ha, very true."

"Ren?"

"Yes, Anna."

"What did you mean when you said that you know why they're looking for me? Who's looking for me?"

"The informants."

"Stop joking around. You sound like a deranged fan fiction novel."

"You're funny Anna, but I'm not joking. They're called the informants, and they're the ones that killed that man. They're looking for you because they know you saw them do it."

"Tons of people saw what happened."

"No. Tons of people saw the dead man on the sidewalk. You saw him get killed, and you saw the man who did it."

"Okay, but how could they possibly know that only I saw that."

"They were watching."

"What? But I don't know anything about them! Which begs the question, why do you? Who even are you? Can I trust you? I mean, this all seems completely ridiculous."

"Anna, they know who you are and they're going to try to kill you."

"You're insane. A weirdo. I have to get out of here. I bet you're just some strange man taking advantage of what you saw on the news, trying to kidnap me or something."

"Anna, you're not really afraid of me, and I can tell. It's because you know I don't mean you any harm. I'm here to help you."

"Why? What do you want?"

"I want to help you."

"Alright, buddy, now you're just copying the trench coat trope. Now you're going to pull something out of your satchel

and say in a low, dramatic voice, 'Here, I brought this for you. Open it. Inside you'll find everything you need.'" Ren smiles, reaches for his satchel, pulls out an envelope, and hands it to Anna.

"Here. I brought this for you. Open it. Inside you'll find everything you need." Anna doesn't bother to roll her eyes and quip back. She opens the envelope. Inside's a picture of her face. She scans, turns it around, looks harder and gasps – it's a picture of her at the scene of the crime, right before the man got shot. Inside there are more photos.

"Did you take these?"

"No, the informants did."

"Ah, the 'informants.'"

"They have pictures of everyone around. You were the only one watching while it happened."

"Well maybe they should've been more discreet."

"They don't have to be. They just kill their witnesses."

"How crudely efficient."

"Indeed."

Anna looks up,

"How do you have these?"

"I work for them."

"What!"

"Undercover."

"For whom?"

"That's not important right now."

"Oh, 'that's not important right now.' Te-he-he, that's not important right now, Anna. Well, Ren, you can go take that pebble on the side of the road right there, and stick it--"

"Anna, please. Don't say rude things to the strange man who has pictures of you!" Now be a nice girl, and step into the large white van."

I don't think so. You are crazy."

"Anna, Shhhhhhhhh--"

"DON'T YOU SHH ME you creep, I don't want to hear another word out of you--"

"Anna! There's a man behind you."

"What." Anna stops, turns around. There's a man in sweatpants and a sleeveless shirt, looking perfectly unsuspecting except for the fact that he's staring right at her, with his hands in the pocket of his pants, and a small, white, plastic wire around his ears. It could've been an earbud. He could've just been rocking out to the new Taylor Swift album.

"Anna, please. I know you have no reason to trust me, but I strongly suggest you come with me now."

"Where?"

"Just to somewhere where we can talk, that's all." Anna looked into his eyes. Sparkling eyes, a little too glossy for dishonesty. His mouth clenched shut, anticipating her refusal. But what alternative did she have? Being left to the man a few yards away from them didn't seem like an option destined to end well.

"Okay. But no vans. In fact, no cars."

"Perfect. I have a motorcycle."

"And a helmet?"

"You can use mine."

"I'm bringing my phone and I'm calling the police if you take me anywhere where there aren't enough people around... or anywhere I don't recognize"

"Fair, fair."

"Okay, let's go."

"The motorcycle's down there." Ren pointed. "Walk towards it, don't run. I'll be a few steps behind you. He's not going to kill you here, so we just have to walk fast enough that he doesn't grab you and take you somewhere else." Anna nodded, and started towards the motorcycle. She looked behind her. Ren stroked his chin, looked up at the sun, and started after her. Anna got on the motorcycle and tried not to look back again, worried she might freak herself out.

Ren, sure that Anna would wait on the motorcycle for him, turned a head around his shoulder, and looked at the man in the shorts and shirt. Ren walked faster towards the motorcycle and took out a small flip phone as the man behind him started following. Into a text message chat Ren quickly typed six words: I have her. Ready kill soon.

Ren got on the motorcycle behind Anna, gave her his helmet, and as the man behind them turned his walking stride into a run, Ren revved the engine, and they took off into a blazing early afternoon... **◆**
To be continued in the next issue.

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 As it dances low lights about the hearth
 Mirror bouncing kindness
 Off the walls
 Off the ceilings
 Bronzing blending bookend lanterns
 Embrace a cornucopia of vases and timers
 Clicking sand in unexpected ways and days
 That repeat ~
 Tumbling over the shortening hours
 In the giggling glass
 Waiting ~
 For the next turn



One Agape Christmas

Lights strung together as friends
 Waxing palm trees of the holy land
 Candles posturing perfectly short and tall,
 Bright boxwood bulbs sprinkling confetti
 Dabbing greens, reds, blues and whites ~
 Wreaths standing watch along the balcony
 Ribboning portals glowing,
 A ceramic fountain jar bubbles
 Like a tureen with Jordanesque baptismal water
 Before the baby
 Beckoning neighbors to the love at its core
 A life-size crèche pendant

~ Jeannie Carlson

AROUND THE BLOCK

Help St. Pete Celebrate New Year's Eve

First Night St. Pete is ringing in its 29th this year on December 31 with a family friendly Interactive Art Park at South Straub Park. The First Night team has put together an amazing program that includes eight hours of music and interactive exhibits, as well as literary arts, aerial arts, fire jugglers, street performers, fire sculpture, labyrinth, a peace flag project, sea creature puppet procession, Bubble Stomp and more. New this year is the larger-than-life monarch butterfly installation. The first 500 people to participate in the "Seeds of

Hope" installation will receive a packet of native milkweed from www.saveourmonarchs.org.

The ticket for entry into 12 different venues requires the purchase of a custom-designed First Night St. Pete button by

local artist Cecelia Lueza. Advance purchase is \$12 for adults and \$5 for children over age five; children five and under are free. Visit www.FirstNightStPete.com for more information.



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The Last Word: Around the Block

Free Holiday Concerts at First Presbyterian Church

First Presbyterian Church, at 701 Beach Drive NE, kicked off its annual 2021-2022 concert series this past September. Two upcoming holiday concerts are free of charge and open to the public. Tickets are not required to attend the performance.

For more information on the full concert series which continues through May 20, 2022, visit their website at www.fpcstpete.com/fpcconcertseries2021-2022 or call 727-822-203.



"The Sounds of Glory" Featuring the Tampa Oratorio Singers and Full Orchestra

The Sounds of Glory performance on Sunday, November 14 at 7pm features famous masterwork *Glorias* by Bach, Puccini, Mozart, Vivaldi, and Beethoven performed by the Tampa Oratorio Singers, a 60+ voice-auditioned concert chorus, comprised of talented volunteer singers from all walks of life encompassing the entire Tampa Bay Area. An offering will be taken for Tampa Oratorio Singers.

The Many Moods of Christmas

Be dazzled as more than 120 vocalists and instrumentalists present the annual Many Moods of Christmas Concert at First Presbyterian Church, St. Petersburg on Sunday, December 12 at 4pm. Musicians from First Presbyterian Church and the Pinellas County Center for the Arts are joined by additional local vocalists as well as ten liturgical dancers. A diverse repertoire of choral and orchestral works are included in the program. An offering will be taken to benefit the St. Petersburg Free Clinic. ●



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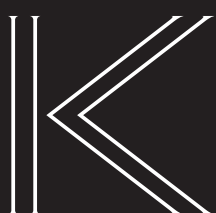


Let Kaitlyn Kellin Guide You Home for the Holidays

Kaitlyn and Compass are bringing a whole new direction to the Tampa Bay area by pairing local insights with cutting-edge technology.

"St. Petersburg-born-and-raised, I love this vibrant and diverse community, which my family has called home for three generations. My real estate experience spans nearly a decade, which means I come to the closing table with expansive knowledge and unique expertise. My priority is always my clients' needs, not the bottom line -- to me, my clients aren't just numbers, but future neighbors."

If the New Year has you making a move, Kaitlyn Kellin is here for you. Call her today to start your journey.



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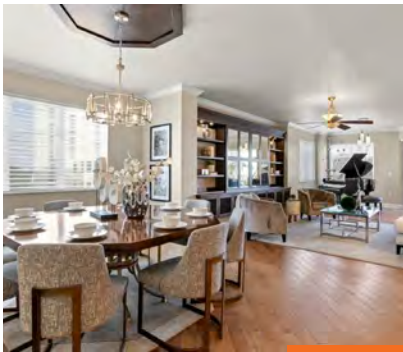
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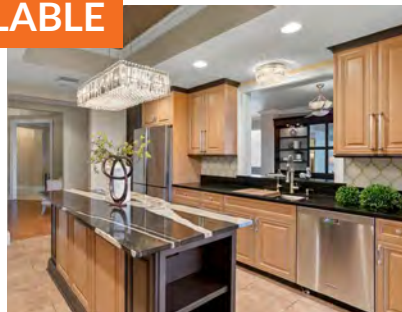


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