



# NORTHEAST JOURNAL

JUL/AUG 2019  
St. Petersburg, FL  
EST. SEPTEMBER 2004

Good People ∞ Good Places ∞ Good Things Happening

## Horticulturist Extraordinaire Sunken Gardens Says Goodbye to Bill O'Grady

Janan Talafer

*It was a flower. It was alive and wonderful. It gave the gardener hope and made him want to work even harder. And so he does – he toils day and night, tirelessly tending to his jungle of a garden. – The Little Gardener, Emily Hughes*

Bill O'Grady is a plant whisperer. Show him a plant and most likely he knows the plant's common name, botanical Latin name, and country of origin. A passion for gardening runs deep. He's also an avid collector. Which plant or flower of his favorite? "That's like asking a parent which is his favorite child," says Bill.

If pressed, he says his favorite is the unusual one he hasn't discovered yet. That says a lot since Bill has lived all over the country and grown a great variety of plants. His backyard at the home he

*Continued on page 12*



Bill O'Grady at Sunken Gardens

## Weedon Island's Grand Central Airport

Will Michaels

St. Petersburg truly has a fabled aviation history. Our city is the birthplace of worldwide commercial aviation. The World's First Airline was launched from the Pier on New Year's Day 1914. This event is soon to be commemorated with a monument of the Benoist Airboat, the first airliner, on the historic take-off site near the new pier. Tony Jannus, the chief pilot of the airline, once said, "Our work has stamped St. Petersburg as the aviation headquarters of Florida

*Continued on page 24*



Passengers and Eastern Air Transport airliner, image circa 1931.

Courtesy of St. Petersburg Museum of History

## Shorecrest Headmaster Launches Children's Book



Mike Murphy reading his book at Shorecrest during Celebrate the Arts week

Gay Wasik-Zegel

Like the fictional Albus Dumbledore of Hogwarts School of Wizardry, Mike Murphy – headmaster of Shorecrest Preparatory School – also has a bit of magic up his sleeve. His work shines throughout the school's campus and in the pages of his new children's book.

Recently, while recovering from knee surgery, Mike's interests in travel, space (he had just been to Cape Canaveral), and his penchant for storytelling provided the perfect blend of ingredients for the creation of a children's adventure series. The ideas came together so quickly that he was able to write not one, but three books, in rapid succession. Though he had often told stories to his two sons as they were growing up, this was the first time that the words seemed to effortlessly translate to paper.

Just months after jotting his stories down... Poof! The first book in his series, titled *Lilly Lou Makes a New Friend*, has been published. "The writing came together in about two weeks," said his wife, Robin.

The story begins as Lilly Lou and her parents read a book about birds as they sit by the fire in their Missouri farmhouse. Suddenly, they hear a loud crash. Mr. Lou is the first to investigate, but soon the whole family gathers around as a small panda-like creature emerges from his downed spacecraft. He is Moozy Toozy from the Planet Mooz, and he has lost his brother. Lots of laughter, pancake breakfasts, and a road trip to New York City ensue as the Lou's

*Continued on page 20*

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

### What are you doing on your summer vacation?

We invite *Northeast Journal* readers to join us in a fun project reminiscent of the popular Flat Stanley school project in the mid-'90s. If you had grade-school children at the time, you might remember that the project became an extraordinary media sensation, with paper cutouts of Flat Stanley traveling on Air Force One, orbiting the earth on the Space Shuttle, and being photographed in many locations around the world.

We're not suggesting a revival of the Flat Stanley project. But, if you're going somewhere interesting this summer, bring along a copy of the *Northeast Journal* and have someone take a photo of you holding the issue with a backdrop of wherever you happen to be. Be sure the backdrop shows something about the place, such as the mountains, the desert, a city landmark, the woods, or a cruise ship.

Send us the photo along with a brief description.

We'll publish the photos in a cool feature in the September-October issue of the *Northeast Journal* and on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/NortheastJournalFL](http://www.facebook.com/NortheastJournalFL).

In June, my family and I went to Italy for the month to visit my daughter who lives in Rome, and my husband's family who lives in Rivergaro, a small town between Bologna and Milan. The family has been

in this beautiful region of northern Italy since the 1500s. Our whirlwind trip included a week at an agriturismo in Montalbino in Tuscany, and the beautiful cities of Florence and Venice. Of course, I brought a copy of the *Northeast Journal* with me.

In early June, we also received a note on our website from a reader who wanted to send a message to local artist Robert Holmes after she read Livia Zien's story about him ([www.northeastjournal.org/capturing-the-burg-in-acrylics](http://www.northeastjournal.org/capturing-the-burg-in-acrylics)) in the January 2018 *Northeast Journal*. Michelle now lives in the Poconos and hadn't been in contact with Robert in over 30 years. It was very heart-warming to put the two of them in touch again. A nice story with a happy ending!

Thanks for reading the *Northeast Journal* as we share good news about our community.

*Janan Talafer*  
 Editor, *Northeast Journal*

**Correction:** Our apologies to thee photo ninja – Steven Le, [www.theephotoninja.com](http://www.theephotoninja.com), a St. Pete commercial, portrait, fashion and sports/fitness photographer. We neglected to give Steven credit for the photos he took of Jimmy and Michelle Moore – aka the Lady and the Bard – in Gay Wasik-Ziegel's article in the May-June issue. Check out his website. Steven's award-winning work has been featured in national publications and on travel websites, as well as the Museum of Fine Arts.



*NEJ editor Janan Talafer in Venice*

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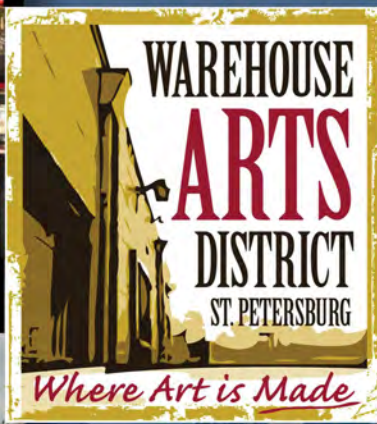


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## MEET THE WRITERS

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

**Scott Brown** worked in the U.S. Senate and for FNMA, Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers. He dodged the crash to start his own firm which he sold at the end of 2018 so he and his wife Ellen, of 37 years, could retire to Old Northeast. Scott and Ellen have three amazing children.



**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](http://www.JeannieCarlson.com))



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



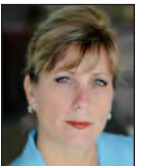
**Lynn Lotkowitz** spent years in radio in NY, and in business dev/mgmt at *Florida Trend Magazine*. She volunteers at Tomlinson Adult Learning Center ESOL Program, and travels internationally. Lynn is the new *NEJ* Facebook roving reporter sharing photos and video about exciting events, people and places around town. [facebook.com/NortheastJournalFL](https://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*. [[wmmichaels2@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:wmmichaels2@tampabay.rr.com)]



**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.



**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](mailto:janantalafer@gmail.com)]



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



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# Young, Creative, and Business Savvy

Lynn Lotkowitz

Drive down ever-changing Central Avenue, and at the corner of 11th Street you can't miss the cluster of 23 royal palm trees, the sunshades, or the beach sand. The space serves as the outdoor patio for Intermezzo Coffee and Cocktail, a chic, stylish venture owned by Jarrett Sabatini, a 25-year-old entrepreneur who lives downtown on the edge of the Old Northeast.

A 2016 graduate of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg, Jarrett is one of the growing number of young, creative entrepreneurs who are adding to downtown's high energy, and changing the landscape of St. Pete. Intermezzo's hip vibe and minimalist decor with big windows overlooking the street bring to mind a trendy city feel, and that is exactly Jarrett's goal.

Initially, Jarrett launched Intermezzo as a temporary, three-month pop-up coffee shop. The concept worked and people liked it. But then temporary became more permanent. "My landlord, Jonathan Daou, became my partner. We got to know each other and he suggested we expand and do a bar," says Jarrett. "While I was in college, I managed the wine section at Locale Market, and John knew I was a beverage enthusiast." In January 2017, Intermezzo Coffee became Intermezzo Coffee and Cocktails.

How did he come up with the name Intermezzo? "It means intermission," says Jarrett. "When I thought about my personal connection to coffee and what I like about good cafés, I realized I often went to cafés to take a break, read a book, listen to a podcast, or hang out with friends. It was like a break – or an intermission – in my day. I wanted to encourage that break and provide a good space for it."

The hospitality business is in Jarrett's blood. He grew up in Eustis, and his family owned a restaurant in nearby Mount Dora. "I remember my grandmother making a me a sandwich and sitting with my brother on the steps of The Clubhouse," says Jarrett. "We were always around the restaurant and bar run by my family, until I went away to college."

After high school, Jarrett moved to Gainesville, where his brother was a student at the University of Florida, and he attended nearby Santa Fe College for two years. But, to complete



Top: Jarrett Sabatini. Middle: A wedding at Intermezzo. Bottom: Sunshades and sand on Central Avenue

his education, he wanted a more urban environment and decided to move to St. Petersburg.

"At 19, I was ready to move to a bigger market. I wasn't interested in partying in college. I wanted to move on with my life," says Jarrett. "St. Pete had a cool bohemian atmosphere." He enrolled at USFSP and got his degree in marketing.

"My goal was always to have my own business. I wanted to make my own decisions and do it my way," says Jarrett. Growing up in the family's hospitality business certainly gave him plenty of experience. From the time he was 13, he worked as busboy, prep cook, and waiter. "I did anything that was needed," says Jarrett. "When I was 19, I made the whole cocktail menu. It was a passion. I loved trying to mix and test drinks. I was into it."

Jarrett's enthusiasm and energy are impressive. He's continually working to improve and freshen the atmosphere of his business, changing the look of the interior to fit the season, and adding theme nights and specialty cocktails. At Christmas, he transformed the venue into 'Miracle at Mezzo' with holiday-themed drinks and over-the-top kitschy decor. I stopped for a visit last year and it felt like I was at a fun holiday office party.

To spice it up more, he added bocce ball, picnic tables, and sunshades in the lot next door. Royal Palm Night Market – a popular weekly market featuring vintage goods, art, music, and cocktails – also takes place there. There have even been three weddings held under the palm trees.

Jarrett is single and says that for now, he's driven by a passion for his work. In his limited free time, he enjoys reading old cocktail and wine books to stir ideas. Running helps him decompress.

What's next? Right now, his plan is to focus on offering coffee by day and growing the cocktail business at night. But in five years, he hopes to launch another restaurant concept in a different location. "There are a lot of people who have moved here in the last few years from New York, Charleston, Chicago, and other great cities," says Jarrett. "I want to bring a little taste of that vibe and atmosphere here. That was my idea with Intermezzo and it has worked well." ●



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# Starting Over in the Sunshine City



Scott Brown

On moving day, it was seven degrees with the wind chill well below zero. The night before the move, I got a savage stomach bug that left me completely miserable for 24 hours. While I was feebly supervising the packing of the storage unit, a water line in the apartment froze and burst. My wife dutifully mopped up the flood before we turned in the keys. The next day, I began to feel better, but then on the drive south, the dog got sick just as we crossed into Virginia. Then my wife got the bug just in time for our night in Savannah. We limped into Old Northeast St. Petersburg the next day.

We had spent the last 25 years working and raising a family on Long Island. As the nest emptied, we began to think about our next chapter with no clear idea of what that looked like. We began reading the Best Places to Retire lists. Boise and Fargo? I don't know what those *Forbes* people were thinking. We needed to figure out what was important to us. Walkability was number one. If one or both of us stopped driving, we didn't want to be isolated. We wanted a place that was culturally diverse without being big-city urban. Affordability was very important. No more snow. We wanted a year-around home. We also were looking for a 'wow factor' that we had trouble describing. Kind of like umami, the Japanese word for 'deliciousness.' We'd know it when we tasted it.

For the past several years, we took trips to places that had retirement-home potential. Asheville, N.C. was lovely, but too cold in the winter. The Coachella Valley was stunningly beautiful, but summers there are like living on the surface of Mars. The San Diego beach communities had all become too expensive with too much night life. Downsizing on Long Island didn't save us enough money to justify the decision.

As our youngest started his senior year, we got an email from some long-time friends who live on 1st Street NE next to something they referred to as 'the coffee

pot.' They invited us for a visit. We decided to spend a few days with them in March and then hop down to the Keys for the rest of the week.

We flew in to Tampa International and our friends met us inside the terminal. Compared with the NYC airports, TPA was a pleasure. As we drove across Tampa Bay, everything seemed so different. Palms and pelicans. Ocean and blue sky. And gorgeous weather.

Once we settled into our friends' place on 1st Street, they took us for a walk along Coffee Pot Bayou. We saw great blue herons and osprey. Without warning, big mullet would fly out of the water and splash on reentry. Turtles were sunning on the docks. Our friends told us about manatees and dolphins,

both of which we would see on later trips. There were jacaranda trees and bougainvillea in bloom. The bayou, teeming with life, was surrounded by homes ranging from modest to way out of our price range. There was no commercial activity along the bayou and no high-rise condos to block out the sun. The whole experience took me back to the beach and bayside communities of San Diego where I grew up during the 1950s. Umami.

We learned that in the Old Northeast it is possible to live on a sleepy tree-lined avenue that is minutes from Coffee Pot Bayou, and only a couple of blocks from Fresh Market, Trader Joe's, and the other shopping and dining on 4th Street. The sidewalk along Coffee Pot Bayou can take us to Demens Landing in downtown, or up to Weedon Island. By locating in the Old Northeast, most of what St. Pete has to offer is available on foot or by bike.



Living easy in the 'Burg: (Above) Scott with a Redfish; (Below) Scott and Ellen Brown



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**SINCE 1994**

We joined another pair of recent Long Island transplants for dinner at 400 Beach. They spent a lot of time talking about the local opera and how New York Metropolitan Opera performances are live-streamed at Eckerd College. We learned about the Dali, the Chihuly, the Holocaust Museum, the James Museum, and the Fine Arts Museum, where one of our friends is a docent. I was surprised that a city with a population barely over a quarter-million could pack so much cultural punch.

Our friends took us to the old Shuffleboard Club on a Friday night. The place had been taken over by millennials. Microbreweries and distilleries are cropping up throughout St. Petersburg. The youth culture here is vibrant. As we packed for the next leg of our trip, we were very aware that we had barely scratched the surface of what St. Petersburg had to offer.

During our visit to the Keys, our experience in St. Pete had time to sort itself out in our heads. We made a decision. We let the kids know in late March on one of our regular Sunday conference calls. We listed the house in April and I sent in a resignation letter effective for the end of the year. We began sorting through a lifetime of stuff, giving a lot away to friends and charities. What we couldn't give away went into the dumpster. By May, we were under contract; a month later everything was settled. We moved into an apartment on Long Island to give us plenty of time to house shop.

Florida real estate is very different from Long Island. It took us a while to fully appreciate evacuation zones, termite damage, subsidence, ridiculously hard water, mold, and gators. On one occasion, it took my wife, the realtor, and our engineer to talk me down from lobbing in a bid on a lovely 4-bedroom colonial that was slowly sinking into the fill on the south end of Crescent Lake.

Eventually I came to my senses. We settled on a nice place with a fully furnished accessory apartment over the garage in a location equidistant from Coffee Pot and Fresh Market. We could go for days without driving. We were under contract in August and closed in November. We wanted one more Christmas on Long Island, so we postponed the move until January.

We have been on the ground in Old Northeast now for four months. A lot of that time was spent on house renovation, unpacking, and getting ourselves legally registered as Floridians. We have begun to explore our new home turf. My landscape guy, Pete Klinkenberg, introduced me to the writings of his dad, Jeff Klinkenberg, the long-time columnist for the *St. Petersburg Times*. Klinkenberg's essays about Florida's unique people and places have inspired many of our day trips. More than trip ideas, Klinkenberg's writings further confirm to me that we landed somewhere very special, where we can spend years exploring and never do the same thing twice. That was the 'WOW' factor, the umami – the deliciousness that we were looking for. I'm glad we found it. ●









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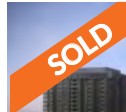


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**4601 CHANCELLOR ST NE #144**  
2 BED | 2 BATH | 1,135 SF  
\$139,900




**425 16TH AVE NE**  
4 BED | 3 BATH | 2,822 SF  
\$840,000

**100 1ST AVE N #2606\***  
2 BED | 2/1 BATH | 1,402 SF  
\$779,000




**199 DALI BLVD #1107\***  
2 BED | 2 BATH | 1,555 SF  
\$777,500




**416 14TH AVE NE\***  
2 BED | 1 BATH | 1,160 SF  
\$545,000

\*Participated in sale.

**BILL O'GRADY** *Continued from page 1*

shares with his husband, Chris Stewart, a senior manager at HSN-QVC, is so lushly landscaped that to make room for more plants, he has to donate a few first.

Spending some time with Bill not only gives you an appreciation for the man, but also the role he played in shaping Sunken Gardens. Bill retired as supervisor of the historic gardens in May after a career with the city that spanned 19 years. Bill's many fans say he helped the venue stay true to its legacy as one of America's oldest roadside attractions, a four-acre urban oasis that drew thousands and thousands of tourists to the Sunshine City.

**A LITTLE HISTORY**

Most locals know the history. In 1903, George Turner bought a parcel of land from the newly incorporated City of St. Petersburg, and drained a sinkhole lake on the property to indulge his passion for gardening. The gardens grew in size and reputation, and in 1935, the venue opened to the public, setting in motion a popular tourist attraction that would last through three generations of the Turner family.

But post-Disney, the public lost interest in small roadside attractions, and the gardens fell on hard times. With dwindling crowds and lost revenue, the Turner family closed the park and searched for a buyer. Finally in 1999, the city stepped in and bought it.

According to Robin Reed, president of the Sunken Gardens Forever Foundation, the city had plans to develop the venue as a botanical garden without much thought to its role as an historic landmark. For

example, plans were underway to replace the charming and funky multi-colored walkways with five-foot-wide cement paver sidewalks. But Bill intervened. "Bill realized the contribution that Sunken Gardens made to the history of St. Pete, and the importance of keeping the unusual features of the famous roadside attraction that it had once been," says Robin. "You can find botanical gardens in any number of cities across the country, but there is only one Sunken Gardens. I can't imagine where it would be today without Bill's guiding hand. He has cultivated the gardens with his ideas, love, and enthusiasm."

Gardens have been an interest for Bill as long as he can remember. He grew up in Boston and spent summers in Nova Scotia, where his dad was born and many family members still lived. French was their first language, so that's what Bill spoke in the summer. "I grew up tending vegetable gardens, collecting eggs, dressing the chickens, working on the fishing boats, and watching my great aunt can everything," he says. "One of my earliest influences was a cousin whose garden was very mathematical and scientific, laid out with straight lines and flowers planted between the rows. It not only produced food, but it was beautiful."

Years later when Bill was living in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, he cultivated a huge 50-by-100-foot vegetable garden, harvesting so much produce he invited friends to share the bounty. At the time, he was a pre-med student at the University of Iowa, and although he loves science, Bill says he learned that a future career in pediatric medicine was not going to be his life path. Eventually he settled in Portland, Oregon, where he met his husband Chris. Bill went on to pursue a long career building a network of veterinary clinics into a multi-million dollar business.

When he wasn't running the clinics, Bill was busy restoring their 1910 home, down to making sure the exterior paint was authentic to the original. That kindled his interest in historic preservation. He was



Bill with one of Sunken Gardens' flamingoes



Bill with SG Manager Lauren Kleinfeld



Chris Stewart and Bill O'Grady

also gardening on a grand scale with formal gardens, a rose garden, Japanese garden, bonsai garden, koi ponds, English cottage garden, and espalier fruit trees. The backyard was also filled with aviaries for his birds and lofts for his pigeons, both racers and fancy-colored ones. At one time, he had an elite racing flock of 100 pigeons, and bred thousands of finches, canaries, and other soft-billed birds. Then there's the fish. He and Chris have had dozens of fresh-water aquariums over the years and koi ponds in the backyard.

**THE SUNSHINE CITY**

Bill retired from his corporate job in 1997, and the couple decided to leave Portland for St. Pete. They bought a home in Tierra Verde with lots of space for Bill to garden. But, after a few years, he was restless and decided to respond to a job posting for a horticulturist at Sunken Gardens. "I didn't have the job

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Cynthia Smoot at Jingle Mingle with an egg that was laid by one of the two older flamingos after the new birds arrived

experience, but I knew plants," says Bill. "When they learned about my experience with birds, they offered me a job doing the bird shows, but I was only interested in working as a horticulturist. I figured that's that, but the next day they called and offered me the position."

In 2000, the gardens were just beginning to be revived after several decades of disrepair. Bill oversaw the pruning of plants-gone-wild and began reshaping the planting beds, but he also agreed to do the bird shows and took on some of the garden tours. Of the many tours he conducted, a few stand out, such as one he conducted for the wives of military officers from around the world who were stationed at MacDill's Central Command, and another for visually impaired children – "we focused on the scents and the textures," says Bill. "I had them place their hand on a lily pad to feel the buoyancy of the water."

Restocking the flamingo flock a few years ago was a high point as well. Bill flew to Texas to spend a few days at the San Antonio Zoo with the birds, still babies, so they would get to know him and be less traumatized by the move to a new location in a new

state. He also helped publish a guide to the Garden's plants and history, and a second book geared to Pinellas County grade-school children.

**PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

But, he says one of the most significant accomplishments has been the development of a master plan, along with a cultural landscape report. "You can't know where you're going with out a map," says Bill. The master plan guides the future of the gardens and the cultural landscape report provides recommendations for helping the venue stay true to its historic roots. "I wanted the gardens to look like



Bill in his longtime Sunken Gardens office with a newly hatched Brazilian red-footed tortoise

George Turner had them in the '50s and '60s," says Bill. "Sunken Gardens had a big influence on tourism and the growth of St. Petersburg. It was very forward thinking of the city to save this jewel."

In the last eight years, Bill says many of the action steps outlined on the master plan and cultural landscape plan have been accomplished. Still on the drawing



board is a children's garden to be cultivated behind the amphitheater. There are also plans for the amphitheater to become a soft-billed-bird aviary, and for the original concrete animal enclosures to be rehabbed and brought up to current-day standards so they can house the parrots, macaws, and other big birds.

A Sunken Gardens historical museum is in the works, too. The original public entrance to the attraction – a 1940-era building that currently serves as the bird-care headquarters – will be converted into a small museum, complete with old films (recently converted to DVD) and hundreds of Sunken Gardens' collectibles like pennants, post cards, creamers, snow globes, shot glasses, and dinnerware – much of it from Bill's own collection that he purchased from eBay or received from friends. "Over the years, everyone figured out that Bill likes to collect things," he quips.

Retiring from a career you love is never easy, but it's "time to pass the torch and let someone else take it to the next level," says Bill. "I never dreamed working here was something I would do, but it was like all my life experiences had groomed me for the part – I love gardening, I love birds, and I love historic preservation."

Sunken Gardens is the better for it. ●



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# NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF COMMUNITY... 1911-2011

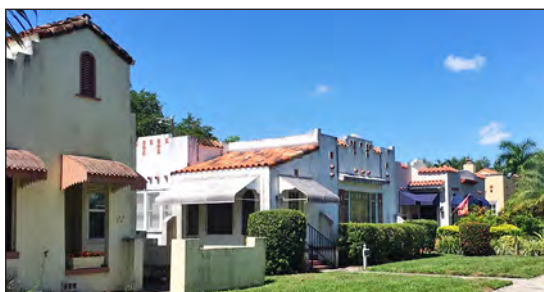
## ST. PETE'S JEWEL ON TAMPA BAY

Rick Carson, editor • nsnaeditor@aol.com

### HONNA'S PRESERVATION INITIATIVE

A little over a year ago in spring 2018, HONNA distributed a resident survey to get a pulse on the neighborhood. Our last major survey had been done in 2008, and we needed a better idea of how the neighborhood has changed over the last 10 years. From the responses, the number-one program respondents want to see implemented is historic preservation, and the top-two critical issues are residential development and tear-downs of older homes. Since 2007, more than 87 houses have been demolished in the ONE, including 75 in the past six years alone.

The mission of the Historic Old Northeast Neighborhood Association is *Promote, Preserve, Protect*. In the last few years, we – as an organization and neighborhood as a whole – have not done enough to 'preserve and protect' many of the houses that were torn down by developers. We have always relied on local preservation groups to help designate historic properties or even mini-historic districts, but this past year HONNA did successfully aid homeowners in designating the 100 block of 19th Avenue NE and the 200 block of 10th Avenue NE as Local Historic Districts. Our Preservation Committee has been working diligently to create this preservation initiative to work directly with neighbor-led efforts to preserve



*Mediterranean Row*

parts of our neighborhood through the creation of Local Historic Districts.

One of our homeowner residents, Dee Sheppard, recently spoke at our June quarterly HONNA meeting about the designation of her 200 block of 10th Avenue NE as a mini-historic district.

Months ago, there was a house up for sale on the block that would most likely be demolished. The neighbors approached HONNA about protecting the block by forming an Historic District. This action would not necessarily prevent demolition, but would force the City to have a tighter review process on what could be built there to maintain the character and size of the surrounding homes. The creation of a mini-historic district was successfully supported by a majority of the homeowners on that block. The aforementioned house actually sold to a buyer who appreciated that it



*200 block/10th Avenue NE*

was within an Historic District and has since renovated and restored the property.

HONNA is not opposed to new development, but we have heard time and time again from residents that the majority of the newer homes are out of scale and character with the surrounding properties. There are examples in our neighborhood of new homes that fit into the character and feel of the Old Northeast, and homes up for demo within mini-historic districts would be subject to a design review by the City to preserve the feel of that district.

If you would like more information about this Preservation Initiative and other issues regarding preservation in the Old Northeast, you are encouraged to contact HONNA's Preservation Committee via email at [www.preservation@honna.org](mailto:www.preservation@honna.org).

~ Natalie DeVicente, HONNA President

### REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE... AND REPURPOSE

Sometimes it takes someone with vision – even if it's not entirely clear at the time – to create a one-of-a-kind creation. Alicia Reyes Shapiro had a vision for a seemingly useless chunk of machinery, and the end-result is a truly unique piece of art that happens to double as a kitchen island light fixture.

Alicia and her husband, Robert, had visited the area starting around 2010 to visit her son in Kenwood. As they drove around the city, they 'found' the Old Northeast, which reminded them of the neighborhoods they grew up in Lorain, OH, and Middletown, NY, with beautiful tree-lined streets and 100-year-old homes with large front porches. Robert was looking to purchase a condo, but ended up conceding to Alicia's desire to buy a home, though he stated he had one condition: it must be move-in ready. Well, as it turned out, Alicia noticed the home at 445 13th Avenue NE, which had been in foreclosure, unoccupied for over nine months and in significant disrepair inside and out. The vegetation over-growth was out of control and the pool water was literally a dark green color, complete with swimming creatures, and code complaints to the City as a bonus. It



*Robert & Alicia with sculptor Tom Pitzen; their repurposed light fixture is a showpiece*

was definitely not a 'move-in ready' house.

Robert wanted absolutely nothing to do with it, but Alicia recognized the potential, exclaiming "this is it!" Robert now says that "once again she was right, and fortunately she had the design skills and work ethic to drive both the initial fix-up and then the big renovation."

The Shapiros purchased the foreclosed house in 2013, but during the initial fix-up they noticed a long crack in the ceiling of the middle bedroom, and asked their contractor to take a look in the attic where he discovered a large and heavy old whole-house fan sitting unconnected, straddling the beams above that room.



Robert pulled the permit property card from the City, and a previous owner had the fan installed in the spring of 1947. The fan was likely disconnected when central air was installed, and because of its size and weight, it was left in the attic. The contractor was able to disassemble the fan and remove it from the attic in many different pieces. Not seeing the value of a pile of metal, Robert asked the contractor to haul it off, but Alicia with her vision intervened and insisted that they keep all the pieces, hoping that eventually some of it would get repurposed. The fan parts became a point of contention every time Robert had to move them from one space to another during various phases of the renovation.

In the end Alicia was right to hold on to the old fan. She didn't know what could be done with it, but knew the right artist could help shape a vision for its repurposing. And Alicia found just such a person in Tom Pitzen, a local sculptor in Gulfport ([www.pitzenstudios.com](http://www.pitzenstudios.com)) known for doing large public sculpting projects for cities and towns.

Tom visited the house during the renovation, and when he saw the fan, his first reaction was that several of his artist friends would be jealous. He looked over the fan components and in about five minutes, while sitting on the front porch, sketched his initial vision of the kitchen island light. As for the creative process, Tom noted that "it just happens, I can't really explain it. I really enjoy the relationship with my patrons. It guides all of my work." Robert and Alicia were so confident in what Tom presented that they didn't even want to see it in stages, only when he was ready to install it.

The repurposed whole-house fan, transformed into a light fixture, has certainly become a centerpiece for the Shapiro home. Visitors are always taken by the unique reuse of the fan and the story behind it. Robert says a common refrain from visitors is, "You certainly didn't find that at Home Depot!" And they are right.

~ Sharon Kantner

**SOME BENEFITS OF LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION**

- Local Historic District (LHD) designation can help mitigate unwarranted demolition and construction of large new structures which dwarf neighboring homes and often are out-of-character in scale and architecture with homes on the block and surrounding neighborhood.
- LHDs can be created for areas of the Old Northeast where neighbors desire protection the most. A LHD can be as small as one block including both sides of the street.
- Studies have shown that property values increase at a greater rate than comparable undesignated properties in almost all LHDs.
- Buyers often seek to purchase homes in a LHD because of certainty that new development will not detract from their investment.
- City preservation staff can often find alternatives to help save money on renovation.



- Tax incentives including property-tax abatements are available when renovating. Check with the Preservation Office *before* beginning your project.
- Certain exemptions to the Florida Building Code may be granted to homes in a LHD.
- Increased sustainability as historic buildings are often much 'greener' than given credit as they do not have the negative environmental impact that new construction creates. The greenest house is the one existing.
- Historic homes were built to last – often with quality, hand-crafted materials, and are of a higher-standard building construction.
- LHD designation is currently the only protection available that offers some safeguards for neighbors from new construction that disrupts their block's character, streetscape, and scale, and intrudes on the privacy of nearby homes. ●

**HONNA'S SHINING STARS: "BEFORE" AND "AFTER"**

In an effort to honor Old Northeast homeowners for preserving or updating their home or property and investing the extra dollar to keep the character and history of their homes intact, HONNA has been recognizing them with the Neighborhood Star Award. Every month, yard signs will be placed on properties to indicate an award. Here are the Stars for June: Estelia Mesimer, 1300 North Shore Drive NE; and July: Linda Winton, 425 21st Avenue NE.

Watch for new Stars in the neighborhood monthly, and you'll be able to find them posted on [www.honna.org](http://www.honna.org) in addition to HONNA's Facebook page. We invite you to be a part of this effort, so please feel free to nominate a neighbor or a refurbished property you admire in the Old Northeast. Have a home to honor? Send the information to Charleen McGrath at [treasurer@honna.org](mailto:treasurer@honna.org). ●



**QUARTERLY NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING**

The focus of the June meeting was the unveiling of the HONNA Preservation Initiative, an effort to protect the historic character of the Old Northeast [see accompanying

article], which was cited in a 2017 survey of neighborhood residents as a priority concern. To help explain how this can be accomplished, three homeowners in Historic Kenwood shared with the audience about how Kenwood has been successful in designating sections and blocks of its neighborhood as historic. In addition, Dee Sheppard, who owns a home on the 200 block of 10th Avenue NE, described how she recently was able to educate and mobilize the 14 property owners on her block to support being designated a mini-historic district. This effort adds to the two other such districts in the Old

Northeast (700 block of 18th Avenue NE and 100 block of 19th Avenue NE) in addition to Granada Terrace, which has been a Local Historic District for many years.

Our neighborhood community police officer reported on criminal activity in the Old Northeast over the previous four weeks, which was minimal and largely limited to a handful of vehicular burglaries of unlocked cars. ●



HONNA invites and encourages you to stay connected and on top of programs, events, and other happenings in our neighborhood. Want 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](http://www.facebook.com/honna.org).

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- Visit [www.honna.org](http://www.honna.org)
- Become a HONNA member. You'll receive periodic informative email announcements. [honna.org/get-involved](http://honna.org/get-involved)
- Volunteer for a project, program, or event (the Candlelight Tour of Homes, Trunk or Treat, Porch Parties, Crime Watch). Contact John Johnson at [jj1sp@gmail.com](mailto:jj1sp@gmail.com).
- Follow Historic Old Northeast Forever at [www.historicoldnortheast-forever.org](http://www.historicoldnortheast-forever.org). HONNF works "to preserve and protect our special neighborhood" (HONNF is not affiliated with HONNA).



JUNE: 1300 North Shore Drive NE "Before"



JUNE: 1300 North Shore Drive NE "After"



JULY: 425 21st Avenue NE "Before"



JULY: 425 21st Avenue NE "After"



Over the past eight months, the City has fixed almost 50 issues within our neighborhood. One area where the City is quicker to respond due to the time and cost to fix – is with our street signs. According to HONNA Board member Doug O'Dowd, over the last two months, ten sign issues have been reported. These include signs that are missing, unreadable, in disrepair, etc. Each of these has been fixed by the City within 10 days and often with a few days. No sign is too big or small: if it is missing or in bad shape, please report it. This will be a small step in keeping the Old Northeast a great place to live. So, if you would like to be a part of this campaign,



please use the SeeClickFix app – [www.seeclickfix.com/st-petersburg/report](http://www.seeclickfix.com/st-petersburg/report) – and remember to take a photo of the issue (if possible) and the closest address.

The final of four speed-calming humps between 22nd and 30th Avenues along 1st Street N/NE has been installed and is located between 26th and 27th Avenues. The humps were created in response to a majority vote of the property owners along this section of 1st Street to address the issue of speeding cars. ●

**On the Calendar**

Check [www.honna.org](http://www.honna.org) and watch social media for details on these and other upcoming events

- Monday, September 16**  
Quarterly Neighborhood Association meeting, Westminster Church 6:45pm social, 7pm meeting
- Friday, September 20**  
Porch Party; 7:30pm [There are no porch parties in July or August]
- Sunday, October 6**  
Second Annual Old Northeast Field Day

# Exploring the World's Oceans

Kristen Kusek with Janan Talafer

Shore Acres resident Kristen Kusek has a cool job. She's a science communication strategist at the USF College of Marine Science, a nationally recognized graduate-level marine science program located downtown on Bayboro Harbor. For many, the marine science college remains somewhat of a mystery, a hidden gem for the city. That's one reason why Kristen was hired earlier this year. She says the ability to communicate science effectively with the public has never been more important.

Kristen's passion for the ocean started early. A native of Lawrenceville, NJ, she spent summers on what she calls her favorite beach on the planet: Long Beach Island. "Adventures were everywhere: building drip castles, hunting for sea glass in the jetty, and digging to China (and finding elusive sand crabs along the way)," says Kristen. "As a teen, I became obsessed with dolphins and Jacques Cousteau, and felt a need to understand the sea which felt – and still feels – like an itch I couldn't quite scratch."

Kristen went on to be the first person to graduate from USF with a dual Master's Degree in Marine Science and Journalism. She worked as a science writer and education outreach coordinator for Inter-Ridge (an international nonprofit ocean science organization affiliated with Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute in Massachusetts), as communications director at Harvard, and then as chief communications and development officer for Earthwatch Institute (the world's largest environmental volunteer organization). Now, 20 years later, she's back in St. Pete to help raise public awareness about her alma mater.

The *Northeast Journal* asked Kristen to tell readers more about her interest in marine science. Here's what she has to say.

**What marine science issues concern you the most?**

Plastics and pollution top my worry list. I've been fortunate to visit many beaches described as remote and pristine only to find the inevitable bottle, wrapper, or even a shoe. I'm sick over one prediction, that by 2050 the weight of plastic will outweigh fish.

I'm reminded of an experience 23 years ago. I was a graduate student on my first research cruise. We were heading to the Dry Tortugas and pulled up our first trawl. We hoisted the net and saw what looked like a gargantuan albino sea snake – "A new species!" I screamed silently in my head – only to realize that it was a discarded fire hose. Our out-of-sight/out-of-mind mentality has caught up to us, and the pervasive nature of plastics today makes my stomach turn. I'm glad to see a new consciousness about plastics stirring up.

**Tell us about some of the interesting marine-related adventures you've had around the world?**

I'm humbled by all of my experiences, from diving to the bottom of the Pacific Ocean in the submersible Alvin as part of an IMAX film project, to an Arctic expedition where I climbed to the top of Jan Mayen – a Norwegian island and the world's northernmost active volcano.

One favorite was an expedition out of Fiji where we crossed the international dateline, which is roughly 180 degrees longitude. This is the one place on the planet where this happens: if it is noon on Tuesday on the west side of the dateline and you cross to the other side, it becomes noon on Monday. So one minute I was in today, and the next I was in yesterday again.



Wrapping my brain around that scientific version of *Who's On First* was a wild experience that capped off an already thrilling expedition, during which we discovered the first underwater volcanoes in the South Pacific. (Oh, and the sunsets in the South Pacific stirred the soul unlike any other I've seen.)

Another favorite experience was with Earthwatch, where I joined an expedition to the Soutpanberg Mountains in South Africa and tracked leopards and monkeys for ten days. Way out of my comfort zone because there was no saltwater anywhere, and we were tracking creatures with limbs rather than fins. Epic.

**What would you like readers to know about the USF College of Marine Science?**

We are one of the top-ten marine science colleges in the country. We work on every possible aspect of the ocean – geology, biology, physics, chemistry – in a wild spate of locations, from Tampa Bay to Antarctica, and have globally recognized expertise in fisheries management, sea-level rise, red tides, and more.

We are also one of almost a dozen marine-related organizations in St. Pete, including Fish and Wildlife

Research Institute, Florida Institute of Oceanography, USGS St. Petersburg Coastal and Marine Science Center, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, SRI International, Tampa Bay Estuary Program and the US Coast Guard. Together we comprise the largest marine science hub in the southeastern United States.

**Tell us about some of the research projects underway at the college.**

We led a massive, 17-institution, multi-country research effort in response to the historic Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010. What made the spill particularly difficult was the fact that we lacked baseline data to fully understand its impact. We've learned a great deal since then, and with pressure mounting to make deeper oil wells even closer to shorelines, we are well positioned to inform decision-making and policy.

We are partnering with Fish and Wildlife Research Institute and Mote Marine Lab in Sarasota on monitoring and predicting red tide on our coast. If any readers were around last year, this one doesn't need further explanation. Here is a link to a story we wrote about it. ([www.marine.usf.edu/news-and-events/red-tide-forensics-so-thats-what-happened](http://www.marine.usf.edu/news-and-events/red-tide-forensics-so-thats-what-happened)). In addition, we do a lot of work using satellites to understand blooms of all kinds, including a seaweed called Sargassum and blue-green algae, both of which are important issues for Florida residents.

**What else would you like readers to know about the marine college?**

I'd like the public to understand that there is still so much to discover about our oceans – the blue of our blue planet. I recently wrote about the effort to

*This page from top: Kristen Kusek today; On location in Alaska 2017; USF Red Tide Glider. Facing page from top: Kristen on the Alvin dive; Fire drill in the South Pacific*





map the West Florida Shelf ([www.marine.usf.edu/news-and-events/floridas-most-valuable-treasure-map](http://www.marine.usf.edu/news-and-events/floridas-most-valuable-treasure-map)). Most people don't realize we've only mapped less than 10 percent of the West Florida Shelf and this work is critical to efforts toward sustainable fisheries, oil spill recovery efforts, and more. We even recently found some new shipwrecks right here in our backyard!

**What is it like to move back here after 20 years?**

St. Pete is alive at last. I've been welcomed with open arms into a vibrant professional community, and the dialogue, action, and innovation toward a better, healthier, more sustainable St. Pete excite me to no end. I feel like I moved back at a perfect time in my life and the life of St. Pete: I'm more ready than ever to share what I've learned professionally and personally with my college and community,



and feel all of the gifts that St. Pete has to offer me in return: opportunity, energy, and fun in the salty sea. ●



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# Coming Soon: Your New St. Pete Pier™



Kristin Brett

The St. Pete Pier is one of the largest construction projects the city has ever undertaken, totaling 26 acres of downtown waterfront development. If you live or work near downtown, you no doubt have seen some of the new Pier's structures and supports starting to spiral upwards. They are the walls and framing for buildings, the support for solar panels at the Marketplace, and beginning framework for the Janet Echelman floating sculpture.



Construction is now at a feverish pitch with overnight concrete pours for the Pier Head building floors, and the entire Pier District is an active construction site. An average of over 200 workers are on site, working 10+ hours a day, six days a week.

As many long-standing residents know, there have been several public piers throughout St. Pete's history. Seven, in fact. The earliest pier, built in 1889, was the Railroad Pier, built by entrepreneur Peter Demens to handle distribution of goods by rail. Several followed, the most recent being the Inverted Pyramid, which was built on top of St. Pete's 1926 pier head. Designed by noted architect William Harvard, Sr., the upside-down pyramid opened in 1973, and over the years housed

three restaurants, snack bars, novelty shops, an aquarium, and breathtaking views of Tampa Bay. Due to a crumbling infrastructure from the 1926 vintage it was constructed upon, the Inverted Pyramid closed in 2013.

Soon, St. Pete will celebrate its eighth public pier – no doubt the most noteworthy waterfront landmark of our city's history. So, what will the new Pier have to offer? I wanted to give readers of the *Northeast Journal* an idea of what to expect. Here's a sampling:

- **Kid's Play Area:** St. Pete has dozens of wonderful parks and green space, however it has never housed a downtown playground. The new Pier's play area will be its first, and will be unlike any other. Adjacent to the Family Park, this will be an exciting, interactive fun-zone for children, themed – appropriately – to the sea and intended to expand curiosity in nature. Nearby splash pads will offer water fun for kids of all ages.
- **Beach:** Spa Beach will be expanded, thanks to new breakwaters installed to shore up the beach and protect local sea-grass beds. To provide a respite from the bright Florida rays, a large shade structure will be constructed in Spa Beach Park, thanks to a grant from the American Academy of Dermatology.

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- **Dining and Drinks:** There will be three dining concepts at the main Pier Head, with something for everyone to enjoy. Teak is an upscale fine dining restaurant featuring a Florida-themed menu. Pier Teaki is a rooftop bar with a tropical atmosphere and trendy cocktails. And the Driftwood Café is a ground-level casual-dining spot with healthy menu options. Additional dining within the new Pier District will include Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille, a Florida-themed restaurant with locations in Ft. Myers Beach, Sanibel, and Captiva. The restaurant takes its name from the novels of *New York Times* best-selling author Randy Wayne White. Rounding out the Pier's food scene is the Pavilion Café, a quick-serve take-out concession near Spa Beach Park.
- **Discovery Center:** The Discovery Center – operated by Tampa Bay Watch – will offer dynamic interactive exhibits geared toward educating the public and showcasing our Tampa Bay estuary. This marine learning center will also provide classroom space for school field trips and summer camp programs.
- **Fishing:** The Fishing Platform at the Pier Head was created using the existing caissons from the Inverted Pyramid Pier, and will allow visitors to get close to the water and provide a dedicated area for fishing. Gator Jim's Bait Shop will offer fishing supplies for local anglers.

- **Art:** Spectacular works of art by four world-famous artists will be on display at the new Pier. An aluminum-coated, origami-inspired pelican by Nathan Mabry will 'guard' the Pier's entrance. Near the Family Park, a brilliantly colored mosaic mandala created by Xenobia Bailey will amaze and delight all visitors. And, at the Pier Head, a bronze sculpture by Nick Ervinck in the image of splashing water will definitely cause heads to turn. In addition, a much-anticipated net sculpture designed by world-renowned artist Janet Echelman will be located near the Family Park. Echelman – who grew up in the Tampa Bay area – has showcased her work throughout the world in a variety of locations, including London, Montreal, Boston, San Diego, and Amsterdam. She creates experiential sculptures that transform wind and light.
- **Relaxation:** How about some down time? The new Pier will offer just that with enlarged beach access at Spa Beach, Family Park and lawns where visitors can stretch out and picnic, and plenty of seating along the waterfront to sit and soak up the scenery. With all of these amenities and more, there will be new and unfolding experiences for each and every visitor to the new St. Pete Pier.™ It's destined to become a world-class attraction, drawing residents and visitors of all ages to enjoy and experience it time and time again. ●


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**MIKE MURPHY** *Continued from page 1*

try to help Moozy Toozy and his brother, Moozy Woozy reunite.

Colorful drawings by St. Petersburg illustrator, Jonathan Hoefler, bring the familiar sights of the 'Big Apple' to life. Even the mayor steps in to help. Read closely and you'll find social commentary tucked into the plot. A happy ending promises more 'Moozite' adventures to come, as they visit Washington DC and other places in the US.

Mike himself was a reluctant reader as a boy. His mother had a new baby the year Mike was due to go to kindergarten, so instead, he stayed home and missed out on some important readiness skills. He also had an auditory processing issue that made it difficult to decipher certain sounds. Anyway, he jokes, "Who had time to read when there were balls to hit and trees to climb?" Keeping this in mind, Mike hopes that his new series is just the sort that will capture the attention and hearts of early elementary readers.

Mike put a copy of *Lilly Lou Makes a New Friend* to the test by reading it aloud to a class of third graders. They, in turn, provided a valuable tip for future books by asking a question about the Moozites. "What are their superpowers?" they all wanted to know. Taking this into account, Mike assured me that the Moozites will display their superpowers in all upcoming episodes! Mike also has some important advice of his own for parents and teachers. "Be patient. Read to your children every day. Set aside time for family reading. Find books the individual student can finish quickly."

**PULLING TOGETHER WITH PRIDE**

Mike has been headmaster at Shorecrest since 2005, when he came to St. Petersburg from Atlanta where he had been head of school at Pace Academy. Mike's 14-year tenure at Shorecrest has brought much transformation, especially



Mike reads a copy of *Lilly Lou Makes a New Friend*

this past spring, when life-long dreams became reality on campus. Shorecrest's Charger Commons facility opened in March, making way for new state-of-the-art dining areas and a common outdoor space where students of all ages connect every day. Thanks to the generosity of three families, it is also home to the newly named Mike Murphy Experiential School. Here, the youngest of students experience the enchantment of learning. One highlight – a bright and inviting library media center for the Experiential and Lower Schools – sits adjacent to the new Maker Space/Technology Center, where, according to Mike, younger children "engage in programming, simple robotics, and the development of projects or products to enhance their studies." New Upper School facilities will be housed on the second floor which is still awaiting completion.

"I am proud of how the community united to transform the Shorecrest campus into one of the most beautiful schools in Florida," Mike wrote in an email. "When I came [to Shorecrest], I could not understand how a school with such a successful record of educating students and sending them to great universities could thrive in facilities that did not match the quality of the program. Today, thanks to the generosity of the community, the facilities at Shorecrest match the quality of the programs the faculty and staff provide to the students."

Personal interest in the growth and development of all Shorecrest students has been another one of Mike's secrets to success. For example, the parents of one of the students at Shorecrest felt that their son wasn't living up to his potential and told Mike they were considering pulling him out of school. Instead, Mike became the boy's personal mentor. "It was rewarding to see something click in him," said Mike. "By senior year, he had taken on a major leadership role at school and in

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Lilly Lou book cover; Illustration by Jonathan Hoefler; An illustration of Moozy Toozy



Mike Murphy kayaking

the community. He was accepted in a pre-med program and is now about to complete medical school.”

**CREATING NEW WORLDS**

Mike will be stepping down at the end of the 2020 school year. Nancy Spencer, associate head of school at Westminster School in Simsbury, Connecticut, was recently announced as the new Shorecrest head of school beginning July 1 of next year. Mike will leave big shoes to fill, but is confident that he leaves in place “an incredibly talented administrative team to support our students.” What will he do with his spare time? Besides

his interests in birding, hiking and camping, and traveling, he says, “In my perfect world, the Lilly Lou series will become popular with children and families, allowing me to travel to many cities to gather information for new books about Lilly Lou and the Moozites. I am open to a variety of options, including consulting, being an interim head, or hiking the Appalachian Trail. I also hope to travel with my wife, Robin. In short, I plan to stay busy.”

No doubt about it... Old Northeast resident Mike Murphy leaves a trail of magic wherever he goes. Watch out universe... here he comes! ♦



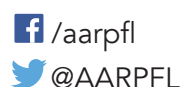
Mike Murphy and his wife Robin



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# Bird Behavior and Misbehavior

Samantha Bond Richman

The feeder stands motionless in the early morning light filtering down through the oak and jacaranda branches above. Its dark green paint still glisten with dew. The feeder is sheltered by larger trees as well as thick palmettos, which offer some welcome privacy from the alley running beside the yard. Lanky stalks of green ginger grow up alongside the feeder's steel support pole and in the spaces between the trees. A disorderly garden of low ground cover is provided by a myriad of grasses, bromeliads, and vines giving shelter to local ground dwellers. A path of crushed white seashells runs parallel to the alley, between the thick vegetation and the house where the feeder stands. A few dead leaves and spent purple jacaranda blooms litter the path.

The palmetto palms tremble and shake. Suddenly a chorus of *mweep-mweep* calls come out of the greenery as a group of tiny, voracious sparrows burst out. Somehow they know the carefully placed feeder has recently been refilled with seeds. They seem to appreciate the privacy and protection the placement of the feeder offered. The competition for a spot directly on the feeder's perch is fierce among the little birds. Their rapidly flapping wings allow them to hover, nearly as well as hummingbirds, as they attempt to muscle into a spot.

The birds engage in battle for perch space, sometimes sparring with their beaks. The whine of hungry cheeps quickly turns to angry-sounding chirrup as birds peck at one another, sometimes clamping down on wings and tail feathers. There is a constant rotation of two or three birds at a time, each trying to take a turn to land and eat a few seeds. Frequently they 'back into' a space on the perch so that they can face the onslaught of competing sparrows. Their tiny beaks are specially designed for breaking seeds, and breaking bad.

Suddenly, a large winged shadow swoops over the feeder in the side yard. Several more follow, darting in with great speed. The sparrows stop squabbling long enough

to see the blue jay crew has arrived. With a shriek, the first blue bully flies into to feeder and bowls the sparrows out of the way. Only one jay at a time will fit on the perch, and although they are not the most desirable birds to attract, they do offer a brilliant display of blue, grey, and white feathers along with a black crown. They sport a fierce black beak, and are second from the top of the pecking order at the feeder. While they shriek their presence to the other birds, they often make deep burble-sounding noises when talking amongst themselves.



A tall wooden privacy fence separates the side yard from the backyard, and gives a spot for birds waiting a turn at the feeder a place to rest. It also offers a clear view of the bird bath placed along the fence's interior perimeter. The bath is a welcome oasis where all can drink, bathe and socialize. Many birds come to the bath, even those who are not interested in the nearby seed offering. Sometimes a squirrel will climb down the fence and drink heartily. A grey indoor-only cat watches the activity from the window, breaking the house rules as he rests on the kitchen table.



A male and female couple of mourning doves arrive, and begin feeding on the seeds scattered among the white seashells below the feeder. It seems their wings are too large and their flying skills are not as precise as needed for feeder perch landings – though sometimes they land on the roof of the feeder and dream of dining on the perch. While they don't fit on the narrow feeding ledge, they get plenty to eat on the ground. The doves are peaceful and beautiful. Feeding silently, the two communicate with each other with head bobs and an occasional grooming gesture. They, too, enjoy the bath for cooling off and for the fresh water it provides. The doves are almost always the last to leave at sunset.

Frequently, squirrels dominate a feeder meant for birds. The human sponsor may be disappointed that squirrels are plentiful and keep the desired song birds away. The squirrels also eat heartily and will devour a bag of *bird* seed in a matter



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of days, further frustrating and aggravating the poor sponsor. Sometimes this results in crazed shouting, arm waving, and – in extreme cases – a spray with the garden hose. It’s a bird feeder, they insist, and add a baffle to the feeder as a shield. Squirrels are not easily deterred, and will likely scamper over the baffle, enjoy their seed, and mock the sponsor. Often what follows is the matching of human engineering – coupled with trips to the hardware store – against a nonstop army of clever squirrels. Entire books have been written on the subject, and anyone who has made these attempts will enjoy reading *Outwitting Squirrels*, a book authored by Bill Adler, Jr.

Another feeder has been added to the scene, and hangs over a large oak branch above the side yard. It is secured by plastic-coated fine-steel wire and attached to the wooden privacy fence with a screw eye. This allows for the sponsor to fill the feeder, and then hoist the feeder back into just the right place. It must be high enough to keep the squirrels from jumping up onto it from the fence, and low enough below the oak branch to keep them from jumping down onto it from above. Attempts at precision placement have made it nearly perfect (birds only), though the squirrels seem to be strategizing all the time. This feeder, it is hoped, will one day attract some of the parrots seen around St. Petersburg. For now, it is frequented by cardinals, blue jays, finches, and woodpeckers. The sponsors enjoy them all, and share the nature viewing with house guests, especially young children, who delight in the seemingly endless procession of feeding and bathing birds.

The blue-jay party is disrupted by the rapid fire sound of *cha cha cha chucka*. A red-bellied woodpecker arrived. He has the largest beak and most chutzpah among the birds here and darts into the feeder perch for some of his favorite sunflower seeds. Sometimes birds will visit a feeder, take a seed, and then perch nearby on the oak tree with their prize of a whole sunflower seed. They then hold the seed between their feet and use their beak to force open the sunflower seed shell before devouring the contents. The red-bellied woodpecker – hard to see, though it is red – has a red head as well. The males have an orangey-red mane of feathers extending from just above their eyes to the back of their neck. Females have a bit of the same red color, and as is typical, the female birds are less flashy than their male counterparts. The woodpecker females have only dull grey feathers on the front half their heads, with the red feathers starting halfway back, looking almost as if they suffer from male-patterned baldness. Red-bellied woodpeckers have peculiar, specialized feet for going up or down a tree trunk facing either direction. Two toes face forward and two toes face back, a quality interestingly called zygodactyl. They are given clearance by all the other birds on the feeder.

Suddenly all the birds scatter, as a garbage truck rumbles through the alley. They will be back. A mockingbird visits the bird bath and drinks his fill. Not much for seeds, he eats bugs, sometimes chasing them down with his white-and-grey feathers flashing. Mockingbirds, which can have over 200 songs, are named for mocking what they hear. Some even mock car alarms.

One local mockingbird became known as Bad Foot Joe, as he was distinguished by having a crumpled foot. A single blue jay was identifiable from the scores of his kind due to a beak malformation. The top half curled down, like a fang, and the bottom curled way up, and they did not meet at the tips. No way of telling if these were from birth or injury, though each bird was an adult and seemed to have overcome the difficulties of presented by their defect.

The feeders are busy year round, though some guests are seasonal. Winter brings migrating birds which may make only one visit to the feeder. Guessing their identity is sometimes a challenge and a delight. Books make identification easier, though unless a camera is at the ready, observers will have to rely on their ability to recall details of the birds to make accurate identification. Watching them is fun regardless of the lack of desire to become a real ornithological expert.

Feeders provide supplemental food for the birds, and are a source of easy, inexpensive entertainment at home. Feeding wild birds is a bit like having outdoor pets, without the responsibility of ownership. Give it a try! ●

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Proceeds Benefit The Bill Edwards Family Foundation for the Arts a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit

**HISTORY** Continued from page 1

and this is largely due to the hearty cooperation of the city and citizens of the town... and I must say that Tampa Bay is a fine place to fly.”

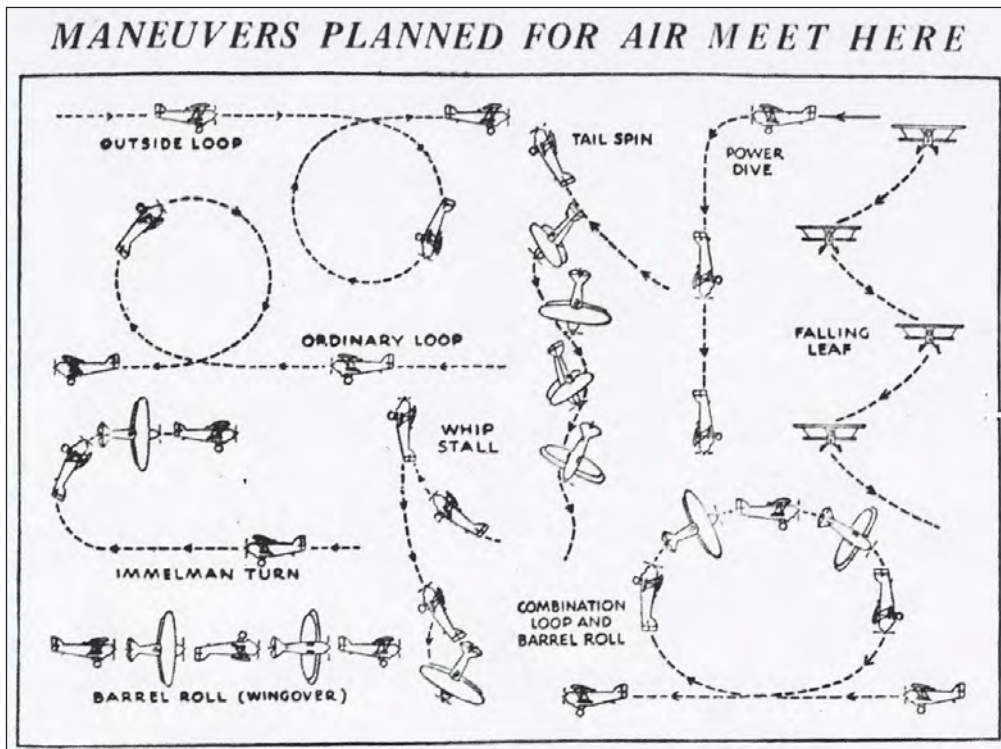
The First Airline – which used ‘airboats’ or seaplanes landing on water rather than airport runways – was followed by various other enthusiastic aviation developments in the city. Piper-Fuller Airport – on the site of today’s Walter Fuller Park in west St. Petersburg – was the first city airport, established in 1926. It effectively came to an end with the start of World War II, although it was not converted to a park until 1960. Albert Whitted Airport was established in 1929 on the Downtown Waterfront and continues to operate to this day. Albert Whitted hosted the beginnings of National Airlines, later to become Pan American Airways. St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport (PIE) began in 1941 and also continues to thrive. But, there was a fourth airport known as Grand Central Airport, and later Sky Harbor.

Grand Central was also opened in 1929. Its location was on Weedon Island in north St. Petersburg, today a state park managed by Pinellas County and much better known for the Weeden Indian Culture and their mounds. Their name is a misspelling of the island, named after Dr. Leslie Weedon (1860-1937) one-time island owner.

Grand Central was the brainchild of Fred V. Blair, a native of Ohio. Blair attended Harvard University, graduating in 1913. He then became an educator serving as an assistant headmaster and principal in Ohio and Illinois. Like many early St. Petersburg pioneers, he came to St. Petersburg for his health. He was

given six months to live by his doctors in 1916. After arriving in St. Petersburg, he turned his talents to real estate and development rather than education. At one time he was associated with Eugene M. Elliot who worked with George Gandy selling stock to finance the Gandy Bridge, and was later involved in an unsuccessful attempt to develop Weedon Island for residential use. Elliot was a notorious huckster. In an attempt to get the attention of potential real estate buyers, he salted the island with bogus Indian artifacts in 1923 and then invited the Smithsonian to send an anthropologist to investigate. The anthropologist immediately recognized the artifacts as fakes, but then his attention was attracted to nearby mounds discovering the famed Weeden Culture. The anthropologist was also the misspeller of the culture’s name. It is not known if Fred Blair was involved in Elliot’s attempt to develop the island, but he certainly must have been aware of that, and the island’s location as suitable for an airport.

Blair formed Blair & Company, Inc. and began selling stock for \$10 a share. Investment advertisements touted, “Airports – Aviation Industry and Aviation Properties are in demand. The Future of Aviation offers the Greatest Speculation.” Grading for the airport began in late 1929. The airport consisted of 528 acres. The main portion was a 100-acre tract, triangular in shape, with three hard-surface marl runways. The longest was 3,200 feet. An administration building and hangar were also built at a cost of \$10,000. A dock was built on adjacent Papy’s Bayou for seaplanes. Arrangements were made for a bus line to facilitate transportation between the new airport and downtown St. Petersburg.



Grand Central Airport hosted many air shows in the 1930s. This was a promotional piece illustrating maneuvers to be made during one of the shows. Various competitions were also held, often air races. First place prizes ranged from \$25 to \$100. On one occasion a suede jacket was awarded the best dressed pilot, image 1933.

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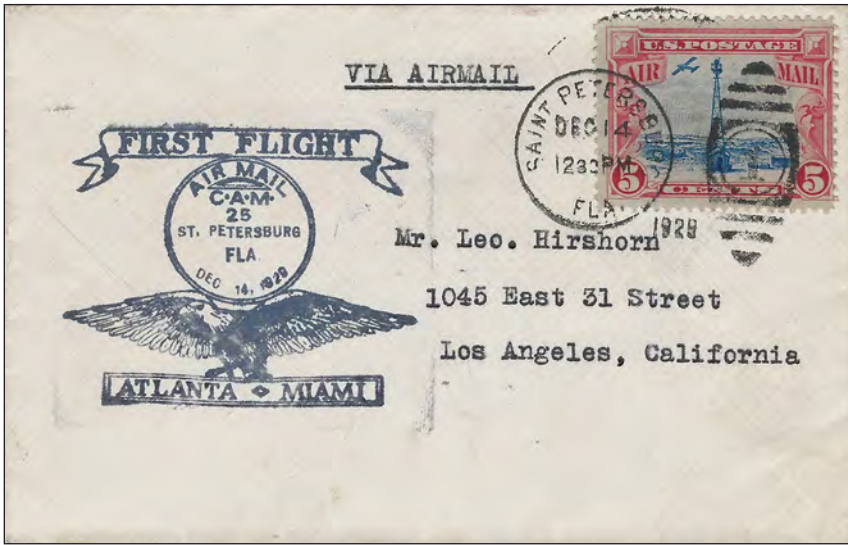
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First Flight airmail cachet marking Pitcairn Aviation airmail route between Miami, St. Petersburg, and Atlanta. "CAM" stood for "Contract Air Mail." The number 25 was the route number. Pitcairn Aviation became Eastern Air Transport in January 1930, and was later known as Eastern Air Lines.

It was announced the new airport would target commercial and sports flying and industrial development.

It was also about this time that Chamber of Commerce publicity director John Lodwick came up with one of his many brainstorms for promoting the city – Goodyear blimps. He arranged for the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company to locate a blimp at Albert Whitted Airport, and got the city to pay for construction of a necessarily large hangar. On December 11, 1929, the blimp *Vigilant* of St. Petersburg was christened and gave rides to VIPs over the city. One of those in the blimp was none other than William L. Straub, renowned editor of the *St. Petersburg Times*. The *Times* noted, "Mr. Straub, who had the thrill of his first trip into the air, and who saw his beloved St. Petersburg from on high, said he had never had as much fun in his life. In fact, Bill declared he would like to have a blimp of his own for commuting to Loafer Lodge [his beach home] at Pass-a-Grille. He says he is confident he could run it, and confessed that his hands were itching to get hold of the controls." The next day the *Vigilant* took a second group of VIPs up which included Fred Blair. They flew over Weedon Island and Blair saw his Grand Central Airport while under construction from the air for the first time.



Courtesy of Michaels Family Collection

Fred V. Blair, an aviation visionary, established Grand Central Airport on Weedon Island, St. Petersburg in 1929.

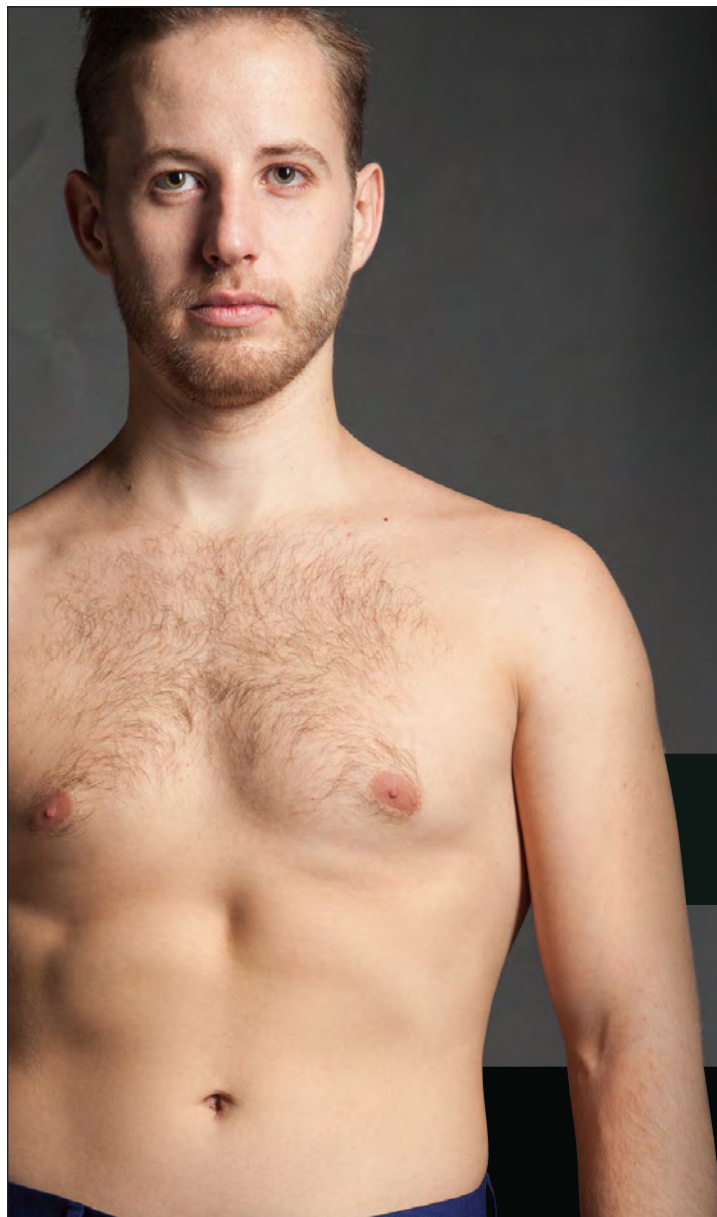
To commemorate the opening of the airport on January 8, 1930, pilot Harold McMahon landed on Weedon Island with the *Northern Star*, America's largest passenger plane at the time weighing in at 15 tons. Historian Sheila Stewart described the landing and celebration: "McMahon was greeted by a large crowd gathered to catch a glimpse of the giant aircraft. Like the prehistoric people who watched the graceful spirals of the birds impressed in effigy upon their pottery, hundreds of admiring spectators gazed at the graceful landing of the huge aircraft."

Grand Central and Albert Whitted got underway at virtually the same time and a debate broke out about their relative merits. Some in the city expressed concern that Albert Whitted's location on the downtown waterfront was a safety 'menace' to the life and property of nearby residents, a burden on city tax payers, and that the location could be better used for a large recreation center. Others argued that the two airports comple-

mented one another. Grand Central was seen as an ideal airport for mail and cargo carriers, flight training, and amateur flying. Albert Whitted was seen as best suited for short-haul passenger operations, sight-seeing planes, and a 'drop-in' airport for winter visitors. Its proximity to the downtown business district was hyped. The airport was viewed as an important 'feeder' to Grand Central.

Also discussed was aviation competition between St. Petersburg and Tampa. Blair noted, "If these two cities keep scrapping each other instead of getting together on the problem of making the Florida west coast attractive to airplane lines and flying in general, aviation in Florida will continue to be concentrated in Miami." (Blair himself tried to entice the seaplanes from Albert Whitted, but the pilots felt the adjacent Riviera Bay was not big enough.)

Continued on page 26



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### HISTORY *Continued from page 25*

Somehow, Blair made connection with Eastern Air Transport – previously known as Pitcairn Aviation – which became Eastern Air Lines in 1938. Eastern Air began regular mail service to Grand Central in December 1929. On New Year's Day 1931, Eastern began regular passenger service between Grand Central and Daytona Beach, with stops in Tampa and Orlando, using yellow-and-black Curtis Kingbird airliners carrying seven passengers. Travel time was about one-and-a-half hours. Daytona was a junction terminal where other planes could be taken to Atlanta, New York, Miami, Havana, and several Central and South American points. Service out of St. Petersburg was scheduled daily. Grand Central served as the Eastern headquarters for northbound passenger travel. Tampa and Orlando coordinated reservations through Grand Central. In August 1931, Blair opened Gulf Coast Airways which focused on flight training for pilots and repair of aircraft. It was not an airline. Numerous air shows and events were held at Grand Central, helping to promote the airport. Blair also managed to attract a movie studio to the island which produced three bad films. Comedian Buster Keaton participated briefly in the film making. The airport facilitated the travel of actors, and film was flown to New York for editing.



*Aerial view of Grand Central Airport, image 1930.*

With onset of the Great Depression in the 1930s, the airport eventually failed. Eastern Air Lines ended their use of the airport in 1936. The airport was foreclosed on in 1937 and purchased by a private party. In 1944, Clarence W. Ludwig – who operated an aviation maintenance facility and school for flyers at Peter O. Knight Airport in Tampa – acquired Grand Central and changed the name to Sky Harbor Airport. He proposed to establish an 'aero country club' on the field with opportunities for fishing and swimming, but this failed due to the airport's then-remoteness. The idea was not new. Blair had considered an 'aviation country club' back in 1931.

In 1946, Sky Harbor was leased to Carl E. Stengel who planned an aviation school to operate under the GI Bill of Rights. This soon folded and in 1948, Ludwig sold the airfield to multi-millionaire Ed C. Wright and the airport was closed. Florida Power erected a power plant on the east end of the island, and the state purchased the remaining land for a State Park.

After Grand Central, Blair continued his development activities focusing on beach properties. In the early part of World War II, the city held practice blackouts at night. During one of these blackouts in 1942, Blair lost his footing at the top of a stairway and fell fracturing his skull. He died shortly afterwards of his injuries.

Fred Blair is not well known in St. Petersburg history. Nevertheless, he was an aviation visionary just like those first city leaders who welcomed new aviation technology in 1914 and facilitated the First Airline. ●

*Sources: Raymond Arsenault, St. Petersburg and the Florida Dream 1888-1950 (1996); Warren J. Brown, Florida's Aviation History: The First One Hundred Years (1994); R. E. G. Davies, Airlines of the United States Since 1914 (1972); Jack Phillips, "The History of Piper-Fuller Airport" (Internet); Pinellas County Department of Environmental Management Environmental Lands Division, The Weedon Island Story (2005); St. Petersburg Times (Various); and Sheila K. Stewart, "Mythic Landscapes of the Boom and Bust Weedon Island, Florida," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. 84, No. 3 (Winter 2006).*

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

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The Flight 2014 Monument Project has achieved its goal of raising \$750,000. Construction on the monument is soon to get underway. Many thanks to all who donated to the monument including the *Northeast Journal*. For more information see [www.airlinecentennial.org](http://www.airlinecentennial.org).

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# North Shore's Early Streetcars

Laura Duvekot,

historic preservationist, City of St. Petersburg

To a curious eye, St. Petersburg's historic trolley or 'street railway' lines remain surprisingly visible, and they tell an interesting story about the lifestyle of Sunshine City residents in the early part of the 20th century.

In the March-April 2018 issue of the *Northeast Journal*, Dr. Will Michaels explored the history of the streetcar lines in St. Petersburg. But, you might not be aware of how streetcars shaped the North Shore Historic District, the formal name for the area we now call the Old Northeast.

The streetcar lines connected North Shore residents with downtown St. Petersburg, the Bayboro Harbor area, Gulfport, and Pasadena. This was the era before cars or buses, and Perry Snell and J.C. Hamlett – the most prominent developers of the North Shore neighborhood – were keenly aware of the positive impact on property values that better connectivity to nearby beach-front communities and the commercial/entertainment attractions of downtown would have.

The first North Shore/Coffee Pot Street Railway line began its run in 1912 with a terminus at 15th Avenue North. Three years later, service was extended from an existing line on 9th Street North to 34th Avenue North, and to the baseball field at the present-day site of Coffee Pot Park.

Although North Shore was initially developed as a residential neighborhood of single family homes, it wasn't long before commercial stores and apartment homes were built around streetcar stops. The intersection of 7th Avenue North and 2nd Street North was the point of connection between the Seventh Avenue Looper trolley line and the North Shore line. This highly trafficked trolley stop led to the development of the Seventh Avenue Shopping Center, which in the late 1920s housed a market, bakery, a pharmacist, and a restaurant known as the Black Cat.

Trolleys stopped at this intersection as often as several times per hour, resulting in hundreds of nearby residents walking past shop windows which drew customers in with the smell of fresh bread, or the sight of a neighbor enjoying a cup of tea. What better than convenience to make a sale? Today, a portion of the building remains and now houses the Old Northeast Tavern and Black Crow Coffee.



Top: San Rafael Apartments at Locust St. and 13th Ave. Bottom: A former trolley stop, now home of the Old Northeast Tavern.



Traveling a few blocks northeast, the North Shore Line made its way deeper into the neighborhood to the corner of Locust Street and 13th Avenue. In 1925, the three-story San Rafael Apartment Hotel was built. Ground-floor retail stores faced Locust, and 30 apartments were located on the second and third floors. A 1937 advertisement promoted the businesses which included a drug store, tea room, grocery store, and beauty parlor – all boasting about the complete amenities that mimic the comforts of home, suggesting that most residents in St. Pete at the time were seasonal visitors. In 1972, the drug store, restaurant, and grocery store were converted into apartments. But, the outline of the storefronts still remains visible.

The creation of 'streetcar suburbs' like North Shore occurred throughout the US during the late 1800s and early 1900s. But, as personal automobile and buses became more commonplace, streetcar use diminished. Construction of expensive streetcar tracks seemed burdensome and unnecessary. Bus routes eventually replaced proposed trolley lines to the Veterans Administration Hospital at Bay Pines and through Snell Isle.

By 1950, St. Petersburg's streetcars were gone. All had been removed and placed in a local 'bone yard.' Throughout the country, the same thing was happening. Streetcars were no longer needed as buses came into vogue.

But today, their legacy is being increasingly explored. A National Register

Multiple Property Listing of historic resources related to streetcar and bus systems in Washington, DC was completed in 2006, and in 2012, the Georgia Department of Transportation's did an inventory of that state's historic streetcar systems.

The City of St. Petersburg's Urban Planning and Historic Preservation Division has recently used historical maps to create a layer depicting many of the original routes of trolley lines. You can take a look at the maps at [www.stpete.org/history](http://www.stpete.org/history). Examining these routes allows the forgotten stories of the early development of the Old Northeast and eastern portions of the city to become clear. ●

Sources: "Map, Guide and Transfer Regulations, Municipal Transit System of St. Petersburg, Florida," undated brochure. James Buckley, Street Railways of St. Petersburg, Florida (1983). Kate Hoffman, "North Shore Historic District (8PI09640)," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, (2003). Sanborn Map Company. St. Petersburg, Florida; 1923 Sheet 23; 1951 Sheets 23 and 62.

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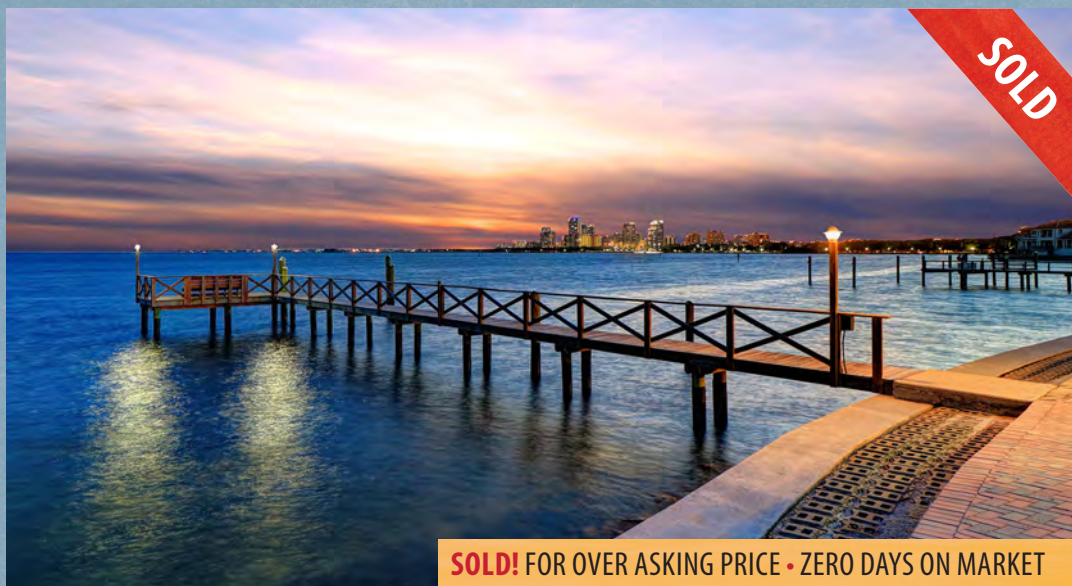
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## MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR



**Gary Smith**

Locust Street NE

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

I moved here in 1988. My family had moved here in the early '70s and lived in Venetian Isles. We were military so no real hometown. Elementary close to the Pentagon, junior high in Tokyo, briefly in Colorado Springs, Honolulu High School, Colorado State University.

**Best hidden gem(s) in St. Pete?**

Waterfront, tropical neighborhood of Driftwood, Munch's, El Cap, Verandah at Vinoy, Old Northeast Tavern, Crescent Lake Park, Denver Park.

**Top two places in the world on your bucket list?**

Johannesburg, and – thanks to Bourdain – Sri Lanka foodie exploration.

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

Mark Twain. He was my favorite American writer, humorist, and traveler. So many to choose from, but going with Tom Sawyer.

**Favorite sport, recreational activity, or hobby?**

Boating. My dad bought a 26' Ranger. We sailed that thing all over the west coast for 20+ years. Today I'm blessed with friends with boats.

**A great movie you'd recommend?**

*Jeremiah Johnson*. That dude was gnarly.

**If you could have a super power what would it be?**

Flight. Never get in a car again.

**What are you watching/binge watching on Netflix?**

*Below Deck*. Yachtee dreaming!

**Favorite restaurant in St. Pete?**

Red Mesa Cantina, although I can make an argument for 10 others. Great salsa, margaritas, outdoor dining, and tacos. You don't like tacos, eat with someone else!

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

An Aristocratic Mutt

**Tell us about a person or situation that inspired you.**

My mother, Helena, was diagnosed with dementia 12 years before she passed. My dad and sister Melena steered her through her travels. Hospice came in when we got to that place. Family and Hospice. Yep.

**Current book you've read and would recommend?**

I always go back to *The Complete Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway*. He was a magnificent story teller and a world traveler. Spain, Key West, Africa, Cuba. You could absolutely be there yourself. *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*. Epic.

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

Dali, Rays day game, Ferg's, El Cap, Vinoy, Old NE Tavern, Old NE Halloween night, Reggae Fest. What a place we live in!

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

Well, my story on the history of the NE Racquet Club made the front page of the *Northeast Journal*. I was the first sports editor of the *Vail Daily*, *Vail*, *Colorado*.



**Amy Calvin**

2nd Street North

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

My husband David and I moved to St. Pete from our hometown of St. Louis (Go Cards!) nearly five years ago. Best decision we ever made!

**Best hidden gem(s) in St. Pete?**

The Old Northeast neighborhood. It isn't really hidden, but it is a gem.

**Top two places in the world on your bucket list?**

I just returned from my first visit to Europe (London, Paris, Barcelona). It was the trip of a lifetime, but Tahiti and Italy are still calling my name.

**Favorite restaurant in St. Pete.**

Right now, it's Trophy Fish. Love the setting and fresh seafood.

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

I'd love to interview a panel of current female Fortune 500 CEOs. To get behind their motivations, challenges, and lessons learned would be fascinating.

**Favorite sport, recreational activity, or hobby?**

When I'm not working, you'll catch me at the beach, reading, walking the neighborhood, or enjoying a good red wine.

**A great movie you'd recommend?**

I adored *A Star is Born*. It is one of the only movies I've ever watched more than once – and I cried both times!

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

I am most encouraged when I see my clients succeed, and they simply say, "Thank you, Amy."

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

I'm a cat person all the way – which is another reason I love our neighborhood.

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

Tiger Woods. I think his comeback story is extraordinary. It holds lessons about winning, failing, changing, and persevering that apply to everyone's life – if even on a smaller stage.

**Current book you've read and would recommend?**

*Educated* by Tara Westover. While I love fiction, this is a memoir. It drives home our human craving for education and the influence parents have – or not – on the education of their children. Plus, it has a great story line.

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

Florida CraftArt because it's great for guests' gift buying – and my husband's furniture is on display!

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

Quitting my job of 15 years at a large global communications agency to move to Florida and start my own company.

**Something people might not know about you?**

I've been to 20 Jimmy Buffett concerts – an official Parrothead.



**Scott Brown**

with his wife Ellen

29th Avenue North

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

Since January, after 33 years in the NY metro area. Met Ellen in DC. I was born and raised in San Diego.

**Top two places in the world on your bucket list?**

Wimbledon and the French Open

**What famous person would you like to meet & why?**

Assuming language was not a barrier, Jesus Christ, Mohandas Gandhi, Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha), and the prophet Muhammad... moral leaders who either founded great religions or, as with Gandhi, brought about a revolution without firing one shot.

**Favorite sport, recreational activity, or hobby?**

Playing tennis, watching tennis, going to tennis tournaments, talking endlessly about pro tennis.

**A great movie you'd recommend?**

We just watched *Five Feet Apart*. It is a romance about two teens with cystic fibrosis who fall in love. Tough to watch at times, but it will leave a mark.

**If you could have a super power what would it be?**

Eat anything, don't gain weight.

**Favorite restaurant in St. Pete?**

Our house when we make dinner for friends and family. Other than that, Sea Salt – best combination of fantastic outdoor dining, good service, great food, and really cheap and good happy hour food.

**Tell us about a person or situation that inspired you.**

The 412 NYFD first responders who charged into the World Trade Center on 9/11. John 15:13 says that there is no greater love than to lay down your life for your friends. Those first responders laid down their lives for complete strangers.

**Current book you've read and would recommend?**

Marjorie Stoneman Douglas' *River of Grass*. Her environmental and cultural history of the Everglades reads like poetry. She is credited with saving the Everglades from development. If you had asked me about her three months ago, all I would have known was that she had a high school named after her.

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

Walk along Coffeepot Bayou to see the manatees if they are in season, then hang a right and get ice cream at Old Farmers' Creamery on 4th, then go to City Produce to get the world's freshest shrimp for dinner. Bike along Vinoy Park to Demens Landing. Use the new augmented reality app at The Dali Museum. Check out gators at Boyd Hill Nature Preserve. Stake out a spot at Honeymoon Beach. Do some Friday night shuffleboard at the Shuffleboard Club... I could keep going.

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

The thing I am proudest of professionally is mentoring two very talented young men to run the business that I created and watch them do it so much better than I ever could. Personally, I am proudest of the three amazing and funny millennials my wife and I brought into this world.

**Something people might not know about you?**

I absolutely will not eat Lima beans.

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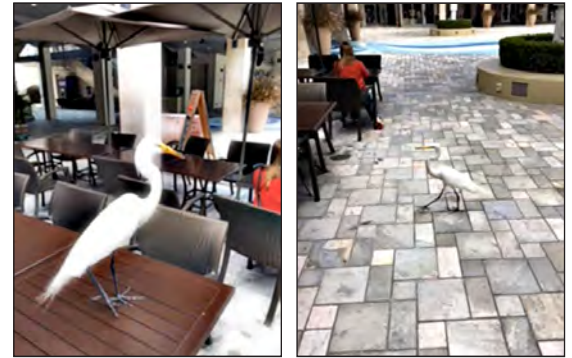
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# ONE Inspires

Jeannie Carlson



## EGRET ON A TABLE

Uninvited

Intrusive

Spread like a stork

About to proclaim

A new arrival

Lying in wait

Foraging for fries

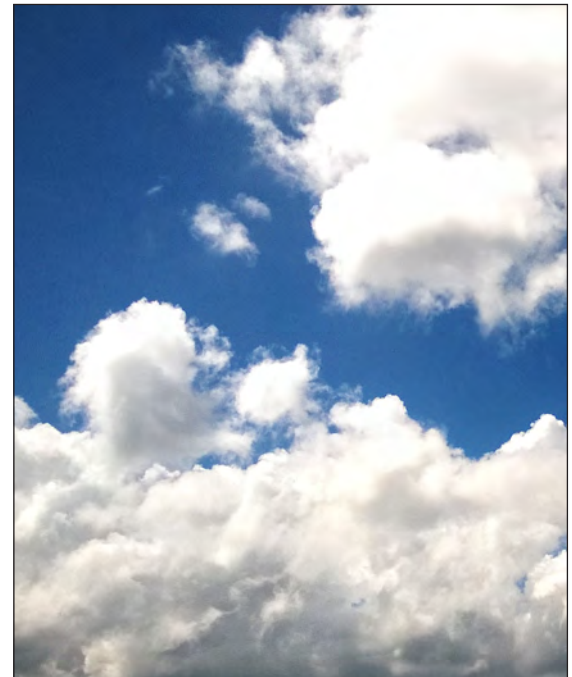
Fishing for a feast

Imposing on picnics

Pestering patrons

Attracting a waiter

To shew him away



## OVERCAST

Obscure clouds try

To block the light, but

Not for long -

Gray on white streaks of squiggles

Brushing past the blue felt -

Shredded dirty Q-tips stick on

Poodle fluff blowing by

Wagging its tail

Tipping its fedora

Feigning deference to the Divine

That always lusters through

Polishing patinas

Making mortals look up

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# THE HEART GALLERY

The Heart Gallery provides an emotionally safe way to connect children with families through a traveling exhibit featuring the faces and stories of local foster children ready for adoption. [www.heartgallerykids.org](http://www.heartgallerykids.org).

## SIYON, AGE 11

Siyon is outgoing and friendly! He says he is easy to get along with and loves to have fun.

Staying active and playing sports is one of his favorite ways to spend an afternoon. Siyon loves football and loves going to football games. Other interests include video games, movies and hanging out with friends.

Like most kids, Siyon enjoys his food, especially pizza and snacks, but then again, there isn't a lot of food that he doesn't like. When asked how he would change the world, he responded, "Everyone should be nicer. Let's start there." Siyon does not know what he wants to be when he grows up yet, but he does need a family who can help him figure that out. Above all else, this young man wants a family who is kind, fun, and will play games with him.



Siyon  
LSF-105927734  
Jonathan R Photo

Photographs courtesy of Jonathan R Photography ID: LSF-105927734

## TERYNCE, AGE 10

Terynce is a happy kid who loves to laugh. In his free time Terynce, likes to play video games and watch Netflix or YouTube. Terynce's favorite video games have anything to do with sports. From football to tennis, he loves them all. His Netflix preference is cartoons about super heroes. He loves Marvel!

When asked what Terynce favorite sport is, he said wrestling, and John Cena is his favorite. Terynce is also a big fan of pizza, but no fish please!

Terynce likes to be active, so any time on the playground is greatly appreciated.



Terynce  
LSF-103140713  
Photography by  
Jonathan R Photography

ID: LSF-103140713  
Photos by  
Jonathan R Photography

[www.heartgallerykids.org](http://www.heartgallerykids.org)

To learn more, attend an adoption orientation. Call Diane Johnson at 727-456-0600 ext. 2085 or email [djohnson@eckerd.org](mailto:djohnson@eckerd.org) for information. Can't adopt, but want to help? Contact Patsy Stills, executive director at [patsy@heartgallerykids.org](mailto:patsy@heartgallerykids.org) or call 727-258-4806. Donate at [www.heartgallerykids.org](http://www.heartgallerykids.org), or Heart Gallery of Pinellas & Pasco; 500 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St. N, Suite 300; St. Pete FL 33705.

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# PEOPLE AND PETS

To submit photos or to be photographed, contact *The Northeast Journal*.

Email your HIGH-RES digital photo to Diana Krause Geegan at [dkghomes@gmail.com](mailto:dkghomes@gmail.com). Please include your name, address, phone number, and pet's name.



Debbie Portela and Dasa Kalinacova with Gino and Glen  
Placido Bayou



Dotty Feinberg with Ziggy  
Beach Drive

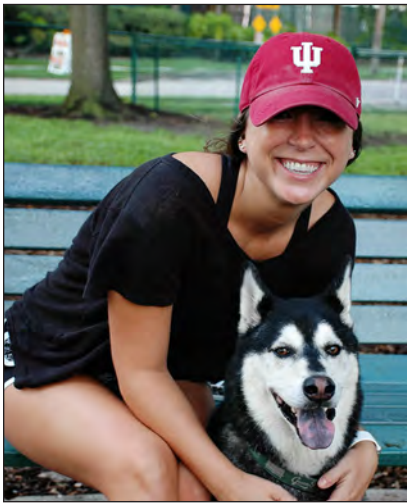


Adam Marland with Rita and Harvey  
1st Street NE

Thank you to Lisa Schneider for helping with the People and Pets page for the summer issue.

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Adrian Gillaspay with Harvey  
14th Street North



Ross Gelfand with Scooter  
1st Ave North



Rebecca Nguyen with Haiku  
5th Street



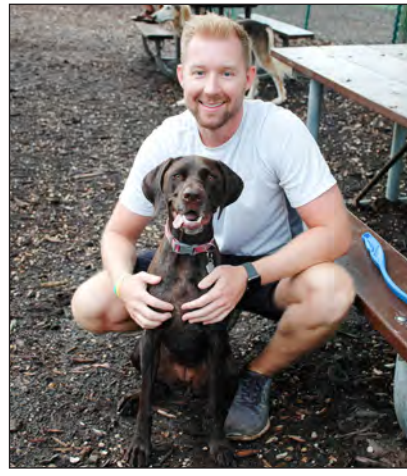
Phil Cook with Tipsy and Beau  
North Shore



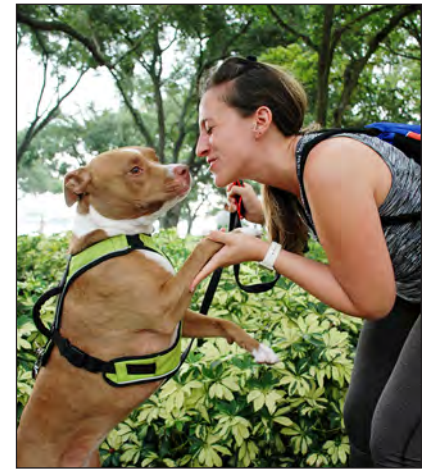
Kirby Armstrong with his 'twin' Digry  
23rd Ave North



Jeremy Kelly & Moura McCallister with Bear  
14th Street North



Cory Krediet with Kali  
14th Street North



Allison Leverone with Lucy  
Yale Street



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