



# NORTHEAST JOURNAL

MAR/APR 2020  
St. Petersburg, FL  
EST. SEPTEMBER 2004

Good People ∞ Good Places ∞ Good Things Happening

## Northeast Little League A St. Pete Tradition

Jon Kile

There's a smell that comes with the cloud of red dust that rises when a runner slides into home plate. It's the smell of childhood in spring. For 62 years, the baseball stadium at 45th Avenue North and First Street has been home to the Northeast Little League.

This year's Opening Day on February 22nd marked the official unveiling of Northeast

*Continued on page 9*



Northeast Little League 2019 AA spring champions

## St. Anthony's Triathlon: International Acclaim, Local Favorite



Runners with the St. Anthony's Triathlon sprint down city streets

Samantha Bond Richman

What triathlon athletes know – and many locals may not – is just how popular the St. Anthony's Triathlon is among professional and novice competitors alike. People from all over the world love to come here for this USA Triathlon-sanctioned race, held the last weekend of April. Now in its 37th year, the St. Anthony's Triathlon is considered one of the largest and longest-running events of its kind in the country.

Accolades listed on the website include: "one of the top-10 Great Destination Triathlons in the US," and one of the "5 Bucket-List Olympic Distance Triathlons in North America." In 2018, more than 3,000 athletes from 41 states and eight countries came to St. Pete to participate.

There are actually three distinct race events for different ages and abilities. There is the Olympic Triathlon (which includes a 1.5K open-water swim in Tampa Bay, a 40K bike, and 10K run in and around downtown St. Pete). The Sprint Triathlon is half the distance of the Olympic Triathlon, and the Meek and Mighty Triathlon is shorter still, and open to athletes as young as seven. Athletes can compete in the swim, bike, and run themselves, or they can be part of a team of people competing.

Venetian Isles resident Donna Miller started as a casual participant in the Meek and Mighty in 2012, and then began increasing her competitive level each year, going from the Sprint distance in 2013, to Olympic distance in 2014. As her interest in races grew, she began training harder and improving

*Continued on page 34*

## Vision 2050 Planning Our City's Future

Will Michaels

StPete2050 is a city-government-initiated visioning process to explore and create a picture of what our city should look like thirty years from now. It is an update of the 2020 visioning process that took place 20 years ago. The 2050 Vision process will result in a new City Comprehensive Plan along with updated portions of the Land Development Regulations (LDRs). After the City Charter, the Comprehensive Plan and related Land Development Regulations are the city's two most important ordinances.

*Continued on page 22*



Today's aerial view of St. Petersburg looking south. What will it look like in 2050?

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

### March Means the Grand Prix

This will be the 16th year for the Firestone Grand Prix, with racecars roaring down city streets at an average speed of 102 mph – just a blur as they buzz by boats in the marina and the Dali Museum, then out onto a runway at Albert Whitted Airport.

This year's action takes place March 13-15, and even if you don't watch from the grandstands, you can certainly hear them from most of our backyards! The *Northeast Journal* had the chance to talk with racecar driver Sebastien Bourdais, who lives in Shore Acres with his family. Sebastien is our local hometown hero, having won the Grand Prix in both 2017 and 2018. This year's he'll be competing on the A.J. Foyt team.



*Sebastien Bourdais celebrates his 2017 Firestone Grand Prix win.*

### What do you like about living here?

Everything about St. Pete appeals to me. It's small enough not to have the big-city syndrome, but booming and vibrant with lots of energy. The food scene is great, and we have the best beaches and water. The proximity to the airport makes it convenient.

### What is it like to race in your 'adopted' hometown?

Sleeping in my own bed during a race weekend is quite a luxury. I get to compete with friends and family around. We also have a big charity event, Kart4Kids, that benefits Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, and that's a feel-good moment!

### What do you love about racing?

It was my passion before it became my job in 2003. I can say now that I have been lucky enough to make a pretty good living out of it, and it still is my passion. But what I enjoy the most is the teamwork and the search for the best-handling car possible. When you manage to get there, it's an unbelievable feeling.

*Janan Talafer*

Editor, *Northeast Journal*





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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.

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.



Scott Brown worked in the US 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 Ellen, his wife 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)



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



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



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



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



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



Sylvia Raymond, a longtime St. Pete resident (now in Crescent Heights), has been a teacher, college administrator, editor, and an administrator at an international organization accrediting business schools. She enjoys biking, volunteering for Crescent Heights Neighborhood Assoc. & others, painting/hiding rocks, and hanging out with family, friends & her two cats.



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



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



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**LITTLE LEAGUE** *Continued from page 1*

Little League’s new mural on the outside of the stadium. When a prior mural project stalled, the league was left with a half-finished painting. A volunteer suggested they reach out to Brian McAllister, an art teacher and muralist at Gibbs High School.

Brian and his students at the Gibbs High School Mural Club have created an impressive portfolio of artwork in Clearwater, St. Petersburg, and the beaches, often competing with international artists for projects. In 2019, they were selected to paint the side of the historic Royal Theater in Midtown St. Pete for the prestigious SHINE Mural Festival.

Unlike buildings with windows that muralists must work around, Brian says the bleachers’ prominent south-facing wall offered him an almost uninterrupted canvas. The club took advantage of the holiday break to complete the mural. He relates the story that just as he and his students were finishing, one of the Northeast Little League coaches was admiring the art and noticed an odd detail. The new mural depicted a true rarity in the sport: a left-handed catcher. Little Leagues nationwide are a big reason that left-handed catchers are extinct, as it has always been standard



Brian McAllister taking a break while painting the NELL mural



A Northeast Little League team in a huddle



2019 Spring AAA Championship Game

practice for each team to receive an equipment bag with a catcher’s mitt for a righthander. Brian explained that the southpaw catcher was actually just the result of the best way to lay out the scene with the angles of the walls.

Board President, Trent Manke said he couldn’t be more pleased. “Driving up First Street and looking at the back of the grandstand and seeing that mural – it is amazing how great it turned out.” He added jokingly, “It also made me take a look at the rest of the structure and realize how much painting I had to do.”

Over the years, thousands of local boys and girls have honed their baseball skills at Northeast Little League. Former Board President and attorney at Tremam Law, Jay Walker has been volunteering with the league for more than a half-dozen years. Jay says that inclusiveness is part of the league’s success. “The entire league is run by volunteers,” says Jay. “It’s a lot of work and every five to ten years there is a different set of faces as kids move up to playing at higher levels. We’ve been a part of the lives of literally thousands of families in the community.”

Northeast Little League offers fall and spring seasons of both baseball and softball, as well as tee-ball for the youngest players. Jay reports that in the spring season, some 450-500 boys and girls are enrolled in the program. There is a cost to participate, but Jay pointed out that their inclusivity is part of the league’s success. “We have a scholarship program, so no one is turned away because of an inability to pay.”

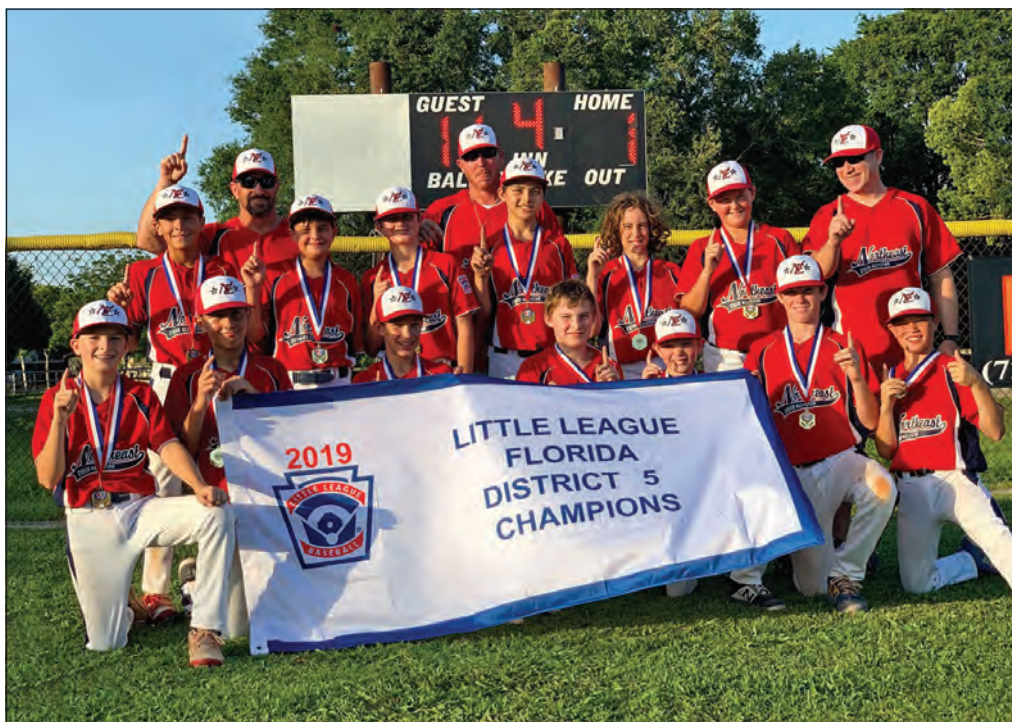
Northeast St. Pete residents know it’s baseball season when

the side streets around the ball fields are crowded with cars and throngs of families gather to watch in the stands. The prime location on 45th Avenue was donated to the league by the Crisp Family in 1958. The league also uses fields on city property on 62nd Avenue North. The 62nd Avenue field has scaled-down contours of Boston’s Fenway Park, complete with a 30-foot-tall left-field fence. Both facilities boast manicured fields, and well-appointed snack facilities run by parents so that players and spectators can get a hotdog or a burger at the game.

This year’s season opened on February 22 with yet another group of local boys and girls stepping up to take turns hitting, catching, and throwing. As teams paraded onto the field for the opening ceremony, a hush came over the crowd as everyone

stood for the Star Spangled Banner. Retired Major Leaguer and current Rays broadcaster Orestes Destrade was on hand, as he often is, to give an inspiring message to the young athletes. His towering stature and big smile embody the spirit of the sport.

Among the other guests honored during the ceremony were Brian and his team of artists. For years to come, players and families will pose for photos in front of their work. From the first days of the Hoola Hoop to the age of the X-Box, a lot has changed for kids at Northeast Little League, but the distance between the mound and home plate remain the same, and hope springs eternal with each new season. ●



2019 District 5 champions, 12 years and younger



# Monica and Jon Kile: Keeping St. Pete Special



in the Florida Studies Program. Mormino was one of their professors.

The two got married and moved from downtown St. Pete to Gulfport, and then to the Old Northeast. In 2015, their lives changed abruptly, when Jon suffered a sudden ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysm that required emergency surgery. This was followed several months later

Janan Talafer

Old Northeast residents Monica and Jon Kile have an amazing story to tell. As the executive director of Preserve the 'Burg, Monica is a powerful force for making sure there's a balance between development and the desire to preserve the landmark buildings and character that make St. Pete a unique and special place to live.



Top and left: Monica, Jon, and family. Above, Monica with Jeff Speck (left, author of Walkable City) and Mayor Rick Kriseman.

Jon is a stay-at-home dad for their two children, James and Anna. He's also a writer, working on his second novel. You might have seen his byline on stories for the *Northeast Journal* and other publications in town. He writes a blog, too, in which he chronicles his life with a rare genetic disorder and the family's road trips in their 1995 VW campervan. But more about Jon later.

As a passionate preservationist, Monica heads up an organization that since 1977 has been dedicated to the city's heritage and its legacy of iconic districts, buildings and homes. "It's the coolness factor that draws people to St. Petersburg and that includes our historic buildings. I see preservation as an economic argument," says Monica. "It's our job at Preserve the 'Burg to point that out."

How Monica came to be a champion for the city's historic legacy is a matter of serendipity. In 2003, she was about to enroll in a graduate program at the University of North Florida in Jacksonville when she ran into Ray Arsenault at her grandmother's 80th birthday party. A well-known civil-rights historian and USF St. Pete professor, Ray is also her second cousin. He asked her to consider enrolling in the new Florida Studies program at USF St. Pete. After a tour through downtown St. Pete, Monica says moving here was an easy decision.

A few years later, she met her future husband Jon at Sunken Gardens during a book signing for Gary Mormino, who had just published, *Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams*. Jon was working in fundraising at USF St. Pete and also taking classes

by an even bigger health crisis: a life-threatening aortic dissection, a tear in the main artery in the body, an almost unheard of diagnosis for a seemingly healthy 42-year-old. Nine-hour open-heart surgery to replace his aortic arch and ascending aorta saved his life.

There were additional aneurysms and more complications. In all, Jon had six major surgeries in seven months. After genetic testing, he learned that he has a rare condition called Vascular Ehlers-Danlos syndrome (vEDS), an inherited connective tissue disorder that causes weakness in the walls of the blood vessels and other organs in the body.

Jon's condition has put many limits on his life – he can't do anything physically strenuous and he had to give up his career as a salesman for a regional oil distributor. He also has regular checkups at the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio, where doctors follow his progress carefully.

But, the couple has learned to live in the moment. In 2018, the family took off on a two-month cross-country trip in their van, traveling from St. Pete to the West Coast and enjoying many adventures along the way. The family continues to enjoy trips that Jon writes about in his blog: [www.dontmaketurnthisvanaround.com/2019/12/31/end-of-the-year-review](http://www.dontmaketurnthisvanaround.com/2019/12/31/end-of-the-year-review).



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At home, the couple is involved at North Shore Elementary School, where their children go to school. Monica helped organize and serve as chair for North Shore's annual Coffee Pot Turkey Trot, a Thanksgiving morning 5K race/walk that generates funds for the school. She's a runner herself. She ran the New York City Marathon as part of the John Ritter Foundation Team for aortic research, as well as the Cleveland Marathon, the California International Marathon, and most recently, the Snickers Marathon in Georgia on March 7th.

Monica first got involved with Preserve the 'Burg back when it had a different name – St. Petersburg Preservation. She started as a tour guide, doing fundraising and writing grants, then joined the board of directors and served as the organization's first part-time director. She left in 2015 to direct the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Eckerd College. Now she's back at Preserve the 'Burg, this time as the organization's full-time executive director, a position she took in September of last year.

Most people know Preserve the 'Burg as the organization that champions saving and restoring the city's historic buildings. In fact, says Monica, Preserve the 'Burg helped create the first local historic district in the city – historic Roser Park, located just south of Bayfront Health St. Petersburg and Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital.

The organization also had a hand in saving the Vinoy Hotel, the Crislip Arcade on the 600 Block of Central Avenue, the Detroit Hotel, and Lang's Bungalow Court.

Monica notes that one of the proudest accomplishments was helping designate the Jennie Hall Swimming Pool as a local historic landmark in 2011. During the Jim Crow era, it was the only public pool in the city where African Americans were allowed to swim. About 10 years ago, it was threatened with demolition and Preserve the 'Burg worked with neighborhood residents to save it. The pool is still operating today.

Preserve the 'Burg also highlights the city's history by offering walking and bicycle tours of downtown and historic neighborhoods, porch parties in unique historic homes, and the annual historic preservation awards. We can't forget the popular movies-in-the-park series or the educational series that recently brought famed urban planner Jeff Speck to discuss his classic book *Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time*.

"Historic preservation is more than saving old buildings just for posterity's sake," says Monica. "It is a valuable economic development tool. In today's economy – one driven by ideas, rather than the manufacturing of a product – place matters tremendously. If you can't differentiate your city from any other place, you will have no competitive advantage. St. Pete has an incredible sense of place. It's different than any other city in Florida. We can't squander that advantage." ♦

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## SPOTLIGHT ON THE ARTS

# Congratulations St. Pete's MUSE Art Award Winners

Jeannie Carlson

Find any flourishing arts-related event or organization in St. Petersburg, and undoubtedly there will be a thread connecting them to the St. Petersburg Arts Alliance. That's the city's nonprofit arts-advocacy organization directed by John Collins, a 17-year resident of the Old Northeast, with his wife, Mary Ellen, who is a freelance writer.

John is humble about his success with St. Petersburg Arts Alliance. "All I've done is to organize volunteers who do good work," he says. Truth is that under his leadership the organization has grown tremendously.

After working as a community-arts endowment consultant for various nonprofits, John took the helm of the newly formed Arts Alliance in 2012. A grant from the City of St. Petersburg helped get it started, and the organization continues to receive ongoing support from City Council.

Last year, the Arts Alliance raised \$500,000. Eighty percent of the funds go toward providing artists and nonprofit arts organizations with critical operating support. Collins attributes the St. Petersburg Arts Alliance's effectiveness to having "partners willing to volunteer, a great board of directors, and a very positive relationship with the St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce."

In addition to organizing events like the SHINE Mural Festival and Second Saturday ArtWalk, the Arts Alliance organizes the annual MUSE Awards. Now in its seventh year, the MUSE Awards showcase local individuals in five categories who "inspire and guide St. Petersburg to its standing as an international arts destination." The award is a highly coveted distinction with recipients receiving a Duncan McClellan-designed art glass "bowl of thanks." Criteria for being selected is primarily based upon how well the individuals "shine a light" on the community. That perspective is derived from the St. Petersburg Arts Alliance's slogan: "Arts Shine Here."

This year's award winners are Lillian Dunlap and Jaye Sheldon, Hal Freedman and Willi Rudowsky, D. Yael Kelley, Duncan McClellan, and Suzanne Pomerantzeff.

Lillian Dunlap and Jaye Sheldon, co-founders of Your Real Stories, were co-winners of the Muse Literary Arts Award, which recognizes excellence in fiction, nonfiction, journalism, playwriting, poetry, or prose. Your Real Stories showcases the 'real' stories of local people through a mix of journalism, storytelling, and theater performance. Lillian and Jaye interview the individuals, then turn their 'story' into a script and hire actors to perform it. Together the two have written more than 70 original scripts. They also host the weeklong Bay Area Festival of Storytelling every October.

Hal Freedman and Willi Rudowsky won the Muse Patron of the Arts Award, which recognizes the contribution of an outstanding couple who volunteer time and treasure in support of the arts. According to John, Hal and Willi are visible at just about every arts function in the city. The couple serves with a number of arts-related organizations, including American Stage, Jobsite Theatre, Creative Clay, and First Night St. Pete. They also own the Academy of Ballet Arts building on First Avenue North and commissioned local artists to paint the murals featured on the side of the building.



Hal Freedman and Willi Rudowsky



D. YaelKelley



Suzanne Pomerantzeff



Lillian Dunlap and Jaye Sheldon

D. Yael Kelley won the Muse Visual Arts Award, given in recognition of excellence in the field of visual arts. Yael's career spans more than 40 years as a professional painter, arts advocate, and certified instructor and demonstration artist for several major arts manufacturers, including Crayola Crayons, Winsor and Newton Watercolors, and Daler Rowney. She was among four artists whose work was just selected to be part of the US Department of State's Art in Embassies Program. Ambassador Ronald D. and Mrs. Johnson will exhibit their work at their venues in San Salvador.

Yael created this year's MUSE Awards poster entitled *Seven, a Thousand Portals* which she says is "an invitation to meditate on the universality of numbers..." She is a founding member of the St. Petersburg Arts Alliance and has served on the St. Petersburg's Arts Advisory Committee and the Mayor's Transition Team for Arts and Culture.

Duncan McClellan, the winner of this year's Muse Arts Ambassador Award, is well-known both locally and in the international world of glass art. He didn't start blowing glass until age 30, but went on to study in New York and Italy before returning to Florida. Ten years ago he purchased a former tomato packing plant south of Central Avenue and transformed it into the fabulous gallery space it is today. McClellan was a pioneer in the renaissance that has turned a run-down industrial part of the city into what is now St. Pete's Warehouse Arts District, home to more than 100 artist studios and galleries.

In addition to showcasing his own work at his gallery, Duncan represents 105 glass artists from around the world. A few years ago, he founded the nonprofit DMG School Project which facilitates arts education in Pinellas County schools.

Suzanne Pomerantzeff, co-founder and artistic director of the St. Petersburg Academy of Ballet Arts, won the Muse Performance Arts Award. Suzanne co-founded the ballet academy in 1969, and has guided its evolution into one of the most respected and established dance studios in Tampa Bay. The school's primary focus is to provide dance instruction to the "underserved urban community of Midtown in St. Pete." Suzanne teaches children as young as three years old up to adults and offers adaptive ballet to children with physical and neurological challenges. Her students have gone on to dance with professional dance companies worldwide. Suzanne was instrumental in establishing a ballet program at St. Petersburg College, and in the development of the dance department at the Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Gibbs High School.

Now that the MUSE Awards are concluded, John says he's already hard at work on the next Arts Alliance project. He hopes to expand the city's opportunities in dance, and he is also advocating for affordable housing for artists. John intimates that the ideal artist's loft allows for both private space to stimulate individual innovation and communal living to facilitate creative discourse. "If I were a developer, I'd be building studios with a shared kitchen," he says. ●



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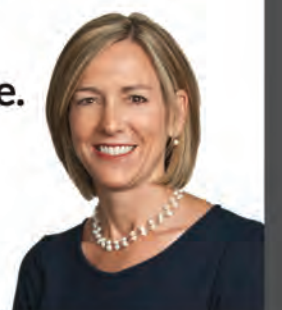
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## AROUND THE BLOCK

### TALENTED STUDENTS PERFORM AT ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL

Matthew Clear, the music director of First Presbyterian Church on Beach Drive, is also Director of Choral Activities at the Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Gibbs High School. In January, Matthew had the privilege of bringing 42 high school music students in the school's elite choir and orchestra to New York City for a once-in-a-lifetime performance at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

"It was the first time the students had gone on a trip of this magnitude to perform," says Matthew. "It was a life-changing experience for many of them – the first time on an airplane, the first time performing in a cathedral like St. Patrick's, and the first time seeing snow. All of them really enjoyed the snowball fight in Central Park."



Matthew Clear directing the PCCA Gibbs student orchestra.

The students also enjoyed many cultural highlights, including a behind-the-scenes tour of the Metropolitan Opera, a performance by the New York Philharmonic, and a visit to St. Patrick's Cathedral the day before their concert. "We knew it might be overwhelming and we wanted the students to take in the enormity of the space so they could be comfortable during the concert and just focus on the music," says Matthew. The next day, about 200 people were in attendance during the actual concert, including many of the students' parents, some of whom surprised them by being in the audience.

"I love what I do," says Matthew, who is now in his third year serving with First Presbyterian Church, as well as teaching at Gibbs where he directs the school's choral ensembles and teaches classes in vocal technique, song writing, and music philosophy. In early January, a week before the students' performance at St. Patrick's Cathedral, they presented an hour-long concert at First Presbyterian to allow the community to hear the same performance the students would give on the 'national' stage. The talent was impressive. "Our students receive great training at PCCA," says Matthew. "Many of our students go on to major in music and we are fortunate to have a very high rate of students receiving a full scholarship to attend college."

In addition to singing at St. Patrick's Cathedral and local churches, the students have also been invited to sing with the One City Chorus, during Veteran's Day ceremony in Williams Park, at the Dali Museum, and even during the Grand Prix when they sang the national anthem. ◆



Students performing at St. Patrick's Cathedral



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Eugene Berman, Curtain design for *Devil's Holiday* (detail), 1939, Watercolor and ink on paper, Collection of the McNay Art Museum, Gift of the Tobin Endowment



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# NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF COMMUNITY ... 1911-2011

## ST. PETE'S JEWEL ON TAMPA BAY

Rick Carson, editor • rickcarson1@gmail.com



We want to share our neighbors' thoughts about what it means to be a neighbor and neighborly in the Historic Old Northeast. Send your thoughts (200 words or so) to rickcarson1@gmail.com.

### A GOOD BOOK IS CLOSER THAN YOU THINK

Another new 'sidewalk library' in the Historic Old Northeast has come into existence and it's sure to catch your eye as you drive down 22nd Avenue NE on the 300 block near Coffee Pot.

Jean Fargo (below left), a retired librarian of 18 years, felt led to take advantage of her very visible home location and use it as an opportunity to share her passion for reading to the many driving by each day. She shopped for the perfect box for her sidewalk

library and found a recycled newspaper dispenser for sale on Etsy. With a little help from her husband, Charlie, they installed the repurposed red box and adorned it with large metal letters spelling out "READ" for all to see.

With two children and three grandchildren, it was important to Jean to have a good mix for both adults and children. Jean, who works for the Tampa Bay Rays, says that you may even find an occasional Rays giveaway' in the box. Thank you, Jean, for sharing your passion, and we are so glad you and Charlie decided to relocate four years

ago from Raleigh, NC (after having lived in Sarasota), joining us in our special little part of paradise here in St. Pete. And thanks to those other neighbors whose sidewalk libraries dot front yards all over the ONE for our enjoyment.

So if you see Jean walking her dogs in the neighborhood or while visiting her sidewalk library, please be sure to thank her for her generous contribution to the neighborhood. ●

~ Sharon Kantner

Some "sidewalk libraries" are part of the Little Free Library movement; go to [www.littlefreelibrary.org](http://www.littlefreelibrary.org) for more information.



Above: 726 18th Ave NE, 116 14th Ave N; Below: 125 13th Ave N, 506 17th Ave NE and 155 14th Ave NE



### YARD SALE

The procrastination is over! Get all those expendable treasures (and accumulated 'disposables') ready for the annual HONNA Neighborhood-wide Yard Sale, which is set for Saturday, March 21. It will be publi-

cized on social media as going from 8am to 1pm. To let us know you'd like to be listed on the locator map that will be publicized and made available on the HONNA website, you will need to register at [www.honna.org](http://www.honna.org) and click on 'yard sale' by Tuesday, March 17. The map will be online and hard copies available at 11th Avenue and 1st Street NE that Saturday morning. For those 'leftover' items that go unsold, you can donate them to Goodwill, which will have a truck available to receive them. Also, secure document shredding by the Louise

Graham Regeneration Center (which has programs to help people with developmental disabilities) will be available as well. This service is available free to HONNA members and for a fee of \$10 for non-members. Watch social media and check the HONNA website for the location of the Goodwill truck and the shredder. If you would like to receive emails about the yard sale and other events and announcements from HONNA, make sure you're signed up at [www.honna.org](http://www.honna.org) where you can complete the membership or volunteer form. ●

### MARCH QUARTERLY MEETING

The upcoming neighborhood meeting is set for Monday, March 16, at Westminster Church (1st Street and 11th Avenue NE). The social period begins at 6:45pm and the meeting will get underway about 7pm. The tentative discussion for the evening is cycling and bike safety. Check social media, the HONNA website ([www.honna.org](http://www.honna.org)) and HONNA e-blasts for updates. ●





**EASTER EGG HUNT**

The annual HONNA Easter Egg Hunt is set for Saturday, April 11 beginning at 10am at Coffee Pot Park (30th Avenue at 1st Street NE). Kids (with parents in tow!) will scamper across the grounds searching for the hundreds of treat-filled plastic eggs and the few elusive ones that mean a special prize for the lucky finders. There will be a separate area just for the toddlers. And the morning wouldn't be complete without a visit from the Easter Bunny, who loves to ham it up for photos with all his admirers. ●

**TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME!**

Old Northeast residents (plus those in Crescent Heights and Euclid/St. Paul) are invited to attend the Rays baseball game on Tuesday, April 28, at 7:10pm against the Cleveland Indians. The lower level seats are \$29/per person, which includes a free Rays cap! All neighborhoods will be seated together in the same section. To purchase tickets with a check or credit card, please email [honnatreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:honnatreasurer@gmail.com) with your name and contact information. ●



**CHURCH PROPERTY**

Regarding the sale of the Westminster Presbyterian Church property, City Council member Darden Rice introduced a resolution to the Council at its December 5 meeting that allows the City to further pursue an application for historical designation for the property. The resolution passed unanimously. The Community Planning and Preservation Commission voted unanimously at its February meeting to recommend to City Council that the church property be landmarked. This would allow adaptive reuse of a property that has been a centerpiece of our community for almost 100 years. In addition, tax incentives are available for landmarked properties. HONNA is supporting the City-initiated design-

**SIDEWALK RAMPS**

Recently, the City began aggressively addressing sidewalk ramps making them ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)-compatible. As you may recall, this is a project that HONNA started a little over a year ago by identifying and marking all street corners that do not meet the ADA standards. As a result, we have seen activity on 22nd Avenue N, which was the last sidewalk section between the Interstate and the water that was not compatible. Additionally, we are seeing activity at Oak Street NE and 17th and 21st Avenues and, per the City, more is to come and in the works. When you see the teams out in the street, please stop by and say thank you for what they are doing – they really appreciate the fact that we are recognizing the progress. Kermit (the manager of one of the teams doing the work), and the rest of his team are ready to let you know what they are doing next as they take great pride in their work.

As a reminder, if you see a sidewalk, light, or sign issue, please use the SeeClickFix app to let the City know. They actually love the fact that we are highlighting the issues, which saves St. Pete money because they don't have to drive around looking for the problems. But when you use the app, please take a photo if possible so it is easier for the teams to identify the issue when they go to check it out.

~ Doug O'Dowd

**HONNA'S NEW WEBSITE**

HONNA has an improved website! Check out [www.honna.org](http://www.honna.org) for its more modern look and streamlined search capabilities. We have partnered with EventBrite for all events to make the RSVP process more user-friendly, and will be adding a new and improved store for HONNA merchandise. Check the website often for all the latest events and neighborhood information. ●



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/honnaorg](http://www.facebook.com/honnaorg).

**WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED:**

- 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 Anna Broshears at [abroshe56@gmail.com](mailto:abroshe56@gmail.com).
- Follow Historic Old Northeast Forever at [www.historicoldnortheastforever.org](http://www.historicoldnortheastforever.org). HONF works "to preserve and protect our special neighborhood" (HONF is not affiliated with HONNA). ●

ation; the Presbytery stated at the meeting that it neither opposes nor supports the designation. The application will have its final reading and vote by Council on March 12; public comment is welcomed. ●

**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 February: 175 28th Avenue N, Maurice Acuna and Kedja Nottingham; and March: 325 18th Avenue NE, Andrea and Vito DiRuggiero.

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 in the Old Northeast. Have a home to honor? Send the information to Charleen McGrath at [treasurer@honna.org](mailto:treasurer@honna.org). ●



FEBRUARY: 175 28th Avenue N "Before" and "After"



MARCH: 325 18th Avenue NE "Before" and "After"

**On the Calendar**

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

- Monday, March 16:** Quarterly neighborhood meeting, 7pm ; (6:45pm social)
- Friday, March 20:** Porch Party, 7:30-10pm
- Saturday, March 21:** Neighborhood-wide Yard Sale
- Saturday, April 11:** Easter Egg Hunt, 10am
- Friday, April 17:** Porch Party, 7:30-10pm
- Tuesday, April 28:** Rays Night Out at the Trop, 7pm



# HONNA's 2019 Activities and Accomplishments



With thanks to the hundreds of members of The Historic Old Northeast Neighborhood Association and all our residents who volunteer for, support and enjoy HONNA's offerings and efforts.

### MEETINGS AND SOCIALS

- Held twelve board meetings and four quarterly neighborhood meetings at which residents heard from and about: our brick streets and a survey of sidewalks and curbs; HONNA's Preservation Initiative and mini-Historic Districts; overview of HONNA committees and assistance available to homeowners; Old NE tree canopy and issues concerning tree regulations
- Arranged eight monthly Friday-evening Porch Parties, including the always popular Halloween Porch Party
- Hosted annual December holiday party for neighborhood residents at the Old Northeast Tavern and collected Christmas gifts for the Christmas Toy Shop charity

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- Continued to pursue acorn lighting project from 5th to 7th Avenues
- Submitted five homes and one commercial building for Preserve the 'Burg's biennial Preservation awards (four homes received awards along with one commercial property)
- Continued STAR recognition program to spotlight homeowners who preserve or update their house exteriors and yards with 12 homes receiving designation, including three nominated by neighbors
- Robin Reed, Chair of HONNA's Historic Preservation Committee, was named Preservationist of the year by Preserve the 'Burg
- Solicited design, submitted Certificate of Appropriateness and received approval for historic district signs for our three new historic districts
- Reviewed proposed projects for redevelopment that were forwarded by the City to HONNA for analysis of compatibility with the neighborhood (e.g., setbacks, design elements, and conforming characteristics)
- Assisted the City zoning department in its review of the Land Development Regulations (LDRs) by attending public meetings and offering input, joining with other neighborhoods to influence a better outcome
- Continued distribution, promotion, and sale of award-winning HONNA publication, *Souvenir of St. Petersburg: Views from the Vinoy*
- Sold "Preserve Old Northeast" banners for residents to display from their homes

### SPECIAL EVENTS

- Held annual Easter Egg Hunt in Coffee Pot Park attended by more than 80 children (and even more parents, grandparents, and friends!)
- Coordinated annual spring neighborhood-wide yard sale on Saturday, March 23, involving more than 50 participants; arranged for Goodwill truck to be available to receive items residents did not sell and provided secure document shredding service
- Organized the annual Children's 4th of July Parade along Coffee Pot Boulevard led by a fire truck and the Righteously Outrageous Twirling Corps



- Held the Second Annual Old Northeast Field Day on Sunday, October 6, in Elva Rouse Park, with 20 teams composed of 80 neighbors competing in a variety of games and tests
- Offered Trunk or Treat on Sunday, October 27, in the Westminster Church parking lot where neighborhood costumed kids gathered for games and candy
- Organized successful 21st annual Candlelight Tour of Homes in December (thanks to homeowners and hundreds of volunteers), selling more than 1,000 tickets and raising operational funds for HONNA while providing a contribution to the Christmas Toy Shop Project.

### NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

- Maintained the median landscaping (with plantings and mulch) of the entryway monuments into the neighborhood
- Provided monthly lawn service/maintenance for closed Westminster Presbyterian Church property
- Conducted neighborhood tree canopy project; planted 13 new trees in parkways
- Have reported and have fixed through SeeClickFix over 25 signs throughout the neighborhood that were in disrepair
- Finished documenting all street corners that are not Americans with Disabilities Act compliant and have at least 10 corners worked by the City and put into compliance; had a City rep attend a HONNA meeting to describe the plan the City has for making St. Pete and the Old Northeast ADA compliant
- Formed a small group to assist in identifying and documenting any infrastructure issues

### TRAFFIC AND PARKING

- Worked to refine rules for traffic and parking to respond to the concerns of residents and small business owners including regarding Residential Permit Parking

### CRIME AND SAFETY

- Received crime updates at quarterly HONNA neighborhood meetings from Neighborhood Police Officers, who took questions from residents and responded to expressed concerns
- Monitored crime reports from the Police Department for number of crimes reported within the neighborhood boundaries
- Supported 17th Avenue NE and nearby neighbors by sharing with them cost of police cruisers and patrols for security and safety on Halloween night

### COMMUNICATIONS

- Provided a HONNA page in the *Northeast Journal* in its six issues during the year
- Redesigned the HONNA website and streamlined search capabilities
- Maintained a presence on Facebook and monitored postings on NextDoor Old Northeast for matters relating to neighborhood concerns



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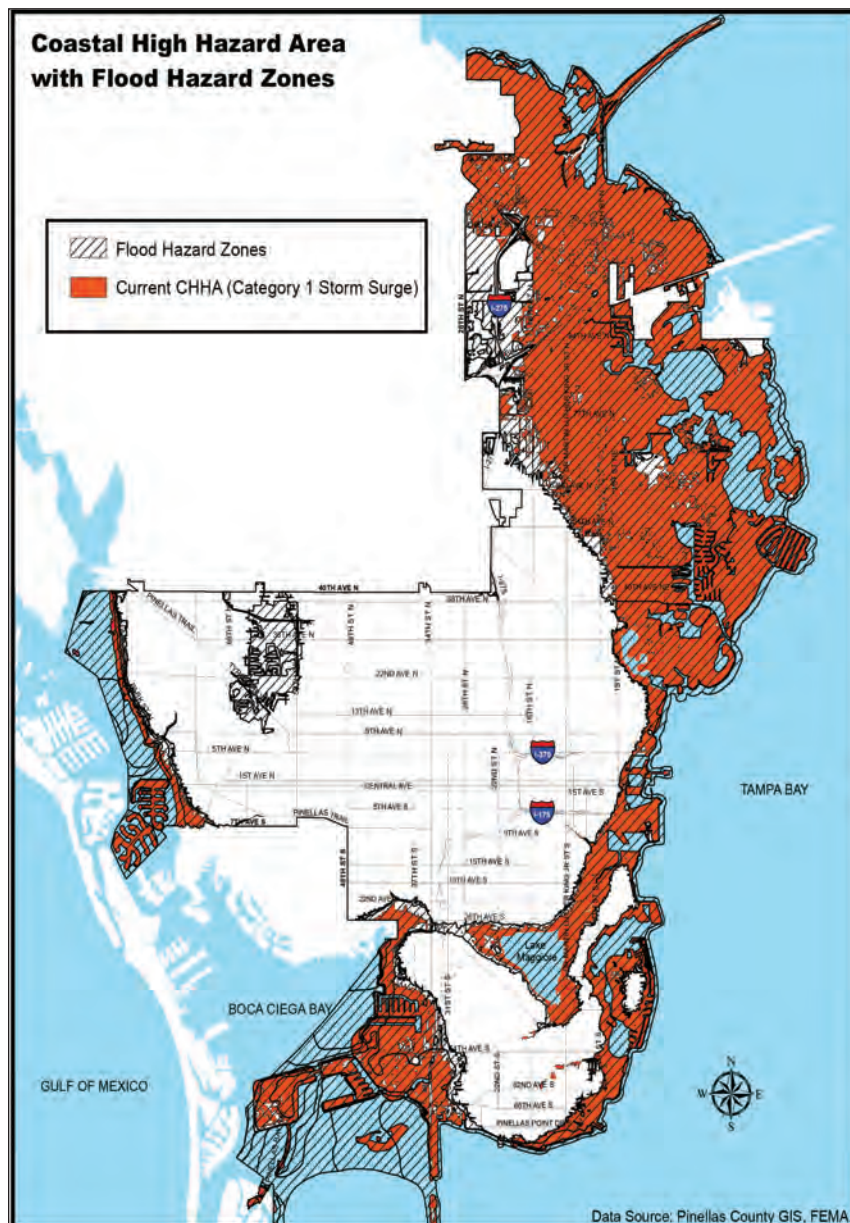
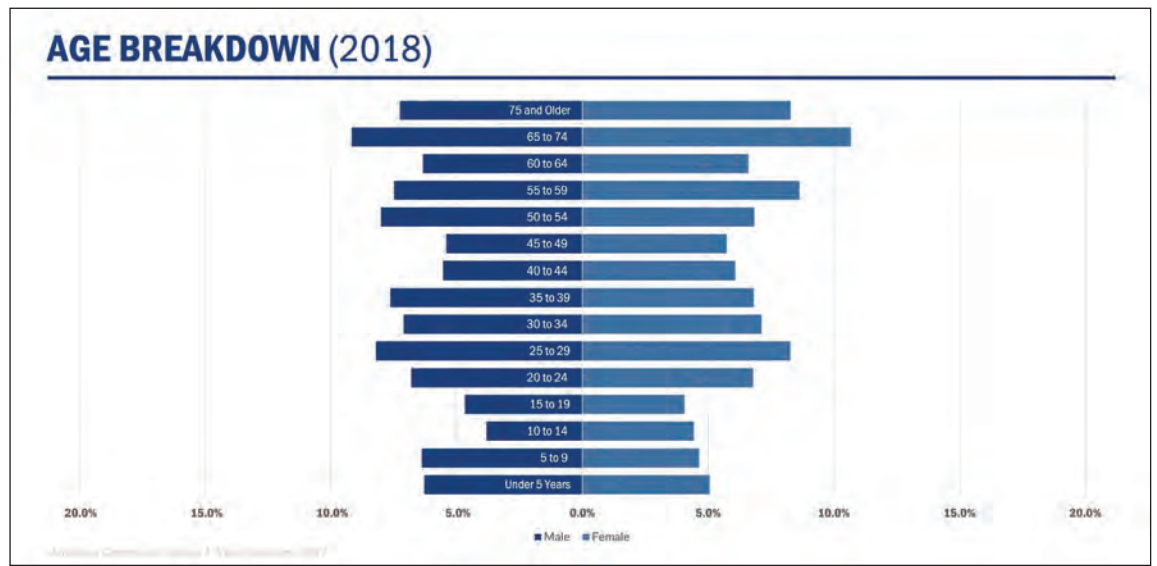
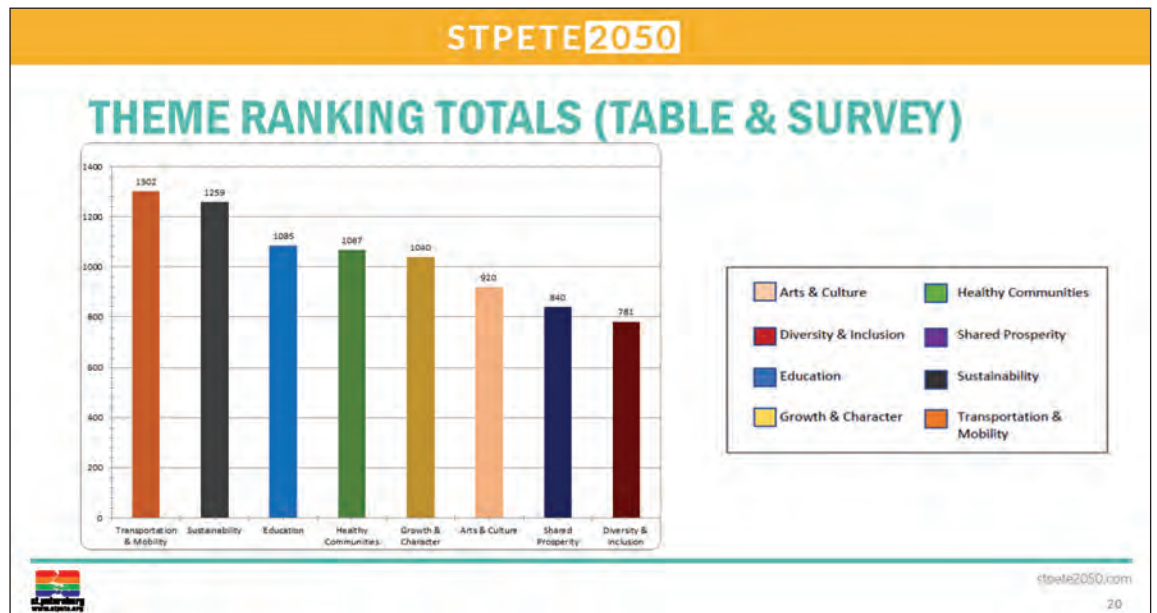
Based on an aggregated number of adults who needed to be admitted to hospitals due to cardiovascular problems as reported by the state of Florida that lived in the four county area of Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas and Polk from April 1, 2018, through March 31, 2019.



**VISION 2050** *Continued from page 1*

The Comprehensive Plan establishes policies related to growth management and preservation of the city’s character. Specific sections of the plan address future land use, conservation, coastal management, transportation, housing, recreation and open space, infrastructure, historic preservation, and public school facilities. The Land Development Regulations address zoning, building mass and height, and other development features. Changes to designated land uses, building variances, and other city initiatives or permitted private construction must comply with these documents. While the new visioning process is aimed at assuring quality of life for our city in the year 2050, a new Comprehensive Plan and updated LDRs will be put into effect in the near future.

The 2050 Visioning process is already well underway. The project began last August and has three phases. The first phase, “Project Initiation,” addressed the question of “Where Have We Been?” as a community. This included several community workshops where accomplishments of the 2020 Vision Plan were reviewed, and ‘mapping exercises’ were undertaken by approximately 300 people identifying existing conditions and challenges. The workshops were complemented by 30 outreach events involving 1,700 people and an online citizen’s survey. The online survey was live over a period of 75 days and had approximately 2,600 responses. The second phase is now underway and asks participants “Where Are We Going?” Workshops have already been held in which surveys were completed identifying community priorities and soliciting solutions to areas of concern. A third phase will get underway in April, addressing the question “How Do We Get



There?” in which a plan will be formulated for addressing identified priorities.

Eleven current city ‘Strengths & Opportunities’ were identified in Phase 1. The top three strengths identified were Arts & Culture, Parks & Recreation, and Local Businesses. The top three opportunities or priorities for improvement included Housing Affordability, Transportation Options, and Job Opportunities.

City Administration postulated eight possible priority themes for Vision 2050. These included Growth & Character, Shared Prosperity, Arts & Culture, Diversity & Inclusion, Education, Healthy Communities, Sustainability, and Transportation & Mobility. The themes were assumed to be self-explanatory and offered without definition. Participants were also invited to suggest their own different themes.

In the Phase 1 workshops, seven theme areas were prioritized. In order of priority they included Transportation & Mobility; Growth & Character; Shared Prosperity; Healthy Communities; Sustainability; Diversity & Inclusion; and Education. The online survey generated a different order of priorities: Sustainability; Transportation & Mobility; Education; Healthy Communities; Growth & Character; Arts & Culture; Shared Prosperity; and Diversity & Inclusion. Combining the workshops and surveys (without giving weight to the number of participants respectively) results in order of magnitude were: Transportation and Mobility; Sustainability; Education; Healthy Communities; Growth and Character; Arts and Culture; Shared Prosperity; and Diversity and Inclusion.

City Administration offered background information pertinent to some of the theme areas. Some notable changes since the 2020 Vision Plan was adopted in 2007 include:

- Median Age has decreased from 48.1 to 41.2.
- Persons renting in the city have increased from 36.4% to 40.3% while the percent of homeowners has declined from 63.6% to 59.7%.
- The Coastal High Hazard Area (area potentially affected by flooding resulting from a Category 1 hurricane) has increased approximately 8,000 acres to 16,000 acres, or about 41% of the city’s land mass.
- Sea Level Rise is now an issue whereas it was not in 2000. Projections used by the City anticipate an increase of 1.35 to 4.56 feet by 2070, with an intermediate projection of 2.33 feet.

With respect to the area of Growth and Character, City Administration noted that in the last five years (2014-2019) our population has increased by an average of 1.3% annually to its current level of approximately 270,000. Between 2014 and 2018, the median household income has increased by a phenomenal 26.1%, exceeded



only by Miami in the state. African American household income has increased by 72%, the highest in the state. Between 2015 and 2019 nearly 7,000 new jobs were added to the city's economy (a 6% increase). The unemployment rate is now 3.1%. The poverty rate is 12.3%. The number of downtown dwelling units has increased from 5,429 in 2015 to 10,886 in 2019 (including under-construction and permitted).

The city's top job sectors include Accommodations and Food Service (14%), Government (13%), Professional, Scientific, and Technical (12%), Administrative Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services (11%), Manufacturing (10%), and Construction (9%).

Based on the assumption that the population will continue to increase at its recent range of 0.555 to 1.5% per year, City Administration projected that by 2050, there will be an additional need for between 2.3 and 4 million square feet of office space; 31,000 and 47,000 residential dwelling units; 1.1 and 1.9 million square feet of retail space; and 3,300 and 5,600 hotel rooms. A particular challenge for Vision 2050 will be to achieve job growth while managing new development.

In the surveys, participants were asked to visualize what St. Pete could be like in 2050. Excerpts from just a few of the hundreds of responses include:

- Eclectic, renowned, seaside community embracing diversity and sustainability to improve environmental resilience and grow a local industry and talent base in addition to big tourism draw.
- I'd like to say less traffic and a light rail.
- Ideally, there will be affordable housing options across all economic classes. Also, future invest-

*Continued on page 24*

## Vision 2050 Here's What They Say...

*"I think the city is well positioned for the year 2050. In particular I think our downtown waterfront parks remain a singular feature which should not be changed. We are one of the leading cities of our size in the world with such a waterfront amenity."*

~David Fischer, Former St. Petersburg Mayor

*"I think Vision 2050 is in keeping with the great planning exercises that have been done throughout St. Petersburg's history. When we did Vision 2020 St. Petersburg was just starting to wake up from decades of limited growth. Now that we have truly become a destination City we have many new people and a younger demographic. Vision 2050 is an opportunity to learn about the unique features of the City and to allow our younger demographic to engage in the future. I think the most important issue to address in Vision 2050 is how to manage growth and protect the character of the city."*

~Bob Jeffrey, Former Assistant Director of Development Services, City of St. Petersburg

*"Twenty years ago when hundreds of people gathered for the 2020 planning, the largest issues were allowing traditional neighborhoods to rebuild without requiring a series of variances and bringing mixed use redevelopment to downtown. Today as we begin 2050, with the added help of the internet, the biggest issues revolve around creating zoning the provides a broad mixture of housing, makes transit use more practical and recognizes the rising sea levels will increase flood risks in significant parts of our town."*

~ Karl Nurse, Former City Council Member

*"Our rapid growth in the urban area of our community has given birth to multi-story structures which are altering its grand character without regard to the long term consequences of creating great canyons of brick and mortar which block our glorious sunshine. My vision for 2050 is that we quickly and presently put in place a growth management policy which would halt further erosion of our urban character."*

~Bob Ulrich, Former St. Petersburg Mayor

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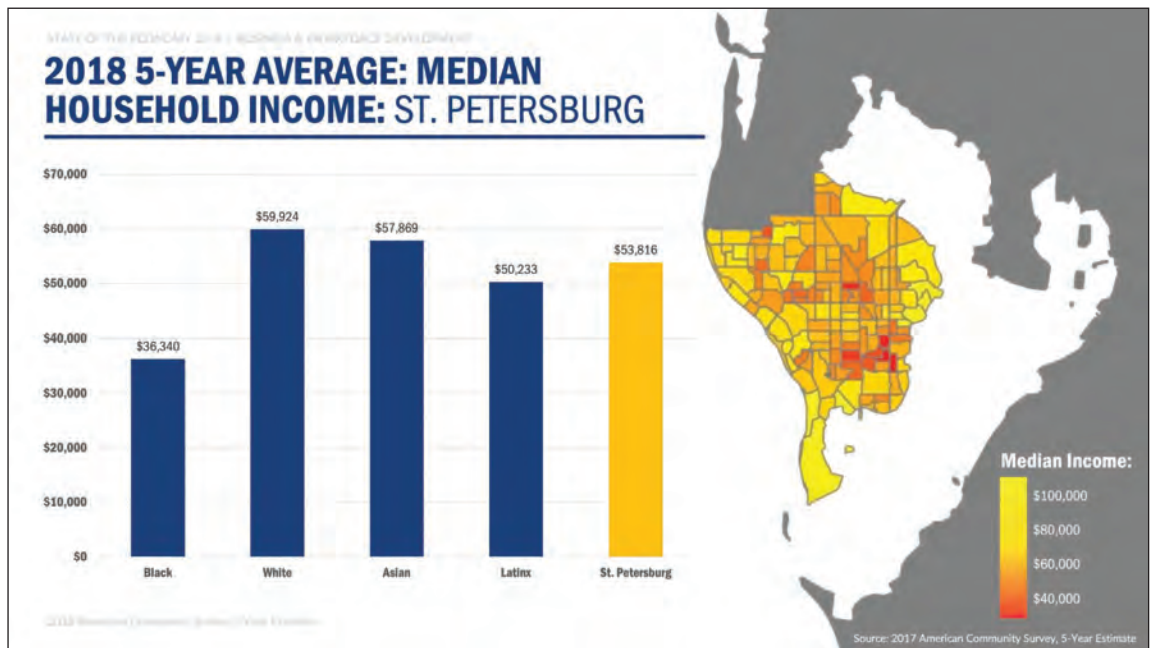
VISION 2050 Continued from page 23

ments will occur throughout the city, not just in a few focused areas.

- I am seeing rampant development and loss of neighborhood character, loss of history, and loss of uniqueness. This is not what I want, but it may be too late to do anything about it. The developers have taken over.
- Building an electrical grid that is solar+offshore wind+energy storage will be integral in St. Pete's ability to not only survive in the turning tide of how we consume energy, but necessary to attract people to the city.
- Hopefully it maintains its quirky personality. I think we're getting out over our skis so to speak.
- Properly designed, St. Pete will become a series of town centers driven by effective urban planning that capitalizes on close-knit neighborhoods and effective public transportation.
- Less segregated than right now.
- Jobs. Culture is nice, but it won't be an economic driver the way jobs will.
- The focus appears to be on newer developments vs. education. The school my home is zoned for is an F-grade school, a school with little diversity, and other areas of concern... I literally have friends who love St. Pete, but have either chosen to move away or refuse to move here due to the school system.
- Not really a visionary, but I love the way St. Pete is now. Things will change, but I hope it can maintain the homey and welcoming feel it has now.

The 2050 Vision Process is fundamentally important in shaping our city's future. This project will result in the revision of key city ordinances that will govern future development and quality of life. All residents are urged to contribute concerns and ideas. You can register for information regarding how to participate in the third and final phase of the process, which will begin in April, at StPete2050.com. ●

Will Michaels is a member of the City's Planning and Preservation Commission which determines compliance of planning and development initiatives with the City's Comprehensive Plan and approves the designation of historic landmarks and districts. He may be reached at 727-420-9195 or wmichaels2222@gmail.com.



St. Pete 2050 Community Workshop image courtesy of the CityofStPete Flickr website

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GOODNESS InDEED

# Safe Paws Rescue: Our Neighborhood Pet Safety Net

Sylvia Raymond

As you walk around your neighborhood, you may see dogs wearing bright yellow “Adopt Me” harnesses. Most of these dogs are probably rescue dogs and looking for their next forever home, while being fostered by caring families. There are many pet-rescue organizations, but one of them is located right here in Crescent Heights – Safe Paws Rescue.

Crescent Heights resident Art Shaul founded Safe Paws Rescue in 2018. The organization rescues, rehabilitates, and re-homes dogs, regardless of breed, size, age, or health conditions. I can attest to this myself, because we fostered two senior dogs, Harry (short for Harriet), and before Harry, there was Lola. Both these pups had health issues, and Safe Paws provided everything they needed to get healthy and comfortable. Harry remains in our care, but we have hopes she will find her forever home by the time of publication.

The credo of Safe Paws Rescue is “if they need us, and we have a place for them, we take them on.” Dogs come to them as strays, abandoned, owners surrenders, and sometimes from the shelter. Most need immediate veterinary care. The organization also helps dogs stay in their homes. If the heart is in the right place, but the family has financial challenges, Safe Paws provides food, supplies, veterinary support, and training if needed.

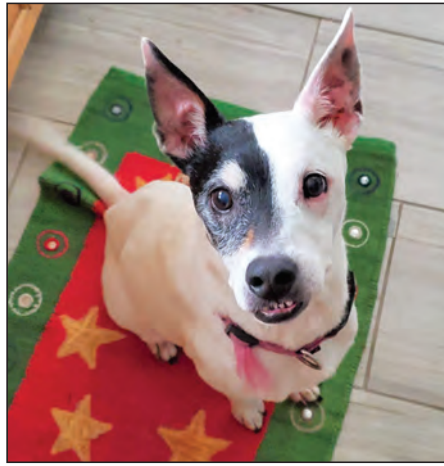
There are many success stories about dogs that found forever homes due to the help of the volunteers and support of Safe Paws Rescue. Here are just a few.

Layla and Tiger – two pit bulls, a mom and her son, seven and four years old respectively – were in a shelter, then two boarding places. Safe Paws finally found them an amazing forever home.

Cody is a large nine-year-old lab mix who was living in a yard for seven years and being ignored by the family. He had multiple medical problems and needed laser surgery in both ears. He was provided medical care by Safe Paws but is deaf. A wonderful lady in Seminole now dearly loves him.

Marcus was 20 minutes away from being killed at a shelter. He came to Safe Paws with multiple wounds (some dog bites, some pellet wounds) and a torn ear. It was not a big surprise when discovered that he was used for fighting. He is very sweet, and it took months to get him healthy. Now in a foster home, and after hundreds of dollars spent on training, he can be walked past other dogs without having a bad reaction.

Bowie (now Toby), was a severely malnourished stray found by a Safe Paws volunteer who was camping in North Florida, and was taken home to St. Pete. Safe Paws paid for Toby’s heartworm treatment and he’s now living in a loving home.



Harry – short for Harriette



Laura and Lola

Lola, as I mentioned earlier, is another success story. She was our first foster dog and came to us through Safe Paws Rescue. We were a bit nervous to foster a dog, since we have two cats. It was a challenging-but-wonderful journey. Lola had severe skin issues and was very uncomfortable. Safe Paws provided all the support we needed, including vet visits, medicines, food, toys, and other accessories. Fortunately, within a few weeks, we had a visit by Laura, who lives in the Old Northeast. She saw Lola’s photo on the website and “fell in love.” She had lost her beloved dog two years previously and it had taken her some time to be ready to look for a new companion.

During Lola’s visit with us, she said she wanted an older dog, with less chance of being adopted. But she also told us that she loved Lola’s “puggness and the beautiful markings on her face.” So it wasn’t long before Laura decided to give Lola a forever home. I recently spoke to Laura, and she told me that they bonded right away and are now walking three or four miles every day, which Lola loves.

Before starting Safe Paws, Art got his feet wet while volunteering for a few other rescue organizations, large and small. What he discovered was that although these other rescues had good intentions, there were issues, such as difficulty finding and keeping volunteers, or there were practices that impacted the wellbeing of the dogs. So, he decided to start his own rescue organization. As Art says, “Rescue is my passion!”

When Art started the organization, before it even had a name, he had two simple goals: always be raising money and do things the right way. The organization started with five volunteers, but has grown to a robust 25 active volunteers, doing many different tasks. Safe Paws Rescue is now a 501c3 nonprofit and a 100 percent volunteer organization. No one gets a paycheck!

Funding is provided via a few sources: about 50 percent from large yard sales; 30 percent from donations; and 20 percent from adoption fees. A kennel building is too expensive, so, for the most part, dogs are cared for and kept safe in volunteer foster homes. Safe Paws Rescue also works as an adoption partner with two PetSmart stores and is authorized to pick up damaged pet supplies from a local Walmart store.

Last year, Safe Paws Rescue saved 60 dogs. Their goal for 2020 is to save 70 dogs, gain eight new active volunteers, and add six new foster homes. Long term, the organization would like to have a shelter capable of safely and comfortably housing 15 to 20 dogs at any one time. For more information or to volunteer, visit [www.safepawsrescue.com](http://www.safepawsrescue.com). ●

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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.



Charles and Jennifer Brackney with Noah and Hazelle, 16th Avenue NE



Kat Wysocki (Arlington Ave N), VP of the Florida Skunk Rescue, with Delilah, seen at Ferg's or Bula Kafe or anywhere downtown. [floridaskunkrescue.com](http://floridaskunkrescue.com), plus FB & Instagram.



This gorgeous guy was found in a box on a lawn, hence his name: Jack in the Box.  
He's the 'assistant art director' for the Northeast Journal, in charge of laying on paper, wrinkling paper, and occasionally knocking paper off desks.  
He also excels at looking adorable, and stealing kisses during deadline.  
Do you have a pet with a paper? NEJ please.  
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## SIYON, AGE 12

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

For fun, Siyon enjoys video games, movies, and hanging out with friends. Siyon also loves to be active. Playing a sport is one of his favorite ways to spend an afternoon. He loves football and loves going to football games!

When asked how he would change the world, he responded: "Everyone should be nicer. Let's start there."

Another thing Siyon enjoys is food. He likes pizza and snacks. There is not a lot of food he doesn't like.

Siyon does not know what or who he wants to be when he grows up yet, but he does need a family who can help him figure that out. His ideal family will have two moms who are kind, fun, and will play games with him.

LSF-105927734 • Photos courtesy of Liara Studios



## RYAN, AGE 15

Now a freshman in high school, Ryan gets himself ready for school and completes his chores daily, and he is known as a nice person who gets along with others.

Always humming or listening to music, Ryan is accepting and affectionate. He enjoys water balloons, puzzles, and playing Candy Crush and Sonic on his iPad. He likes baseball and shooting hoops.

He would love to eat pizza, chicken nuggets, and lasagna every day if he could. He likes reptiles and household pets like cats and dogs, but if there is a bird in the house, he might just leave the cage open.

Ryan does best with consistency, close supervision, and guidance. He needs a family that can help him continue to thrive.

DFL-11959367 • Video and additional photos available on website, courtesy of Sean Woods.



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# An Hour Drive to Florida's Serengeti Myakka River State Park

Scott Brown

Florida is blessed with 175 state parks. One of its most magnificent, Myakka River State Park, is less than an hour drive from St. Pete. Our first visit was just a day trip, but it was well worth it. There are roads and trails for hiking and biking. You can rent canoes and kayaks. There are pontoon boat and tram tours. You can climb the wooden stairs to a walkway where you can look over the treetops or go on the bird walk over the swamp to Upper Myakka Lake. Bring your camera and your fishing pole. There are lots of places for picnicking, or you can eat in the café at The Outpost. The park is dog friendly, but use a leash; Myakka is frequently rated as one of the best places in Florida to encounter alligators in the wild.

Flora and fauna in the park is adapted to the stark shifts between the dry season and the rainy season that mark a subtropical savannah. During the dry season, the grasslands are vulnerable to wildfires from lightning strikes. The terrain in the park ranges from swampland to marsh to grassy prairie reminiscent of Africa's Serengeti.

The Myakka River basin is home to many unusual plant species. My favorite is the resurrection fern. Most plants will die if they lose more than 10 percent of their water content. In severe droughts, the resurrection fern can lose up to 97 percent of its moisture and still spring back to life after the rains return. Resurrection ferns need a host tree to grow on. If you visit in the dry season you will find many low tree branches covered with the delicate dried out tiny fronds of the resurrection fern.



In 1975, the State of Florida designated the Myakka as part of The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The purpose of the Act is to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

Although the park makes a good day trip, it makes an even better multi-day trip if you plan ahead (way ahead) for at least a two-day visit. The park has

five palm-tree log cabins that were built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. These traditional log cabins have one big rectangular room with a high ceiling and a big stone fireplace. Outside your cabin, there is a fire ring and a place to barbecue. You can buy bundles of firewood at the Outpost. No wood gathering is allowed in the park. The cabins are not dog friendly.

More recently, the five cabins got an upgrade that includes a full bath, kitchen, and a small eating area. Today, the cabins even have heat and air conditioning. There is no television, internet, or cell phone service, so bring your playing cards and board games. That's just the right level of 'roughing it' for me. The beds are quite comfortable and the stone fireplace on a cool night is really nice. We were at the park during January's cold snap when temperatures dropped into the upper thirties, so we were glad that we brought extra blankets. One cabin is wheelchair accessible. The cabins rent for \$70 a night. The catch is that they are booked at least six months in advance. So you really do need to plan ahead.

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The park closes at sunset and doesn't open until 8am. The only people in the park after hours are campers or people fortunate enough to have secured a cabin. Much of the wildlife in the sprawling 30,000-acre park is nocturnal. Exploring the park after closing time is a little like the movie *Night at the Museum*. Everything comes to life.

In the sunset gloaming on the grasslands by Upper Myakka Lake, we saw a herd of whitetail deer eating grass and a passel of wild hogs rooting in the ground. On the lake, we saw flocks of sand hill cranes and white pelicans. On the way back from the lake, we encountered a flock of wild turkeys in the brush. Shortly after dawn the next day, on a tip from a birder, we went to the old dam and fishing weir at the south end of Upper Myakka Lake, where we saw a big flock of roseate spoonbills and a wide variety of storks, herons, stilts, ducks, and other shore birds.

Another benefit to being in the park overnight is that we were able to sign up for the Deep Hole hike. Deep Hole is in a special conservation zone in the park where only 30 park visitors a day are allowed. Hikers stand by the door to the ranger station before 8am so that they can get in line the moment the door opens. If you are one of the lucky thirty, you get the code for the gate lock, a pass that you carry with you, and another pass to put on your dashboard. Your passes are good all day. The rangers insist you return



the passes after your hike so that they know you have safely returned and they don't have to send someone out to find you before sunset.

We started our hike around 11:30 am. It's about two-and-a-half miles to Deep Hole, but the trail is flat and clear. We got mildly lost only once – actually pretty good for us! Deep Hole is a sinkhole that connects to Lower Myakka

Lake. It is the deepest water hole in the park. No matter how severe the drought, Deep Hole always has water. The alligators seem to know this and congregate here in very large numbers. The rangers told us not to get closer than 10 feet from them. No one that I saw came even remotely that close. By the time we reached Deep Hole, the day had warmed up and there were at least a hundred mature alligators sunning along the shore.

During our first year in St. Pete we have discovered many of the wonderful features that the city offers. As we expand our scope to the surrounding area, we are finding even more to love about our new home. If you haven't been to Myakka River State Park you are in for a treat. Whether you just go for the day or you go for an overnight, I am sure you will like it. ♦



Left page: Roseate Spoonbills, Black-Crowned Night Heron. Right page: Gators at the Deep Hole, Red- and Black-Headed Vultures

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# Dr. Anna Loyd: Humanitarian, World Traveler

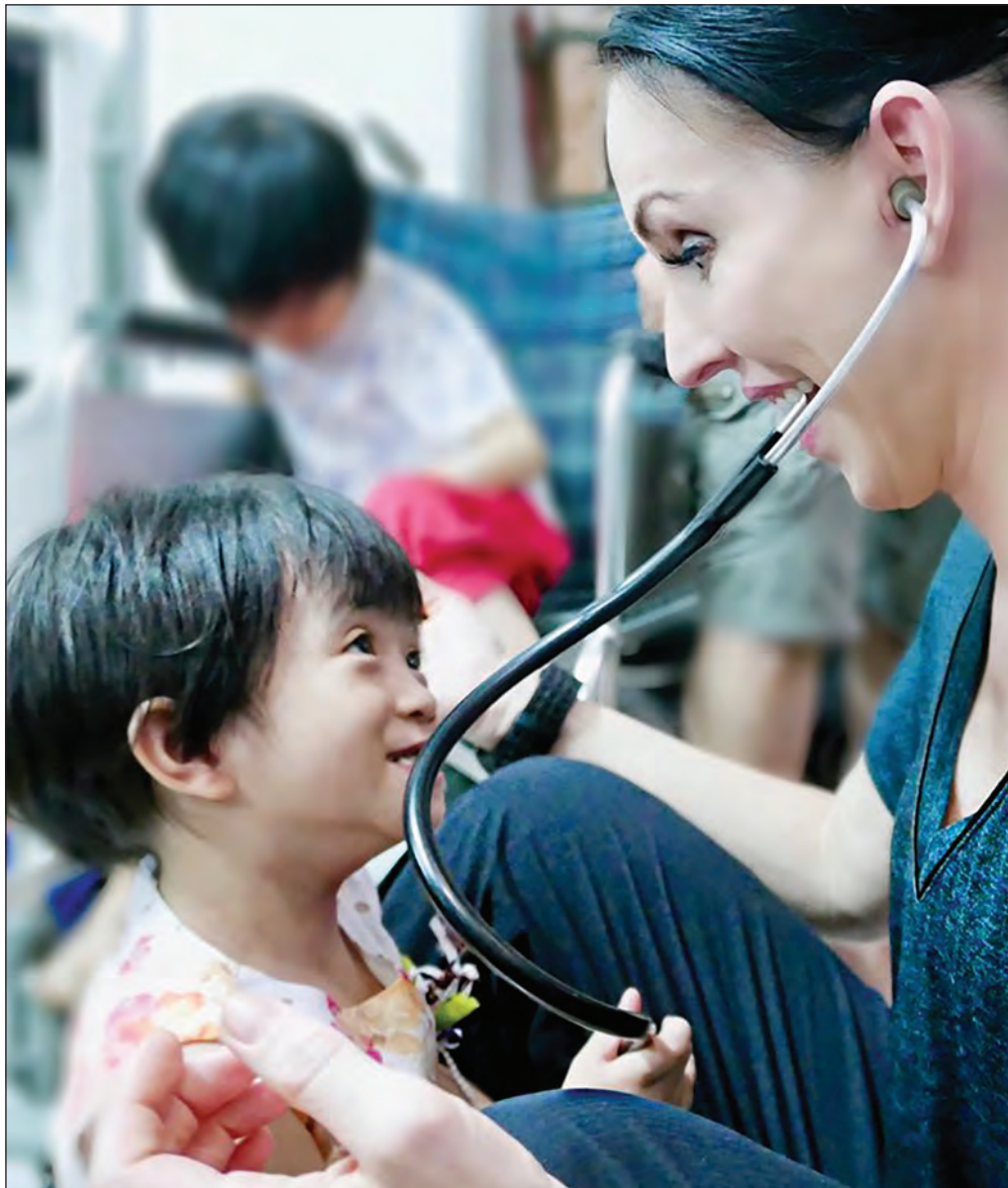
Brandy Stark

There are remarkable people in St. Petersburg, and one of them is Dr. Anna Loyd. Not only is she multi-talented with a wide range of achievements, she is a world traveler, physician, athlete, and humanitarian. She also speaks four languages.

Anna was born in Oklahoma, where her father was an emergency-room doctor. When she was nine, the family moved to Belgium so her dad could study in a one-year tropical medicine program. He had a deep desire to bring healing to people in impoverished areas of Africa, and when his program was completed, the family moved to Zaire in Central Africa. But there was political turmoil at the time under then-president Mobutu. The family was forced to flee, returning to Belgium for another year until it was safe to return to Africa and her dad's medical missions.

"My best memories from my childhood come from watching my father work in the clinic," says Anna. "He would take my brothers and me with him, and I watched as he worked with people. His interactions with them and the way he made a difference for the community were amazing. Compared to my life in America, where everything was, and is, so busy, I found that I could spend quality time with my father there."

During one of these trips, Anna also had a revelation. "I remember being 11 years old and realizing that I was such a brat. Before we moved to Africa, I was concerned with what I wore, wearing just the right hair ribbon, if I was popular, what I ate. In Africa, I saw people who had no money for clothes or food. I learned that my attitude was not a good one, and I worked to change that. I wanted to be more compassionate to others."



Dr. Anna Loyd with a child in Vietnam

When she was 15, the family moved back to the US, and she developed a passion for sports. At one point, she was on the Olympic Development Team for women's soccer. She learned to scuba dive, snowboard, and even skydive. Later, she practiced taekwondo during her medical-residency training.

"I wouldn't say that I'm competitive in most things... except for sports," says Anna. "I get a little nutty with those. I was training to do a professional fight in taekwondo, but tore a muscle in my knee, so ended up not doing that. My time in extreme sports eventually left me in a wheelchair with pins and screws in both of my feet. Now, I just work out, or go sledding and skiing with my nieces and nephew when I visit up north."

Her father has continued to be a lasting legacy in her life. "We're cut from the same cloth," she explains, and he inspired her to go into emergency medicine as a career. She received her medical degree from Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine, but a dislike of cold weather brought her south.

"There were a few things that helped me in my decision.

The first is that I hate cold weather," she laughs. "Also, I studied oceanography and photography. I had come to West Palm Beach to do some scuba diving and I loved the area. I checked out residencies and the University of South Florida had a program that I was drawn to. I ended up enrolling in it, and did my medical residency with All Children's and Tampa General Hospital."

After graduation, she went back north to work with her father for four years. The two shared their passion for emergency room medicine, though he worked with adults and she specialized in children. However, her love for St. Petersburg



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20-HO-1051 (02/20)





Above, Dr. Anna Loyd in Africa with a friendly giraffe. Below, Loyd with her nephew and niece



brought her back to the area. She currently works in the emergency department at AdventHealth Hospital in Tampa, a position she says gives her a “real sense of purpose.” Her medical practice is not limited to the emergency room. She continues to pursue medical missions in countries around the world. In January, she was in Vietnam working in orphanages.

Not surprising, given her childhood, travel is always on the top of her list. Anna says she loves visiting new countries every year. So far, her favorite destinations have included the Galapagos Islands and Germany, as well as scuba diving in Belize. In April, she’s going to France to attend a friend’s wedding. After that, she’s not sure just yet.

As if she’s not busy enough, two years ago, Anna launched Moxy Medical clinic, a medical skin-care clinic downtown. “When I first returned to America as a teenager, I had terrible cystic acne. I was working on myself to be a good person, but I found myself bullied really badly,” says Anna. “I finally got the acne properly treated, but I didn’t want anyone else to go through this. I know what it’s like to be insecure, and I want to help give people confidence.”

With so much going on, Anna’s days are long. She works in the Tampa ER until 3am, grabs a few hours of sleep, and then meets with medical-skin-care clients during the day. When she’s home, she spends time with her two dogs, Yogi Bear and Red. For her future plans, she is working on remodeling a house in the area to create a suitable home for fostering children and, possibly she muses, “to adopt.”

It is impossible not to ask a woman with such drive and energy about her life philosophy. “I meet these people that are so unhappy every day,” says Anna. “I love what I do and have such a sense of purpose. Just do what you love! Before you know it, you will blink and your life will be over.” ●

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 To see it through and true  
 Until the Eternal laughs out loud —  
 His breath blew — —  
 her from her perch. ●



## MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR



**Amanda Salvucci**

Indianapolis  
Street NE

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

I've lived in St. Petersburg for a year and a half. I'm originally from Hanover, MA.

**Best hidden gem in St. Pete?**

Not really hidden, but I love Fort Desoto Park.

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

I've always wanted to go to Ireland. My mom's family is Irish, and I've wanted to see it and explore my heritage. I'd also like to go back to Italy. I've been to Tuscany before, but would love to go back and see another part of the country, like Rome or Venice.

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

I'd love to meet the author Neil Gaiman. I've always enjoyed his books and he seems like an interesting person to chat with.

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

Photography

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

*Atonement*

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

A photographic memory

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

*Mindhunter*

**Favorite restaurant in St. Pete?**

Red Mesa Restaurant

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

Golden Retriever

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

My mom's always been a role model and inspiration for me. She's successful and passionate in her career, as well as an amazing mother.

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

I'm currently reading *The Woman in Cabin Ten*. I'm always looking for a good mystery.

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

Vinoy Park. It's such a beautiful walk along the water and downtown.

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

I recently won an award from the National News Photographer Association for a story I did on Jose Marti Park in Tampa.

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

Being from up north, I grew up skiing. I was on skis at the age of three, and raced competitively in high school.

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

I'm a photojournalist and there are many rewarding aspects to my job. There's the challenge of the artistic element of my job, such as the composition and the lighting. More importantly though, is the stories we get to tell.



**Raphael Perrier**

Allendale

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

I have been in St. Pete 14 years; 23 years in the US. I am from Chambéry, France in the Alps.

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

The art scene, murals, museums, theaters

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

Alaska and Dubai

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

Michael Schumacher. I'm a big Formula 1 fan and I think he is the best ever.

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

Hockey as a sport and golf as hobby

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

*Midway*

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

Flying

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

*La Casa de Papel (Money Heist)*

**Favorite restaurant in St. Pete?**

All Kahwa coffee restaurants!

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

A Yorkshire

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

My father-in-law, Innes Irwin

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

*Steve Jobs*

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

The Dali Museum and the Chihuly Collection

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

Creating Kahwa Coffee here in St. Pete

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

I care a lot about people

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

I am the co-owner of Kahwa Coffee Roasters. I love growing the company and giving back to the community.



**Anne Arsenault**

4th Avenue South

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

I was born and raised in St. Pete. After moving away a few times, I've been back in town for about 10 years.

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

It's not exactly hidden, but one of my favorites places is the front porch of the Vinoy. Also, Sunken Gardens.

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

I think I have too many places on my bucket list. I've always wanted to go to Egypt and Greece.

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

Ruth Bader Ginsberg because I'm a lawyer and a woman. I would love to pick her brain for a while.

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

Riding bikes along the St. Pete waterfront.

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

*Just Mercy*

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

Definitely teleportation.

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

*The Crown*

**Favorite restaurant in St. Pete?**

I am a big fan of all the Red Mesa establishments, original, Cantina, and Mercado.

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

Um, I guess a Golden Retriever.

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

My former boss, Judge Thomas B. McCoun III, recently passed away. The example he set for me, both personally and professionally, inspires me every day to do better.

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

*Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng.

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

Beach Drive, Fort Desoto, the Vinoy.

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

Finishing the Skyway 10K last year

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

I'm terrified of birds.

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

I'm an attorney, but I work behind the scenes a bit. I really enjoy writing and research. There's always something new to learn about the law!



**ST. ANTHONY'S TRIATHLON** *Continued from pg. 1*  
 her times. In 2019, she and a partner won the female grand master division in the St. Anthony's Triathlon Olympic Duo Relay.

Donna has definitely caught the racing bug, though she says she is not out to beat the competition, per se. "It's not about being the winner. Every time I cross that finish line, I feel like a winner," says Donna, who has earned numerous medals from participating in races around the country. In fact, she has a bag of medals to show for her success. She intends on donating them to a charitable organization called Medals for Mettle ([www.medals4mettle.org](http://www.medals4mettle.org)) where the medals are awarded to children and adults for the mettle and courage they demonstrate battling cancer, chronic illness, trauma, and other life challenges.

Donna swam competitively as a child, so it is ironic that now she must now overcome a "terrifying fear" of open water to compete in any race events featuring a swim element. "I swam the Escape From Fort DeSoto race in 2013 with my head out of the water the entire time," she says. She described being panicky, and having to keep illogical thoughts out of her mind of sharks choosing her, instead of some other swimmer. Sometimes she trains with fellow athletes at the waterfront home of a local couple who host swimmer training in the wee hours of the morning.

The biking part of the race is now her favorite, even after overcoming challenges like the discovery that it's possible to have not one, but two flat tires in a single race. Then there's the issue of more gears to be mastered with the purchase of faster, more sophisticated bikes. Donna laughs heartily when she recalls that the first time she participated in the St. Anthony's Meek and Mighty race, she rode what was originally her 'mom' bike, which sported a child seat.

Donna and her family relocated to St. Petersburg in 1996, where they purchased their home and raised their two daughters, Stephanie and Charly. Today, Donna and husband Chuck enjoy their beautiful waterfront home with the company of three rescue dogs, Missy, Roxy, and Mayday. Like their mom, Stephanie and Charly are sports enthusiasts. Stephanie is a member of the US Coast Guard and plays women's hockey in Michigan. Charly competes in equestrian events.

Last November, Charly invited her mom to a competition event at a horse farm near Trion, North Carolina. Thinking it was a triathlon, Donna agreed to participate. It turns out the event was a Spartan race, featuring 20 obstacles over four



Triathlon open swim in Tampa Bay

St. Anthony's Triathlon

miles, including a 'full immersion' (which means head under water) in a muddy pit. Unfortunately, Donna suffered a torn rotator cuff and bicep muscle injury on one of the obstacles, forcing her to seek surgery when she returned to St. Petersburg. In a bit of good fortune, her race-training partner is married to the surgeon who performed the repairs. Donna is still recovering, but doing well, so she's prepared to participate in this year's St. Anthony's race where she will compete in the women's 55-59-year-old Sprint Triathlon.

Donna said she likes the St. Anthony's race because it's the most fun. She tells of how neighbors and friends gather along the route to offer support – and mimosas! The official break areas offer participants water or Gatorade as they pass, though some locals in Snell Isle offer slightly stronger options, including mimosas, margaritas, or beer.

When not racing or training, Donna works as a flight attendant for Delta airlines and has

logged a gazillion miles in her 38 years with them. Incredibly, her success as an athlete has been achieved many years after a debilitating work-related accident. In 1992, Donna was riding in a flight crew shuttle in Detroit when a two-ton salt spreader plowed into the vehicle, shattering her right knee cap, severing her quadriceps muscle, and causing a compression fracture in her neck. She spent five years in physical therapy before returning to work. She was told she could walk, swim and bike, and that she should never run again. While the running portion of the races is her least favorite, Donna has shown perseverance and tenacity in her race career in spite of her previous injuries, completing the run portion at her own

pace. In some races, the run is not a featured challenge, so they are known as 'aqua bike' events. Relay-style competitions allow participants to partner together and choose the events they each will complete.

In addition to providing a competitive outlet for athletes and exciting entertainment for observers, the St. Anthony's Triathlon generates a benefit to charity. This year's proceeds will benefit Team in Training, The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Of course, the local community at large benefits from the thousands of visitors who support local businesses, from hotels to restaurants and retail shops. Volunteers are always



Donna Miller with her medals and at the race



Children compete in the Meek & Mighty competition

St. Anthony's Triathlon

welcome, and competitors who volunteer can earn a reduced entry fee. This year's event will take place April 25-26 with Vinoy Park the starting point for all races. Each race awards winners in multiple classes, with divisions by age, ability, and gender. The professionals compete in the Olympic Triathlon for a top prize of \$10,000 each to the fastest male and female. ●

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