

# DOWNTOWN NEWS

Including Old Northeast and Snell Isle

Magazine



Photo Courtesy of the St. Petersburg Museum of History

## The Princess Martha Hotel - 95 Years of Elegance

The Princess Martha Retirement Residence, previously the Princess Martha Hotel, proudly displays the letter M in stone on the front of the hotel. Everyone assumes that the M is for Martha, but that was not always the case. The M was installed when it was built as the Mason Hotel, which only lasted a short time.

The hotel's builder, Franklin Mason, relocated from New York to St. Petersburg in 1920, just in time for the land boom. With ten years of building experience in New York, he soon started a construction company and built a few projects including an addition to the St Petersburg Yacht Club. - Continued on page 7

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200 people a day are working hard to finish - page 16

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Knowing what to expect makes it easier for the whole family. - page 20

#### Meet our local 98 year-old veteran

At 23, he went Europe to fight in WWII one year before D-Day. - page 23





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**ST. PETERSBURG DOWNTOWN NEWSLETTER**

Inside, you will find articles and local information about the nearby area. We want it to be a Neighborhood Newsletter primarily about your neighborhood - Downtown, Snell Isle and Old Northeast. That is why when you have news or events, contact us.

This newsletter is printed every other month and mailed to every occupied area house, business & PO Box.

We hope you enjoy our newsletters. We want your news and input.

Did you like this issue? What suggestions do you have for future articles? Call or email us your comments, or take our survey at StPeteDowntownNewsletter.com.

Do you need another copy? Ask for them at the UPS Stores at 2nd St. and 2nd Ave S., 740 4th Street N. or 38th Avenue N. next to Publix.

Thank you for reading,

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IN SEPTEMBER!**



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## ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE WHEN SOMEONE CARES

By Erin Emmett, President Guardian ad Litem Foundation

The Guardian ad Litem Foundation of Tampa Bay is an advocate for children, young adults, and families impacted by abuse and neglect in Pinellas and Pasco Counties. These children in foster care need more help than our system provides. Through their collaboration with community partners, the Guardian ad Litem (GAL) staff and volunteers work to support these children. I have been fortunate enough to see the wonderful work these people do over the last five years as a volunteer, board member and for the last three years as the Board President of Guardian ad Litem Foundation of Tampa Bay.



I became aware of GAL through my work with Junior League of Clearwater Dunedin. Part of our community focus was children aging out of foster care. GAL representatives spoke at our meetings and I became interested in helping to fulfill their mission.

Every year in the Tampa Bay area, thousands of abused and neglected children are removed from their families and home. GAL volunteer child advocates represent the best interests of these children as their voice in court. The volunteer's only interest is the child's best interest. They help them in and out of court making sure their needs are met by the system; often they are the only consistent adult in a child's life. At any time, over 1,000 kids are waiting for a volunteer advocate. GAL is working hard to help more kids in the Court system and to help them find a permanent home.

The GAL Program is central to fulfilling society's most fundamental obligation - protecting a child's right to be safe, to be treated with dignity and respect, and to learn and grow in a safe loving family. GAL volunteers are caring adults, there to protect a child's rights at one of the most vulnerable times in their lives.

Through my work on the Board of Directors I have seen the difference this program can make. One recent foster child participating in GAL graduated as the valedictorian of Boca Ciega High School with a 4.6 GPA. He has been accepted into both Yale and Stanford.

While being a GAL child advocate is a wonderful experience, not everyone has 10-15 hours a month to dedicate to the job. However, you can still help by supporting us behind the scenes working with The GAL Foundation.

During my time as President, I have seen exciting changes. We have almost doubled the number of Board members, which helped us to double our amount of fundraising and increase our local community business partnerships. While the State provides the program's basic funding, the Foundation provides the extra funding needed to fill the gaps. These changes have allowed us to increase the amount spent on the children's education and private tutoring.

As a Financial Adviser, I spend my days helping people navigate challenging life events, which is very rewarding. But my work with GAL has allowed me to give back in a special way. Our Foundation is helping children, who have been dealt a tough hand through no fault of their own, as they face difficult life challenges. I see how we are making a difference in so many of their lives.

Do you want to get involved? Volunteer opportunities are flexible to meet your skills, interests, and time commitment. For information about GAL and volunteer opportunities, visit [herotoachild.org](http://herotoachild.org), e-mail [iamfourthechild@galf6.org](mailto:iamfourthechild@galf6.org) or call 727-464-6528.

Together, we can make an even greater impact in the lives of these abused and neglected children. If you would like to talk more about any of this, feel free to contact me, Erin Emmett, 727-712-3400, [erin@roganfinancial.com](mailto:erin@roganfinancial.com). Because it really is true, "Anything is Possible When Someone Cares"

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# Did You Know



**TOP CHEF PARC EVENT** The 5th Annual Top Chef has been moved to the Arts Warehouse District - at The Morean Center for Clay, 420 22nd Street S. The event, benefiting PARC's Culinary Arts Program, just one of the PARC programs, will be August 22nd. The Culinary Arts Program trains clients for restaurant jobs.

This year's participating restaurants include Tampa's Osteria, Bulla GastroBar, and Bake'n Babes, St Pete's The Library, Sand Key's Rusty's Bistro, Carrabba's, and others. Admission is \$125. VIP tickets are \$150. For more information, visit [www.parc-fl.org/events/top-chefs](http://www.parc-fl.org/events/top-chefs) or call 341-6930 for more information.

**SUNKEN GARDENS RENOVATIONS** Sunken Gardens, St Petersburg's oldest living museum is undergoing renovations to its lobby. The project should last about eight weeks. In the meantime, there is a temporary entrance. Great Explorations will continue to have access through the lobby. The project was funded by the Penny for Pinellas sales tax. The botanical garden has been owned by the city for 16 years.

**LEARN TO PLAY GOLF** Let the City's Recreation Department teach you to play. They offer golf lessons for all levels at either Mangrove Bay or Twin Brooks Golf Courses. Level 1 cost \$70. Level 2: \$80. Level 3: \$100. Classes are limited to 6 or less. Visit [www.GolfStPete.com](http://www.GolfStPete.com)

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## MEALS ON WHEELS NEEDS YOUR HELP

Neighborly, Meals on Wheels is in serious need of volunteer drivers. The organization provides meals

to nearly 3,000 adults 60 or older at low or no cost. They deliver the nutritious meals, approved by a licensed dietitian, to the senior's door Monday-Friday. In many cases volunteers are the only interactions some homebound seniors have each day. The organization has lost more than 25 percent of its meals-on-wheels volunteer drivers and this has put some seniors in danger of not receiving their daily meals.

Deliver routes take anywhere from one hour to 90 minutes to complete. Call 727-573-9444 or visit [neighborly.org](http://neighborly.org) for other volunteer options.



# and More...



**RECYCLE YOUR AMERICAN FLAGS** Do you have an American flag that has become worn and frayed? Flag etiquette says it cannot just be thrown away, it must be disposed properly in one of three ways – burn it, bury it or donate to an organization that will either burn or bury it. One place to do that is in the parking lot of Anderson McQueen Funeral Home, 2201 MLK Jr Street N.

Just place it in the box shown above. You can also do this at the American Legion Post 114 at 1520 4th Street N.

**TAX FREE SHOPPING DAYS** Even though it feels like school just ended, plans are already underway for the kids' return to class. If you will need new clothes and school supplies, mark your calendar for August 2-6. That is when the state will wave Sales Tax on many school items - from notebooks to computers; shirts to shoes. Of course many stores will be offering discount sales prices at the same time. The list of items is rather long, so visit [FloridaRevenue.com/BackToSchool](http://FloridaRevenue.com/BackToSchool), to see what is included.

**WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT WIND ENERGY?**

Humans have harnessed the power of wind for centuries-pushing boats down rivers or across the seas, pumping water, and grinding grain. The earliest windmills were in Persia in 600 AD. In the 1920s and '30s, U.S. farms in the Midwest used wind turbines as their primary source of energy.



Throughout the twentieth century, the use of wind energy declined, but now a resurgence is underway with dropping costs and heightened performance. In 2015, a record 63 gigawatts of wind power were installed around the world, almost half in China. It is estimated, the wind energy potential of Kansas, North Dakota and Texas could meet the electricity demands of our entire country.

32 wind turbines recently installed offshore near Liverpool, England are owned by Lego – yes the toy maker. Each is double the height of the Statue of Liberty with blades that have a sweeping diameter nearly twice the length of a football field. A single rotation of one turbine generates one household's daily electricity use. The project supplies power for all 466,000 Liverpools residents.

Today, 314,000 wind turbines supply 4 percent of the global electricity. With new, quieter, cheaper designs, look for that number to continue to climb.

**OUR NEXT ISSUE IS IN SEPTEMBER** Read this issue, and others, online at [StPeteDowntownNewsletter.com](http://StPeteDowntownNewsletter.com).




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# PRINCESS MARTHA, CONT.

By Becky Griffin, Publisher

For \$200,000, he purchased land opposite the post office at First Avenue and Fourth Street North to build a 250-room hotel. With 21 stockholders and bank financing, he began construction in June 1923 with plans to open before the next tourist season just 6 months away.

The Mason Hotel, built for one and a half million dollars, opened to great fanfare in January 1924. No detail was too small to ignore, and the results had a the feeling of a southern mansion's quiet luxury. Each of its 250 rooms, spread out over seven floors with thickly carpeted hallways, had a private bath, unique for those days. Guests were welcomed into a large foyer and lobby that was laid with hand-made Spanish tiles, adorned with rich tapestry covered carved furniture, and had Austrian inch and a half thick hand-made carpets, never before seen in Florida. Up the red quarry tile and marble staircase, guests could relax in the lounge or dine in the large one-of-a-kind elegant dining room. It was prepared to serve one thousand meals a day using only the finest linens and sterling silver flatware.

The hotel hired a "Specialist in Happiness" to keep the guests entertained. Her duties included arraigning card games, dancing partners, parties and anything else that kept the guests amused. An orchestra was hired to play concerts each morning and evening. Sunday evenings the concerts included special performances and were open to the public.

The hotel operated seasonally as a Winter resort and room rates included all the guest's meals. In the summer, much of the hotel's 165 staff members and many of its guests relocated to The Monterey Hotel on the Jersey shore.

With the collapse of the real estate market, Mason's company quickly faded. After only two years, stockholders James Bussey and William Muir took over the operation of the hotel. They changed the name to Princess Martha Hotel to honor Muir's wife, which allowed them to avoid replacing the many engraved furnishings through-out the hotel and to keep the letter M on the front of the building. Due to the area's financial downturn, the two made some changes to the operation. Rooms were available with or without meals and the hotel remained open throughout the year to accommodate travelers and businessmen.

During 1927, members of the New York Yankees baseball team made the hotel their Spring Training Headquarters. Babe Ruth signed a two-year \$80,000 contract

with Yankees owner Colonel Jacob Ruppert in Ruppert's hotel room. The Babe also held his press conferences in the lobby. Clarence Darrow visited in 1928 hosting a party for American poet Carl Sandburg.

Financially, the hotel seems to have operated fairly well through the 1930s, but that changed in 1942 with the arrival of the Army Air Force trainees in St. Petersburg. The Army leased every major hotel in town – the Vinoy, the Soreno, the Don CeSar and the Princess Martha from August 1942 through September 1943.

When the Army Air Force left, Samuel Mann, Sr, Bussey's brother-in-law, bought controlling interest in the hotel and managed it until he died in 1966. Under his watch, the hotel continued to thrive and welcomed many well-known people including Hubert Humphrey, Danny Thomas, Correta Scott King, and Liberace. Other nearby hotels were not so fortunate and never fully recovered from the occupation. The Soreno Hotel suffered damage and was sold in 1945. It closed in 1985 and was torn down in 1992. The Vinoy followed a similar fate closing in 1974 but reopening in 1992 after significant restorations. The Don CeSar was sold to the military before being declared obsolete in 1969. Of the four major hotels built during St. Petersburg's boom years, only the Princess Martha was successful.

In 1964, Mann began the hotel's first major renovation. The small hotel next door was purchased and demolished. In its place, he built a three-story ballroom and meeting space connected to the Princess Martha Hotel, plus a single-story structure with a pool on the roof. The interior was updated to a more modern feel. Fluorescent lights were mounted in drop-down ceilings and carpet was installed over the Spanish tiles and hardwood floors.

After his death, Mann's heirs sold the hotel in 1976 to the First Baptist Church. The Church intended to turn it into a senior resident hotel, meaning for the first-time people would live there permanently. Church events including Sunday School and choir practice were held in some of the rooms. Within a year though, the hotel was \$150,000 in debt and owed \$33,000 in property tax. 25 rooms needed extensive renovation, another 50 needed sprucing up. To make the venture work, 125 of the 150 rooms needed to stay rented, but their highest



The Lobby in today's Princess Martha.

occupancy rate was only 78 causing the hotel to lose \$20,000 a month. In the fall of 1978, the church closed the hotel, and sold it for 1.1 million dollars.

The hotel re-opened in January 1979 as a hotel with some permanent apartments on the first floor. It was sold again, and by 1984 had had four owners, none of which could keep half the rooms full.

In 1984 a new owner leased the property with plans to return it to a real hotel with few permanent guests. The hotel was renovated and updated adding air conditioning units and king-sized beds. Some rooms were converted into suites. The foyer, lobby and dining room were restored to their original appearance. Unfortunately, all these upgrades were expensive, and the ownership group declared bankruptcy in 1986.

In 1988 the Gulf Coast Housing Foundation, a non-profit that provides senior housing, purchased the property and converted the 250 rooms into 118 senior living apartments. The renovations cost close to 4 million dollars.

The Princess Martha was designated an historic landmark in 1995.

Still operating as a senior faculty, the current owners, The Princess Martha Limited Liability Corporation acquired the property in 2011. The following year, the retirement home underwent yet another upgrade that renovated apartments and common areas, plus upgraded the dining area to the style of a grand New York hotel including antique furniture.

Today, retirees ranging in age from 57 to 97 live at The Princess Martha, a premiere 55+ community. It is the perfect solution for anyone 55 or older seeking an easy transition into retirement living. The all-inclusive facility supports a completely independent and active lifestyle in the heart of downtown St. Petersburg. Residents have multiple floor plans to choose from and all accommodate single or double occupancy. For more information about The Princess Martha, visit [www.theprincessmartha.com](http://www.theprincessmartha.com) or call 727-894-6788 for a personalized tour. ■

## WHAT IS ALL THIS TALK ABOUT CBD?

By Michelle Tolan, Your CBD Store St. Petersburg

Cannabidiol, better known as CBD, may be one of the most broadly therapeutic plant extracts of our time. CBD comes from the industrial hemp plant and not the marijuana plant. That distinction is what makes the extract legal in all 50 states as well as increases the medical applications due to hempo's natural chemical makeup compared to marijuana, which is high in the psychoactive compound THC-9.

Along with a lengthy list of therapeutic properties, CBD comes with the backing of the World Health Organization. Importation of hemp products has been legal for some time, which has allowed a large amount of scientific research to be performed on CBD. Well over 1,500 peer-reviewed scientific articles have been published identifying CBD as potentially beneficial for a host of ailments including inflammation, pain management, cancer treatment, Alzheimer's prevention, anxiety relief, acne eradication, epilepsy and more.

To understand how CBD exerts its effects, you first must understand the body's endocannabinoid system (ECS). It is an entire system just like the respiratory or digestive system. It is the endocannabinoid molecules made by the body itself (yes, our bodies make their own cannabinoids, just like the cannabis plant), the receptors for these molecules, and the enzymes that create/break down the endocannabinoids. From a natural, therapeutic perspective, CBD and hempo's residual cannabinoids together may very well support the body's healing in a great number of ways.

Most animals have the same endocannabinoid system as humans making CBD also excellent for pets. Pets can be terrified of thunderstorms and the fourth of July can be the scariest night of the year for fur babies. The tinctures and treats fly off the shelves

during these seasons. Pets also suffer from inflammation, itchy skin and bad habits like constant licking. CBD is also great for aging dogs.

With CBD being sold everywhere (it's the new Avocado Toast!) it's important to know that you are getting a high-quality product, and that's hard to know when you buy online especially when there is no one to discuss your situation with or answer questions and help you choose the best products and dosage.

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Your CBD Store St. Petersburg is comfortable and calming, like a spa. Clients can come in, enjoy a sample and have all their questions answered by knowledgeable, caring staff. Our mission is simple.- to educate the neighborhood on what CBD can do for them and help people feel better. My clients come back again and again to enjoy the atmosphere and to tell me how much better they feel. CBD is truly life changing for me and my clients. I don't suffer from anxiety or chronic pain anymore.

Michelle Tolan is a Certified and Accredited Life Coach and owner of Your CBD Store St Petersburg. Call for a free consultation stop by for some free samples -1219 Dr. MLK Jr. St. N. St. Petersburg. Visit [stpete.cbdrx4u.com](http://stpete.cbdrx4u.com) or contact 727-767-0596, [stpete@cbdrx4u.com](mailto:stpete@cbdrx4u.com)



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## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

### JULY

National Hot Dog Day	18
Downtown Sidewalk Sale	18
Dali Outdoor Movie Clueless	18
Drilled Palladium	18-21
Williams Park Summer Market	20
Rowdies Home Game	20
Carter Plays Coltrane, Palladium	20
GreatExplorationsApollo50thAnnv.	20
National Ice Cream Day	21
Rays on The Runway	21
ClearwaterJazz3DaughtersBrewing	23
Ella Jet and Future Soul Palladium	25
Grouper Week Begins	26
Williams Park Summer Market	27
Side Door Comedy Palladium	27
Rollin' Oats 25th Anniversary BBQ	27
Brian Regan Comedy Mahaffey	27
Parents' Day	28
National Chicken Wing Day	29
DeadlinetoRegisterToVoteforAugust	29
National Cheesecake Day	30

### AUGUST

First Friday	2
Wendy Williams For Record Mahaffey	2
School Supplies Sales Tax Holiday	2-6
Williams Park Summer Market	3
Grouper Week Ends	4
Coast Guard Anniversary	4
GreatExplorationsGreatMessploration	4
Buc's First Pre-Season Game	9
Second Saturday Art Walk	10
Williams Park Summer Market	10
Guerrilla Art Market Grand Central	10
Rowdies Home Game	10
97x Craft Beer Experience Mahaffey	10
GreatExplorationsGreatConnections	11
Property Tax Trim Notices Mailed	12
Public School Open	14
Dali Outdoor Movie Mean Girls	15
Williams Park Summer Market	17
Rowdies Home Game	24
Williams Park Summer Market	24
Women's Equality Day	26
Primary Elections	27
GeorgeClinton'sFarewellTourMahaffey	29
Gulfport Gekofest	31
Rowdies Home Game	31

### SEPTEMBER

Labor Day	2
Schools Closed	2
MFA Feast For The Eyes Exhibit Ends	2
First Friday	6
Improv & Hypnotist Show Mahaffey	6
Grandparents Day	8
Buccaneer's First Home Game	8
Patriot's Day	11
Happy Hour with Historian MOH	12
Guerrilla Art Market Grand Central	14
Second Saturday Art Walk	1 4
Rowdies Home Game	1 4
National Clean Up Day	1 6
Tampa Bay Job Fair Coliseum	1 6
Crossing Bay Concert Palladium	20-22
Rowdies Home Game	21
International Peace Day	21
Closer To The Cure Albert Whitted	21
Good To Me Day Williams Park	21
MFA: Expressions In Origami Ends	22
Fall Begins	23
Deep Purple In Concert Mahaffey	27
Rosh Hashanah Begins	29
Super Boat Races Clearwater Beach	29



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## THE COAST GUARD AUX CELEBRATES 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

June is a very significant month for the Coast Guard Auxiliary, both nationally and locally. Nationally, the Coast Guard Auxiliary is celebrating its 80th anniversary, and locally, Flotilla 72 St. Petersburg, is celebrating its 79th anniversary.

On June 23, 1939, Congress passed legislation that established the Coast Guard Reserve, its volunteer civilian component, to promote boating safety and to facilitate the operations of the Coast Guard. Groups of boat owners were organized into flotillas and these into divisions within Coast Guard Districts around the country. Members initially conducted safety and security patrols and helped enforce the provisions of the 1940 Federal Boating and Espionage Acts. Then in February of 1941, a military reserve was created and the volunteer Reserve was renamed the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

On March 15th, 1940, the Captain of the Seventh US Coast Guard District, chartered one of the first Auxiliary Units in the State of Florida downtown, St. Petersburg, Flotilla 72 is a part of Team Coast Guard, which consists of active duty, reserves, Auxiliary and civilians. The Auxiliary is the uniformed, volunteer, part of Team Coast Guard. Auxiliarists volunteer over 2 million hours annually to benefit other boaters and their families.

The USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 72 Boating Skills & Seamanship course increases your boating knowledge and will make you a confident, safe and intelligent boater. Classes are conducted each Tuesday evening from 7:30pm to 9:30pm conveniently located on the United States Coast Guard base at 1300 Beach Drive SE, St. Petersburg. Pre-Register at [flotilla72registration.info](http://flotilla72registration.info) call 727-898-1324 for more information or visit [tampabaySAFEBOATING.com](http://tampabaySAFEBOATING.com)

Interested in joining? Flotilla 72 St. Pete, visit [www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=070-07-02](http://www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=070-07-02) or the National Auxiliary - [USCGAUX.org](http://USCGAUX.org) to find a Flotilla near you.

## CLOTHES TO KIDS

### Underwear Drive "Drop Off Your Drawers"

Drop (off) Your Drawers is a drive designed to collect and "underwrite" underwear – a basic part of the Clothes To Kids wardrobe. During July and August, Clothes To Kids is collecting new packages of underwear, boys sizes 4-16 (boxer briefs), young men sizes 30 & up, girls sizes 6-16, Junior girls sizes 5 and up primarily bikini style. Please support our mission and help us provide this basic necessity! More than 80,000+ pairs of new underwear will be given this year, all free of charge.

Individuals, companies, civic groups, places of worship, and schools are encouraged to sign up to collect new packages of underwear. Once your collection is complete, "drop" them off to one of three stores - Clearwater (1059 N. Hercules Ave., Clearwater) St. Pete (Twin Brooks Commons, 2168 34th Street South) or Tampa (5011-H West Hillsborough Ave., Tampa).

To sign up, contact Rita Wesley, at [ritaw@clothestokids.org](mailto:ritaw@clothestokids.org) or call 727-441-5050, ext 222. Visit [www.clothestokids.org](http://www.clothestokids.org) for to learn more about the organization.



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## HAVE YOU DISCOVERED PILATES?

By Amy Ladden

With millions of participants, Pilates has become a worldwide phenomenon. Due to its effectiveness and adaptability for all levels of fitness, it can be practiced by everyone. Newcomers will feel the difference immediately and see the difference within a few sessions.



Many professional athletes have added Pilates to their training schedules. Surely, they get plenty of exercise, so why would a football player, tennis player, golfer or swimmer need Pilates? Because Pilates rebalances their bodies after the repetitive motion of their sport. The results are unquestionable.

Pilates is effective because it works all your body's muscle group concentrically and eccentrically equally. Pilates' focus is to move with fluidity and control while maintaining proper alignment - add proper breath patterns to your movements and you're on your way to a stronger body in motion.

There's a fair amount of abdominal work in a Pilates session, which is why it is usually thought to be a core workout, but let's for a moment, think about the core of the body as the skeletal system. Pilates strengthens the body from the smallest muscles closest to the skeleton to the largest muscles closest to the skin. You literally get stronger from the inside out.

As much as Pilates is good for the core, it's essential for the spine. Every good Pilates session should incorporate flexion, extension and rotation of the spine. Strengthening the muscles that support your spine and keeping your spine flexible will improve your posture, your gait and enable you to continue doing whatever you do with less pain and less risk for injury.

Have you discovered pilates yet? If not, what are you waiting for? You're going to love how you feel! Learn more at [aladdempilates.com](http://aladdempilates.com).

Amy Ladden is the owner/operator of [aladdempilates](http://aladdempilates.com) at 327 11th Ave. NE, St. Petersburg on the second floor of the Old North Ward School. She has over 12 years' experience teaching clients of varied abilities. Private, duet and group classes are offered. You can reach her at 727.289.2801 or [amy@aladdempilates.com](mailto:amy@aladdempilates.com).

## GROUPER TRIVIA CONTEST Win A \$100 Dinner at GoToSteves.com

July 26th through August 4 is Pinellas County's Annual Grouper Week. That week, Pinellas restaurants serving grouper will feature the locally caught fish served every way from sandwiches to formal entrees.

Grouper is found all over the world, but the waters off Pinellas County are some of the best areas to catch the fish. John's Pass is regularly referred to as "The Grouper Capital of the World."

Would you like to win a free dinner at Parkshore Grill, 400 Beach Seafood & Tap House or The Hangar? Answer the following questions and e-mail them to [Bob@GriffinDirectories.com](mailto:Bob@GriffinDirectories.com) by July 26. We will randomly draw the lucky winner from the e-mails with all correct answers and the winner will be notified by July 28th

Questions:

1. Name four types of grouper.
2. What is the largest type of grouper in the western hemisphere?
3. How many calories are in a 4-oz. serving of plain grouper?
4. What percentage of grouper are born female?
5. Name five ways to cook grouper

The prize is dinner for two at Parkshore Grill, 400 Beach Seafood & Tap House or The Hangar not to exceed \$100. All three restaurants are located downtown. Good luck and thank you for reading and playing.

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# Business Briefs

## DETOX DESIGNER RESALE BOUTIQUE

Similar to your favorite consignment store, this store, which opened last fall, takes it a step farther by purchasing your items outright, as opposed to Consigning them.

Owners Kylie and Jacob Walsh, both graduates of USF and residents of St Petersburg live in Arrowhead near Venetian Isles. They have been in the Designer Consignment Industry for 10+ years.



The store, which only carries womens items, adds over 300 new items each week and has 100+ Designer labels including Lilly Pulitzer, Free People, White House Black Market and Michael Kors. For handbags, they carry everything from Gucci and Louis Vuitton, to Tory Burch and Kate Spade.

Open seven days a week, find Detox in the old North Ward School House, first floor, at 327 11th Avenue N. by 4th Street N. Find them also Online at DetoxStPete.com, on FaceBook and Instagram. Call them at 201-8590.



**TWICE AS NICE MISRED** has doubled in size. Owner Sara Stonecipher is tearing down walls to give her customers more room and more apparel. MISRED Outfitters, at 615 Central Avenue, carries women's contemporary, everyday apparel. They receive over a 1000 new arrivals each week, all for under \$60

**SWEET MAGNOLIA'S NOW SOUTHERN BAY** They didn't want to, but owner Haylee Saddock changed the name of Sweet Magnolia Bakery to Southern Bay Bakery. "The lawyers made us do it," says Shaddock. "Someone else owned the rights to Sweet Magnolia's." Other than the name, everything is still the same. Find them at 1961 4th Street North, next to Carrabba's Italian Restaurant and Sunken Gardens. Call then at 440-8988.

## PETE'S GENERAL STORE

Located just off the beaten path of 4th Street, this store carries an array of local, organic and regional products. Pete's wants to be the go-to place for essentials as well as fancy treats.

Owner Steven Peterman officially opened in April, at 495 7th Avenue North, next to 5th Street. Get more information at [www.PetesGeneral.com](http://www.PetesGeneral.com) or find them on FaceBook.





# Business Briefs

## ROLLIN' OAKS CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

Rollin' Oats, the natural food grocer at 2842 MLK Jr Street N. is celebrating its 25th Anniversary. The locally owned and operated store opened in 1994. Founded by Bert Swain and Larry Schwartz, today's management says "We wanted to be a different kind of neighborhood grocery store—offering the finest quality organic whole foods, nutritional supplements and body care products." The market also has an in-store café that serves organic vegetable juices, fruit smoothies, fresh salads, and sandwiches.



To celebrate, join them Saturday, July 27 with a big Summer Backyard BBQ from 10am to 2pm. The BBQ will include food, drinks, activities for the kids, in-store giveaways, and live entertainment. Vegan and gluten free options, will also be available. It is their way of saying "Thanks for 25 great years."

**NEW SALON** Bishops Cuts/Color opened at 689 Central Avenue. Founded in Portland in 2001 as the alternative to high end salons and cheap chop shops, Bishops was one of the first to introduce customers to the "all-ages and all-genders welcome" salon experience. They are minority owned and women/LGBTQIA staffed, specializing in cuts, shaves, and colors. They are offering a grand opening special through the end of the year of a FREE haircut for first-time clients. A cheap haircut doesn't have to be bad and great haircut can be affordable. Let Bishops beautify you.

**B.A.E. BEAUTY BAR** A new place to go get pretty, they opened earlier this month. Find them at 1800 4th Street N., next to the Clean Juice Store. Parking is in the rear.



**BOATER'S REPUBLIC ADDS BAR** There is a new bar on 4th Street. In April, Boater's Republic, the popular boating and fishing outlet added a bar with beer taps and wine to their retail store. Now, you can drink while shopping for fishing supplies and clothing.

They even sell package beer and wine to take home. Enjoy their Happy Hour from 4-7pm. Check it out at 3100 4th Street North. [www.BoatersRepublic.com](http://www.BoatersRepublic.com).

## CLOSED

**PINOT'S PALLETE:** A small art studio west of Ferg's. Space is available. Call Erica Waltmire at 813-273-8408

**VOM FASS:** The popular oils, vinegar, spirits and wine store at the corner of 3rd Avenue North at 1st Street N.

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## Bar & Restaurant News



**EL CAP'S OWNER DIES** El Cap's longtime owner Mary Jean Bonfili (66), died May 28th at her nearby home. A popular hamburger joint on Fourth Street N., El Cap was opened by Bonfili's father-in-law in 1963. Mary Jean and her husband Frank bought it from him over 40 years ago. Frank died in 1997, but for over 20 years, Bonfili has kept the restaurant going, not changing a thing, but the occasional price.


In the beginning, Bonfili worked in the back cooking and doing paperwork, but after Frank died, she became more visible, interacting with the customers and staff.

The ownership of El Cap located at 3500 4th Street N. is currently unknown. Tara Mattiacci and Cindy Nally, co-managers, are continuing to run the restaurant until something is decided. But, they hope the locally famous El Cap will continue on in her memory. For now, the message on their menu still says it all, "Hamburgers Are Our Specialty."

**BUBBLE TEA COMING SOON** Cha Mixology is bringing bubble tea to Central Avenue. What is bubble tea you may ask? It is a drink that features a base made from tea, fruit, coffee or milk and chewy "pearls" at the bottom of the cup, shaken until frothy. The pearls are actually marble-sized balls of tapioca. Bubbly tea, also called boba, originated in Taiwan. Look for Cha Mixology to open next door to Enigma at 1106 Central Avenue in the former Milagros Soap Company store.

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**THE BIG CATCH**  
Remember the waterfront Fish Tales Restaurant, south of downtown? After a remodel, it reopened as The Big Catch at Salt Creek by Larry Munch (from Munch's on 6th Street S.) and Mario Farias (Mario's near Tyrone). They offer a great selection of fresh Gulf seafood with a "Flip Flop Fabulous" mindset.



**GREENSTOCK** Soon, there will be a new place to enjoy a fresh salad on Central Avenue. You probably already know one of the owners - David Benstock, owner of Il Ritorno. His co-owner is Brooke Boyd, owner of Hype Group, a public relations company. Called Greenstock, they hope to open at 449 Central Avenue, the site of the former Kalamazoo Olive Oil Company in September.

**CLEAN JUICE** Open on 4th Street N., Clean Juice helps you stay healthy. "But we have more than juice," says Kim Gordon owner and St. Petersburg native. "We offer Acai Bowls (berry, beach, nutty, green and beauty), Greenoas Bowls (Green 14, Yummus, and Pop-eye), and seasonally a Skinny Bowl, Watermelon Bowl, and Cherry Bowl. "If there is one thing that makes us special and different, it is the fact that everything here is fresh and organic," Gordon emphasizes.



See their menu Online at [CleanJuice.com](http://CleanJuice.com)  
Find this store at 1804 4th Street North. Parking is in the back.



# Bar & Restaurant News



**NEW DOG IN TOWN** Sea Dog Brewing Co. moved into the old Bean Town location, 29 3rd St N, located north of Lucky Dill. The restaurant has been newly remodeled.

Sea Dog Brewing Co., owned by The Shipyard Brewing Co., originates in Maine, but Sea Dog is no stranger in the Pinellas area with a location in Treasure Island and another off U.S. 19 in Clearwater. Join their Mug Club and get great specials like your own specialized mug, drink & appetizer specials, and points for dollars spent towards free food.

**DATZ NOW OPEN** Last month, Datz, the local South Tampa gastropub that has a decade of innovative and popular cuisine under its stretchy belt, opened its second location at 180 Central Avenue. The Zagat-rated restaurant built its reputation on the strength of its menu items and by listening to its customers through reviews and its highly active social media channels.

Owners Suzanne and Roger Perry religiously study food trends and give their "food scientists" the freedom to create highly original menu items. Those that work stay on the menu, which changes quarterly. From the Cheesy Todd (featured on Good Morning America) to Barry C's Meatloaf (featured on the Travel Channel) to dozens of fan favorites, Datz St. Pete will showcase the same menu items as the original across the Bay.

Datz Restaurant Group, also owns Dough, Roux, The Canyon at the James Museum of Western and Wildlife Art and the brand-new Dr. BBQ.

**BABA'S BAKERY** Bodega Cantina Café's owners opened a second restaurant simply called Baba's at 2701 Central Avenue, in the Grand Central District. Find the Greek Lebanese inspired restaurant and bakery next to Casita Taqueira.

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Try Wine® has expanded its Wine Dining™ kitchen and added five all new artisan pizza dough flatbreads, and an amazing baked burrata dish with baked peaches, vanilla, mint, and pomegranate infused rose petals (pictured). These are just some of the new additions to their already extensive charcuterie & cheese menu. With 88 wines "by the glass" and a wine list of over 1000 to buy or drink there, a full gourmet market, and their all new expanded Wine Dining™ menu, Try Wine® is the best place downtown to pair great food & fine wine, or to shop for anything wine or wine related. Stop in and visit them at 1 Beach Drive (Bayfront Tower) or shop online from home at [www.shoptrywine.com](http://www.shoptrywine.com)



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# ST. PETE PIER CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

JULY 2019

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

The St Pete Pier closed to the public on May 31, 2013 - over six years ago. Skanska USA was awarded the contract to build the new one. Skanska, a worldwide construction company, is based in Sweden. Their U.S. operations is headquartered in New York with four Florida offices including Tampa.

On June 21st, Skanska USA employees gave me a personal tour of the St. Pete Pier™ - from end to end. I met with Kenneth Duty, Project Executive of Skanska USA.

Oddly enough, some of the old pilings were left to stick up out of the water in front of Tampa Bay Watch's new Discovery Center area. They will be used as part of a natural reef for undersea life.

The seawall was replaced and extended to the north towards historic Spa Beach, which will remain primarily unchanged. The area under the roadway was drilled to test ten basic zones for strength under the mudline.

The new pier is 3122 feet in length—just 178 feet shorter than the former pier. The approach is no longer a straight line; it is accentuated with several angles.

The primary feature of the project at the Pier Head is a restaurant, actually three restaurants, owned by local businessman Chuck Prather, owner of Birchwood Inn and Birch and Vine Restaurant on Beach Drive.

It will be three levels with three distinctively different tropically themed concepts: the Driftwood Café, Pier Teaki and the fine dining, Teak. The top floor will be a rooftop bar with a 360-degree view of Tampa Bay and the city, offering fine dining. Most will be complete when the pier is finished, but the fourth-floor Teak restaurant won't open until possibly next summer.

In front of the St Pete Museum of History will be a large exhibit area and walkway covered with solar panels that will provide both shade and energy. This new vendor Marketplace will be active Friday through Sunday—all year.

A nautically themed children's play area, designed by one of North America's premier playground designers is strategically located near the Pier Splash pad, Welcome Center and Spa Beach. There will be a food vendor and restrooms close to the play area and a tram stop nearby. The widely anticipated art by renowned sculpture artist, Janet Echelman, will be draped across the roadway near the play area, too.

Just beyond the artwork, a new parking lot provided by Duke Energy has covered parking, which also will contain a series of solar panels providing electricity.

Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille, a major seafood restaurant company based in Sanibel, is halfway down the pier route next to the Duke Energy Parking Lot. The one-story 10,000 square foot building has 2,000 square feet of balcony facing the water. Off to its south will be approximately twenty public docks for boaters to use when visiting the pier.

In the middle of the pier's roadway will be Discovery Center operated by Tampa Bay Watch. With inside and outside exhibit areas, stadium seating facing the city is being built for special water-related presentations.



**Kenneth Duty and the Future Teak Restaurant**



**The Future Doc Ford's**

Duty has worked for Skanska for thirteen years and commutes daily from Lithia (Brandon area). He has supervised many Florida projects including the building of Tampa's International Plaza. He supervises 100 to 200 workers a day, many of whom work for subcontractors.

Skanska did not do the initial demolition, which involved cutting and/or pulling out about 1400 pilings. Skanska installed 425 new ones. "The pilings that were removed were 14x14 inches square," Duty explained. "The new ones we installed were bigger - 24x24 inches. They are set along the same path as the original foundation with a minor offset to miss the portion of the previous pier's piles that remain cut-off below the mudline."

A bait shop also at the Pier Head will be operated by Alan Kahana who will also operate the Pavilion at Spa beach. As with the old pier, there is a trolley system that will constantly run from Bayshore Drive to the Pier Head.

"The new St. Pete Pier and Pier District will be a waterfront destination for everyone to enjoy, no matter your age, income, or ability, says Mayor Kriseman. "From an environmentally friendly kids playground to a variety of restaurants and cafes, there will be spectacular views, and lots of shade. I'm looking forward to cutting the ribbon on the new St. Pete Pier."

The original target date for the Grand Opening of the St. Pete Pier™ originally was late last year. Weather and other design factors caused the date to move first to this fall and now into early 2020.

To get all the information about the pier's progress and amenities, visit the official web site at [www.NewStPetePier.com](http://www.NewStPetePier.com). Be sure to sign up for occasional updates on the Contact Us page.





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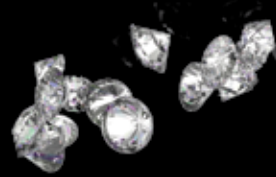
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## WHAT IS THE FLORIDA HUMANITIES COUNCIL?

By Keith Simmons

The Florida Humanities Council (FHC) is the statewide affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). FHC was organized, in part, to better promote the humanities and its various disciplines—history, literature, philosophy, ethics, etc.—in Florida. Since 1973, we have done exactly that.

Through a grant program and a number of public programs, we seek to increase the public's engagement with the ideas which are essential to the human experience. As an example of our work, during the past two years, FHC has invested over \$80,000 in small grants to organizations across west central Florida. From this region alone, over 14,000 people attended a Smithsonian traveling exhibition; 3,500 area students participated in a poetry recitation contest; and 2,100 residents attended a lecture or community conversation. These programs are typically free and open to the public.

In order to complete this work, the Florida Humanities Council relies in several funding sources, including the NEH and the Florida Legislature. During the 2019 session, FHC's state appropriation—which we approved annually for years—was not renewed. This resulted in a 25% decrease in our budget. Consequently, we will have to reduce the number of programs made available to the public.

Despite this loss, we are able to remain in operation. We also remain committed to our core mission: to provide access to the humanities—to the stories and ideas that make us human—to all Floridians, wherever located.

The Florida Humanities Council is also determined to make a stronger case to the Legislature during the next session.

We will also seek funding from the business community and private foundations. A critical component of this process is to rally support for the humanities. We join other Floridians in asserting that the humanities are essential for a functioning democracy.

There are several ways you can join. Visit [floridahumanities.org](http://floridahumanities.org) and:

- Sign up for ENews to keep updated on everything going on with FHC.
- Tell us the programs, stories, and ideas that inspire you and help you to fall in love with our state.
- Contribute to our efforts to provide humanities programs which are free and open to the public by becoming a member or if you are already a member, please consider an additional gift or getting a friend to join.



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## Art & Museum News

**MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS**  
255 Beach Dr NE

**727-896-2667**  
mfastpete.org

*A Feast for the Eyes: European Masterpieces from the Grasset Collection*, has been extended through Labor Day.

Featuring 40 superb Old Master paintings from the 17th and 18th centuries by major Italian, Spanish, German, and Netherlandish artists. The exhibition includes a wide variety of themes, such as flower still lifes, as well as splendid banquet scenes, seascapes celebrating maritime life, as well as urban scenes capturing the grandeur and beauty of Europe.

*Above the Fold: New Expressions in Origami* closes September 22

The Exhibit demonstrates the extraordinary power and potential of contemporary origami. Paper is transformed into breathtaking sculpture, large-scale installations and conceptual works that express contemporary social, political, and aesthetic ideas.

**JAMES MUSEUM OF WESTERN & WILDLIFE ART 892.4200**  
150 Central Avenue thejamesmuseum.org

*Environmental Impact* August 24 – December 1

This traveling exhibition of dramatic paintings and sculptures heightens public attention about environmental issues and unintended consequences of human interaction with nature. Topics covered include global warming, the Gulf oil spill, unabated logging and mining, loss of bee populations, and more. Discover the fragility and hopeful resiliency of our world through the eyes of over 20 artists.

**THE DALI MUSEUM**  
One Dali Blvd

**823-3767**  
thedali.org

*visual magic: dali's masterworks in augmented reality* - through November 3

This special exhibition, sponsored by Tampa International Airport, uses burgeoning augmented reality (AR) technology to engage visitors while highlighting The Dali's complete collection of its popular Masterworks. Coined by Dali Museum founder A. Reynolds Morse, the term "masterworks" refers to paintings exceeding five feet in height or width, painted over a period of a year or longer – in other words, they are both monumental in scale and critical Dali paintings. Through this exhibit, Museum visitors have an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the meaning behind these Salvador Dali works through the lens of AR.

### ST. PETERSBURG SECOND SATURDAY ARTWALK

Join them as 40 artists' studios and galleries open their doors. Shop local and support our arts community in a fun social setting. Download the map and list of participants to plan your festive art evening at [www.speteartsalliance.org](http://www.speteartsalliance.org).

**FLORIDA CRAFTART 727-821-7391**  
501 Central Ave. FloridaCraftArt.org

*Woof, Meow, Chirp and Slither: Artists Interpret the World of Pets*, a juried exhibition at Florida CraftArt of original art that showcases artists' interpretations of the world of pets, continues through August 10.

From across Florida, 36 artists created over 100 pieces from jeweled cat collars to ceramic dog bowls and sculptures of pets. In the exhibition, visitors enjoyed seeing 'pawsitively' fun and inspiring artwork. People are looking forward to the upcoming educational programming that shows how pets contribute to our health, happiness and longevity.



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### WHAT TO EXPECT

By Rebecca Geiger

The comment I get from parents most often when it comes to lessons is: "I have wanted to do this for a while, but it seems so brutal." Well, it is. Knowing what to expect makes it easier on your child and you though. The main thing to know is that even with a good instructor, there will be tears. This is often mistaken as fear, but is actually anger. Extreme anger to be sure, but anger can be a great motivator when used appropriately.

So let's dive in to what is happening in the child's mind. Children do not know fear. Fear is knowing that an action has a consequence which usually causes pain or discomfort. If children had fear we could be much less concerned that they would attempt to "swim" without knowing how. They are also accustomed to being rescued, knowing if they cry loud enough and long enough, mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, etc. will step in and save them. Swimming lessons prepare them for the worst case scenario, should they fall in when you are not there to save them. Explaining this to them is all but impossible. To your child, this is a foreign concept.



By giving children lessons, group or private, you are placing that discomfort squarely on the shoulders of the instructor. Instructors are trained for this. They do not take the child's frustrations personally and can provide a detached place for the child to vent those frustrations and anger while allowing you to continue enjoying your time in the pool with the child during non-lesson times. All

of their negative emotions are directed at their feelings for the teacher, not the water. This is important. We never want them to have a dislike of water, yet we need them to respect it.

There are many options for parents: "Mommy and Me" classes, Infant Swimming Resource (ISR), group, semi-private, or private lessons. The one that is right for you will

depend on your comfort level and the speed at which you want your child to progress. Keep in mind, if your child can see you, it will double their learning time. If you are in the water with them it will triple it. The reason for this is simple. Your child is literally hardwired to cry/whine at a pitch that is excruciating for you. This is a survival mechanism. You are correspondingly hardwired to respond to their discomfort as quickly as possible to prevent your own discomfort. If they can see you, their mind will be focused on why you are not stopping what is upsetting them, giving you extreme discomfort by watching them without interfering. This is a hindrance to everyone while developing this vital skill.

Accepting this can help you make the best decision for your child, and you. No matter which decision you make, please make sure your child learns to save themselves in the water!

*I am known as Miss Becca to my students and specialize in Drowning Prevention Education through lessons and group presentations to children and their adults. Please contact me at (813)363-9133.*





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## Organizational News...

### ST. PETERSBURG DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSN.

Their next Porch Party will be held on Tuesday, August 6 at 6pm in the Alyssa Marie Gallery, 300 Beach Drive. Members tickets are \$15 in advance; \$20 day of.

The next general quarterly meeting is October 9 at the Cathedral Church, 140 4th Street North. This meeting will be a townhall format featuring downtown elected officials, and local Police and Fire Department representatives. Members and Non-Members are welcome.

The organization, representing residents downtown from 5th Ave. N to 5th Ave. S including the Edge District, aims to build a stronger community by bringing neighbors together and serving as a collective voice for downtown issues.

E-mail President Karen Carmichael, Sunny1015K@Verizon.net. Membership and event tickets are available at stpetedna.org.

### KIWANIS CLUB OF ST. PETERSBURG

The 15th Annual Fischer-Carr Scholarship Birthday Bash fundraiser was held in May at The Coliseum. They raised enough money to provide 19 students with Take Stock in Children Scholarships this year. Since 2004, they have raised nearly one million dollars providing over 345 scholarships.

This club meets every Tuesday at Orange Blossom Catering from 12-1:15pm. Email Contact@SPKiwanis.org, call J.C. Russell, Secretary, 821-5518 or visit SPKiwanis.org.

### ST. PETERSBURG WOMEN'S CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Their purpose is providing charitable and volunteer assistance to local 501(c)(3) organizations that provide consistent aid to our community and individuals. For more information, visit wccstpete.com or call 727-744-9114.

### SUNRISE ROTARY CLUB

They meet every Tuesday at 7:30 am at the St. Petersburg Yacht Club. The club supports Wounded Warriors Meals/St. Pete Free clinic Pac-a-Sac, Disabled Sailors Regatta, Brookwood Home for Girls, plus others. Email stpeterotary@gmail.com, or visit stpeterotary.com and Facebook.com/SunriseRotaryStPete.

### EXCHANGE CLUB OF ST. PETERSBURG

They meet for lunch the first and third Thursdays at the St. Pete Yacht Club. To get involved, contact Cathy Duchow, Club Secretary, 727-623-4880 or Cduchow4551@Gmail.com

### KIWANIS CLUB OF ST. PETERSBURG

This club meets every Tuesday at Orange Blossom Catering from 12-1:15pm. Email Contact@SPKiwanis.org, call J.C. Russell, Secretary, 821-5518 or visit SPKiwanis.org.

### ST. PETERSBURG WOMAN'S CLUB


The St. Petersburg Woman's Club belongs to the worldwide General Federation of Women's Clubs. General meetings are the second Friday of each month, at at 1 pm. Evening programs, for working women are the second Tuesday- 7 pm. The Club has been active in the community since 1913 and provides "hands on" volunteer work on many projects & activities. Guests are welcome at all activities. To receive more information about the club or booking our facility, please call (727) 822-4982 or visit www.StPetersburgWomansClub.org.

### HISTORIC OLD NORTHEAST NEIGHBORHOOD (HONNA)

Contact President Natalie DeVicente at 409-2891. To host a Porch Party, contact Susan Arsenault, SueAtcp@aol.com. Get more information at www.honna.org.

### SNELL ISLE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The Snell Isle HOA meets at the Women's Club, 40 Snell Isle Blvd NE. Contact Bonnie Hargrett, BonnieHargrett@Gmail.com or visit www.EnjoySnellisle.com.



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## RISE ST. PETE 9/11 FIRST RESPONDER MEMORIAL

Demolition has begun to clear way for Rise, a monument dedicated to 9/11 community heroes, first responders, and the events of that day. Rise will feature one of the last pieces of World Trade Center steel to be recovered from “ground zero” in New York City. The beam was unearthed during site preparations for America’s Response Monument *Horse Soldier Statue* at the National September 11th Memorial Museum in New York City and given to the owners of American Freedom Distillery. This piece of steel was donated to the Warehouse Arts District Association by the Port Authority of New York in conjunction with the American Freedom Distillery who hired Sculptor Mark Aeling to design and build the monument.

Being a proud member of the Warehouse Arts District Association (WADA), the partners of American Freedom Distillery found a natural and organic collaboration emerge with WADA leaders to create a permanent tribute in the district using the steel beam as the centerpiece. Working with WADA Executive Director, Diane Morton, they secured a vacant parcel on the corner of 5th Avenue S. and 22nd Street as the location for Rise. Just like the 9/11 first responders who have retired or moved on to the next phase of their lives with new business endeavors, the location embodies a community in transition and growth.

“WADA is honored to give the Rise memorial a home. We understand the transformative, healing power of art, and know the impact this monument will have on residents, visitors, and the hundreds of thousands of active and retired first responders and military personnel who call Tampa Bay home,” added Morton.

Located in the Warehouse Arts District of St. Petersburg, American Freedom Distillery is owned by former special operators who played instrumental roles in the American response to the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and now reside in Tampa Bay. One partner, Mark Nutsch, was the commander of a daring team of Green Berets that fought the Taliban on horseback. His team was honored with a bronze horse soldier sculpture that is dedicated to the United States Special Forces, America’s Response Monument located at Ground Zero.

When completed, Rise St. Pete will be a 20’ x 40’ monument with the WTC steel as its central focus. Designed by Mark Aeling of MGA Sculpture Studios, the monument and park will be a gathering place, spurring conversation and reflection by visitors of all ages.

Rise will be located at the ArtsXchange property, an artistic enclave and cultural arts destination with over 50,000 square feet of warehouse space that is being renovated into affordable working studios, galleries, classrooms, and performance space.

## ARE YOU RED CROSS READY FOR HURRICANE SEASON?

It’s officially hurricane season and NOAA predicts a range of 9-15 named storms in the Atlantic this year. After two consecutive years of devastating hurricanes, the American Red Cross of Central Florida is doing everything it can to maintain a high level of preparedness. Here are three steps to take right now:

1. Make a plan for your household if you have to evacuate. Practice it to minimize confusion and fear during an event.
2. Build an emergency kit with a gallon of water per person, per day, non-perishable food, a flashlight, battery-powered radio, first aid kit, medications, supplies for an infant if applicable, a multi-purpose tool, personal hygiene items, copies of important papers, cell phone chargers, pet supplies, cash, blankets, maps and emergency contact information.
3. Be informed about your community’s hurricane response plan. Know how you will get important information before, during and after a disaster strikes.

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# People in our Community

## MEET 98-YEAR OLD WWII VETERAN ODEY O'DONNELL

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

In 1943, at the age of only twenty-two, Francis (Odey) O'Donnell (98) was sent to Europe to fight in World War II. It was a year before D-Day - 76 years ago.

Today, Odey and his wife Lois, live a much quieter life in the Town of Belleair, but he still remembers his time "in the War." Odey was born in 1921 in Hartford, Connecticut. After high school, he attended the Citadel, a military college in Charleston. When the U.S. entered the war in 1942, he joined the Navy. His plan was to be a pilot, so he became a cadet in Flight Training. But to his dismay, he was discharged for "reckless flying", something about flying his plane upside down over the Base. "My commander said he was going to 'save my ass' by discharging me," Odey chuckles.

Still wanting to serve, Odey promptly signed up with the Army Air Force and once again was a pilot cadet in training.



However, when they discovered his navy experiences, they transferred him to Bombardier/Navigation School.

"I was trained on the B-24 Liberator bombers. They were relatively new at the time," Odey says. After his training, he was sent to where the action was - North Africa. To get there, they

had to fly north to Newfoundland, then to the Azores - a region of Portugal, and finally Marrakesh, a major city in North Africa's Morocco.

Odey was first based in Foggia, Italy, where he joined the 15th Air Force squadron. There, he flew 17 missions dropping bombs over the south of France and nearby Linz a city in Austria, Vienna, Greece and Romania.

He was eventually transferred to a provisional unit in Brindisi, Italy working side-by-side with the British. It was their job to drop various supplies—food, guns, ammo—over the south of Europe. The planes (B-17s and B-24's) were painted black so they would not be seen at night. "Sometimes we carried agents, some of whom were OSS, which were members of the U.S. wartime intelligence agency.

From that assignment, he was transferred to Algiers, in North Africa. That is where he was during D-Day. He participated in a second invasion in southern France that came shortly after D-Day.

All in all, he flew 52 missions. When the war was over, the Army wanted him to fly a plane home.

"None of the guys wanted to fly—so we got on a slow boat that took us home," Odey recalls. "We did not care that it would take two or three weeks."

Odey left Europe from Naples, Italy on his birthday, March 17, 1945 and headed home. Just over a month later, he

and his high school sweetheart Elizabeth Winter, were married on April 21, 1945.

The military wanted all the men to get some rest and be medically checked out. Odey was sent to Atlantic City on R&R (military slang for rest and recuperation) where he stayed in a resort that employed Joe DiMaggio as the Athletic Director.

With the help of the military, Odey enrolled in Providence College, and graduated in 1949. He went to work in medical sales. But in 1951, as a member of the Army Reserves, he was recalled for the Korean War. He was trained on a B-29, still as a navigator. He trained in San Francisco, but was never sent to Korea.

Odey and Elizabeth were married for 21. They had seven children, before they divorced in 1969. He met Lois, his current wife, at a medical convention in Boston. They married and lived on Bolton Lake, CT, but often vacationed here in Pinellas County. They enjoyed the beaches and often stayed in Clearwater. Finally one day they decided to stay. They bought a condo and later a house, in Imperial Point, Seminole.

Odey had retired from his job in medical sales, but he wasn't done being involved. They joined the Clearwater Yacht Club where in 1995 Odey became the Commodore and Lois was the President of The Gulls - a ladies' fundraising group. They enjoyed life, cruising to other yacht clubs on their boat, "The Good Life."

They were founding members of the North Suncoast Associates an organization formed to support the Florida Orchestra. Lois has been President or involved with many, many Belleair area groups, including the Belleair Fine Arts Society, the Belleair Beach Ladies Luncheon Club, and the Belleair Garden Club.

On June 14 of this year, Odey, now 98, flew to Washington, D.C. on an Honor Flight, to see the World War II Memorial for the first time. He was the oldest veteran on the flight.

Plans are also in the works for him to be honored and recognized for his service at the November 10th Tampa Bay Buccaneer's game, against Arizona.

The U.S. and the entire world owe Francis O'Donnell and all the other World War II veterans—living and not—a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid.



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