



Metal art by Scott Rogers

NORTHEAST JOURNAL

Good People ∞ Good Places ∞ Good Things Happening

St. Petersburg, Florida

September/October 2026

Est. September 2004

Meet the Mayors of Halloween in the Old Northeast



The Van Vranken family goes buck wild for Halloween every year in the Old Northeast – Bryan, Robin, Amici, and Amore Van Vranken.

Abby Baker

When Bryan and Robin Van Vranken moved to the Old Northeast, they didn't know that every October their house would become the "Monster Mash" house on 17th Avenue NE.

They were warned about the holiday, though. "Our realtor had said, 'Hey, it's a big Halloween here,' but that was okay with us; we're festive people," Robin said. "We knew people had themed houses, and we had a set of turntables, so we were prepared in that way, but what we weren't prepared for were the trick-or-treaters."

In 2018, Robin got the disco ball that would be a staple of the event, a giant Frankenstein, the "Monster Mash" letters, and the Halloween lights

and took charge. Much has been added since, but that first year, Robin bought a bulk supply of glowsticks on eBay to go with their theme. That night, they went through 4,000 of them. "When I closed my eyes that night, I could still see trick-or-treaters coming at me," Robin said, laughing.

Moving In

Bryan and Robin moved with their two children to the neighborhood in 2018. "My wife actually found the Old Northeast on a map before we moved. She did all the demographic research and said, 'This is where I want to live.' She was right."

Bryan and Robin are both originally from New York. Robin, though, had previously lived

Continued on page 8

Ain't No Party Like a Scallop Party

Becca McCoy

The Tampa Bay estuary encompasses over 400 square miles of open water and 2,300 square miles of highly developed watershed. In 1993, two things happened to address the restoration of these marine and wetland environments: Tampa Bay Watch was founded, and it hosted the inaugural Great Bay Scallop Search.

"Our annual Great Bay Scallop Search is a way for citizens to get involved with the scientific portion of our environment," said Richard Radigan, oyster shell program manager at Tampa Bay Watch. "This is a way for everyone to feel good about what they're doing – get out into the water, snorkel, see what's under the waves, and have that sense of stewardship in learning what it takes to conduct science. Not just recreating in the water but actually doing positive scientific work as well."

The event engages around 200 volunteers a year, said Radigan, "and it's all walks of life. It's people that never get on the water, that get to get out once a year, people that spend their entire lives on the water, and I get to interact with all of them."

Continued on page 12



The Great Scallop Search reveals the health of our local waterways.

Tampa Bay Watch

St. Pete Looks to Build Resiliency by Investing in Flood Control



Improvements to the water reclamation facilities are part of the SPAR plan.

Will Michaels

During the 2024 hurricanes 20 inches of intense rainfall and a seven-foot surge flooded between 10,000 and 15,000 homes, many businesses, and city critical facilities. Damage estimates from Hurricanes Helene and Milton exceeded \$2 billion. The lion's share of this, between \$1.3 and \$1.5 billion, impacted neighborhood homes. And some \$500 to \$700 million is still under

Continued on page 22

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Feature Listings



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1230 Darlington Oak Circle NE
5 BD | 4.5 BA | 4,254 SF **\$2,200,000**

Tucked away at the end of a quiet cul-de-sac within the guard-gated community of Placido Bayou, this extensively renovated estate offers a rare combination of privacy, space, and modern luxury. Situated on a .55-acre homesite, this is one of the largest residential lots in the neighborhood. Completely updated in 2023 with thoughtfully designed indoor and outdoor living spaces ideal for both everyday living and entertaining. Elevated at approximately 8 feet and never flooded, the home provides peace of mind along with exceptional comfort.



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SARAH HOWE

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ARTISTIC INNOVATIONS AND COLLABORATIONS

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New African Masquerades: Artistic Innovations and Collaborations is organized by the New Orleans Museum of Art, in partnership with Musée des Civilisations noires in Dakar, Senegal, and received generous support from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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Hervé Youmbi, Cameroonian (active in Douala), Tso Scream Mask, Visages de masques (IX) series, 2015-2023. Wood, pigment, fiber, beads, textile, glue, velvet and cotton fabric, silk embroidery, horse-hair. Collection of the New Orleans Museum of Art, museum purchase, Robert P. Gordy Fund, 2023.38J-Z

EDITOR'S NOTE

There's No Place Like Home

I am writing this during the time of year when we try to be in Florida as little as possible. Don't get me wrong: I love our state. But between the humidity and the hurricanes, it does try our patience. And while we're finally entering fall, seasoned Floridians know that doesn't immediately bring relief!

This summer we were fortunate enough to travel to a rainy Philadelphia, the rainy Smokey Mountains, and a surprisingly *not*-rainy Pacific Northwest. You just never can tell.

But now we're back in town just in time for pumpkin spice season and I think if there's one thing this issue of the *Northeast Journal* confirms it's that our little 'Burg has become a true destination. And is giving us residents a whole lot of good reasons to stay home.

One of my favorite things about my job here is getting to highlight all sorts of spaces dedicated to unique arts and culture. Coming to St. Petersburg's already outstanding museum lineup – spots like the MFA, The Dalí, the Florida Holocaust Museum, The James Museum, The Woodson African American Museum, the Museum of the American Arts and Crafts Movement, the Imagine Museum and more – are newcomers we've featured like the Museum of Motherhood, the Queer Asian Museum, and the Penny Lane Beatles Museum. Add to that the plethora of groovy cultural experiences and festivals like Sunken Gardens, FloridaRAMA, the upcoming Savor Food Festival, and it's hard to argue that our Sunshine City doesn't have something for everyone.

While it's always fun to get away and see new places and try new things, it seems that every day you can do exactly that right here at home. I'm not sure I'd want to live anywhere else.

Happy Fall, y'all! Time to get out and enjoy it. ●

~ Shelly



Maricris and I having Goonies adventures on the Oregon coast in July

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please email Shelly at editor@northeastjournal.org

All photos should be high-res and not cropped too tight.

We'll email you the Meet Your Neighbor questions for you to answer in 550 words or less.

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MEET THE WRITERS

We would like to thank our contributors for this issue. 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. Join our team by contacting editor@northeastjournal.org.

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Abby Baker is a Tampa-based journalist for local media. She currently lives in Seminole Heights, but writes stories about Gulfport and St. Petersburg communities. When she's not on deadline, she likes to paint, travel, and spend time with her two very chubby cats.



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. [JeannieCarlson.com]



Rick Carson has lived in St. Pete since 2001, after a career journey that took him from national politics to the innkeeper of a B&B – from the cesspools of Washington to cleaning guestroom toilets (ask him if there is any difference). [rickcarson1@gmail.com]



Becca McCoy is an award-winning photographer, multi-disciplinary artist, and St. Pete native, recently returned to the area after years in Chicago and Atlanta. She has contributed to numerous City Lifestyle magazine franchises, *Rough Draft Atlanta*, and *Northeast Journal*. She and her husband, artist Justin Groom, comprise Leafmore Studios, LLC.



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]



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.



Shelly Wilson is (almost) a Florida native who tries very hard to love her state in the summer. She's been a writer and editor for 20 years, recently at the *Gabber Newspaper*, and now as the editor of the *Journal*. She loves to read, travel, kayak, and share great stories. She lives in St. Pete with her wife and an obstinate dog. [wilson.raechelle@gmail.com]



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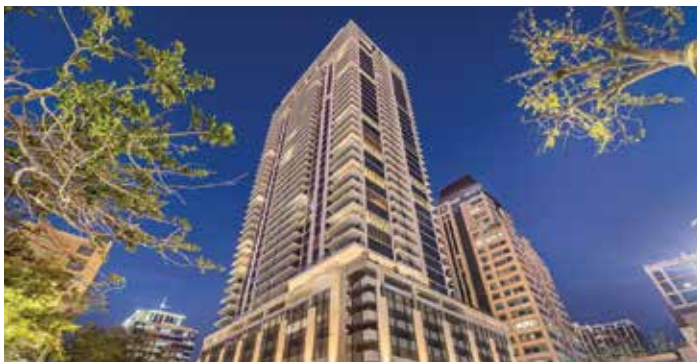
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SOLD | 556 21st Avenue NE | Old Northeast

\$2,650,000 | 4 bed, 4.5 bath

Web# TB8505179



SOLD | 275 1st Avenue S, 1405 | Art House

\$2,064,000 | 3 bed, 3.5 bath | Represented Buyer

Web# TB8498984



SOLD | 1811 W Hills Avenue | Hyde Park

\$2,000,000 | 4 bed, 3.5 bath | Represented Buyer

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in the Tampa area with her family before moving away and living around the country. The pair met in Atlanta, where their kids were born.

But when Bryan accepted a job in Largo, both Bryan and Robin were excited to move to the Tampa area. They lived in a few places at first, including South Tampa.

“It was an amazing blessing when Bryan got the job because I got to show my kids places I had been to growing up, like Busch Gardens and Adventure Island,” Robin said. “I loved how much St. Pete had developed, because when I was here it was very quiet.”

Before long, the two settled on a house over the bridge, to their home in the Old Northeast.

“We didn’t know a thing about the Old Northeast when we moved to Florida, but we kept driving over here. We loved North Shore Park, Crescent Lake, the water – the whole neighborhood vibe. It wasn’t long before we said, ‘Why aren’t we living here?’” Bryan said. “We got incredibly lucky. Before COVID, we found this house on 17th Avenue, and it just felt like home instantly.”

At that time, Bryan was working in a corporate position, and Robin was a full-time parent. Nowadays, Bryan runs his own local therapy practice, and Robin works in software sales.

Fun fact: the Monster Mash house has a bit of history embedded in its address. “Our house has this funny folklore attached to it. Before it was built, there was a bungalow on the lot. The owners literally cut it loose and moved it on a flatbed truck to Roser Park,” Bryan said. “And it got stuck on 17th Avenue. People still talk about it.”

Creating the Monster

When the Van Vranken’s first moved to their 17th Avenue home, there were Halloween veterans to mentor them through the holiday.

“We learned from the professionals. On our block were Marcy and Joe Emerson – kind of like the mayors of the Old Northeast,” Bryan said. “Marcy worked for the neighborhood association and was the community coordinator. I really learned from them...they were really involved in that corner at 17th and Cherry where the police sit, the cotton candy machines, all of it.”

When Marcy and Joe moved to Colorado about five years ago, Bryan started taking over the permits for the street closures and the police that guard the event. The not-as-fun parts of the magic – but still very important. Neighbors, including Jon Kile, definitely noticed.

“As the Mayor of Halloween, Bryan has assumed the responsibility of filing the paperwork to close the street and help create the safe and fun environment that makes the holiday legendary in the Old Northeast,” Kile said.

The cost of the street closures isn’t necessarily expensive, but hiring police can be. It costs roughly \$1500-2000 each year.

“We raise the money right here in the neighborhood. Everybody chips in. It’s a community operation,” Bryan said. “But HONNA now is supporting the street closure, which is so great.”

A month out, Bryan begins putting out the



The house at 17th Avenue in the Old Northeast was coined the “Monster Mash” house by its inhabitants and the neighborhood.

Photos courtesy of Bryan Van Vranken



“The first year we ran out of glowsticks, and we had like 4000 of them,” said Robin Van Vranken.

exterior decorations; the night of, he and Robin put out couches and the “dance party” pieces and get ready to welcome trick-or-treaters.

For the other 11 months of the year, the Halloween decorations live in the Van Vranken garage, kept fresh with an AC unit specifically for them. But the Van Vrankens don’t hang up their good-neighbor hats.

“Bryan is the kind of helpful neighbor who checks in when someone has been in the hospital. He and Robin don’t just know their neighbors, they know their pets. Their free-range kids are a familiar sight zipping around the neighborhood to friends’ houses,” Kile said.

Bryan and Robin are typically modest about these accolades, especially when it comes to Halloween.

“Everyone is all in, not just me,” Bryan said. “It’s a huge community effort and while you can turn your lights off and not participate, there are so many people who want to be involved and want to be in the spirit of it.”

A Joint Operation

Pre-kids, pre-Halloween house, Robin and Bryan were just a couple in Atlanta who bonded over their love of electronic music. “It’s easier when you’re in a couple with someone and you actually like the same music,” Robin said.

That love of EDM was why the pair had an old turntable they busted out for their first Old Northeast Halloween in 2018. Quickly, Bryan revitalized his DJ skills.

“We were like, let’s get the music and make it a monster mash party,” Robin said.

Nowadays, while Bryan has taken the lead with the decorations, permits, and planning of the Monster Mash House on 17th Ave, Robin handles the organized team that runs traffic and is responsible for the food for helpers.

Will the Monster Mash house be a staple for years to come?

“We definitely plan on continuing our Halloween here,” Robin said. “We love to be creative and give a fun experience to the community every year.” ●



“We love to be creative and give a fun experience to the community,” said Robin.



The Van Vranken’s house, before the Halloween storm

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Youth Triathlon Foundation Finds a Home with YMCA



Andy Munkittrick, a Child Support Hearing Officer in Clearwater, founded the Florida Youth Triathlon Foundation in 2023.

Abby Baker

Triathlons aren't the easiest sport to train for – especially when you're a kid. You need a bike, a place to swim, and, ideally, a coach. And that's exactly why the Florida Youth Triathlon Foundation came into existence.

The FYTF was officially started in 2023 by St. Petersburg resident Andy Munkittrick. At first, the group mainly lent bikes to kids.

"The general motivation was the idea that we really see less attendance at kids races," Munkittrick said. "We want to stimulate the sport and have it be sustainable for kids long term."

Those are not idle words. Even sitting down for an interview, Munkittrick, a child support hearing officer in Clearwater, had one eye on his phone, ready to pounce on a child's road bike from Facebook Marketplace.

"It's very hard to find a good road bike," Munkittrick said. "I was always lending out bikes to kids that were coming in behind my kids, and from that it just expanded pretty rapidly."

That changed when the foundation partnered with the YMCA.

Home Base at Speer YMCA

Originally, the FYTF started out at the Jim & Heather Gills YMCA at 3200 1st Avenue S. The relationship bloomed there, but then the group reached out to Speer YMCA, where they currently hold sessions. Located at 495 62nd Avenue NE, it's the main YMCA for the greater Old Northeast.

Newton Reiff, senior program director at Speer YMCA, notes this is the location's first triathlon group.

"We have a lot of team sports," Reiff said, "but individual sports teach kids some different things for self-confidence."

Reiff said the YMCA had hosted small youth triathlons before, but those were typically one-day events. What was missing was a program that could actually teach kids how to participate in the sport.

Aside from giving the kids a place to run, ride, and swim – and to practice the transitions between the three – the YMCA makes sure not to run up a large bill in an already somewhat expensive sport.

"We kept the cost low to make sure everybody had accessibility to



Kids practice their swimming stamina with boogie boards at the Speer YMCA during an after-school Florida Youth Triathlon Foundation practice.



The group started by lending road bikes to kids who didn't have them.

Elizabeth Kostreva

it," Reiff said. "We just try to not turn anybody away for the inability to pay."

The current eight-week program for kids ages 7-13 meets once a week, with the final session culminating in a mock triathlon.

The Triathlete Kids

The YMCA partnership adds something the bikes alone cannot: structure.

Kids in the current program keep folders with training logs and work alongside coaches and other young athletes throughout the eight-week session. When registration opened for the program, the session sold out.

Although triathlon is technically an individual sport, FYTF board member Elizabeth Kostreva said the foundation wants kids to feel like they are part of something bigger.

"We want that team-building feel," Kostreva said. "We want the kids out here having fun but also training."

At 18 years old, Caedmon Higgins is closer in age to the kids than most coaches, but he already has more than a decade of triathlon experience.

Higgins started racing when he was 7 and joined the Florida Youth Triathlon Foundation as a coach about four weeks ago. Now studying exercise physiology with an interest

in working with high-performance athletes, Higgins said coaching gives him a chance to introduce kids to a sport that has been an important part of his own life.

For Higgins, preparing the kids for their first race isn't only about building endurance. Practices focus on swimming technique, bike skills, pacing, and learning how to stay calm when race-day nerves hit. The ultimate goal is simple: Get the kids to the starting line and make sure they're prepared when they get there.

Munkittrick has already seen what can happen when a child first discovers a sport that clicks.

"That moment of engagement, when you first begin a sport, is magical," he said. "And it's always fun to see, and as many kids as we can give that moment to, the better." ●

If you're interested in learning more on the Triathlon Training program at the YMCA (or registering!) visit stpeteymca.org/triathlon-training. The YMCA offers scholarships that can cover program costs for families in need. To learn more, contact Speer YMCA at 727-565-1384. If you are interested in donating or would like to know more about the resources offered by the Florida Youth Triathlon Foundation, contact contact@floridayouthtriathlon.org.

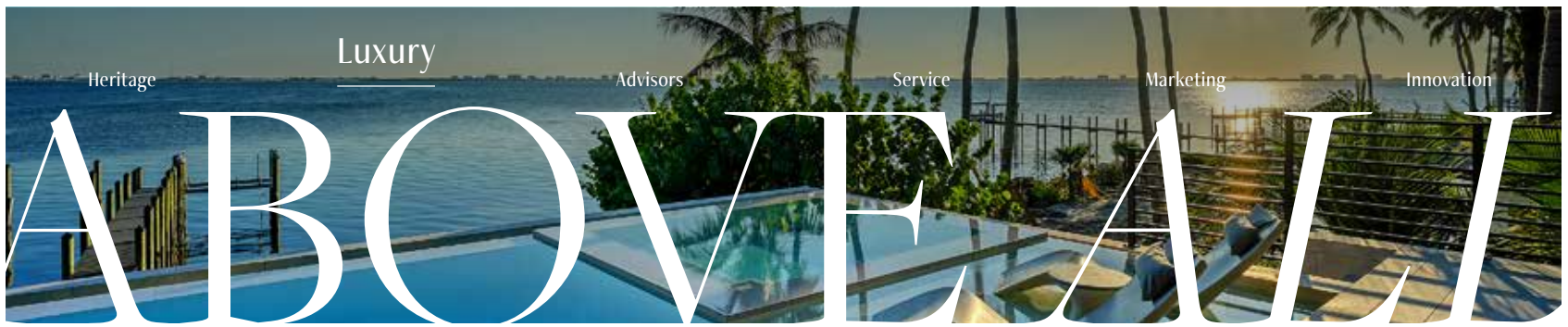


"The general motivation was the idea that we really see less attendance at kids races," Munkittrick said. "We want to stimulate the sport and have it be sustainable for kids long term."

Elizabeth Kostreva



Senior Program Manager at Speer YMCA Newton Reiff says the YMCA works with the Florida Youth Triathlon Foundation to keep costs low for kids and their families.



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The 31st Annual Great Bay Scallop Search was scheduled for Saturday, August 1, 2026 – but the mercurial Florida weather had other plans.

“Logistically, the Scallop Search this year took place from Dunedin Causeway all the way down into Emerson Point Park,” said Radigan. “You have to look at all the weather for a large distance, and as you know, it can be really unpredictable.”

That unpredictability makes the decision to cancel or proceed a difficult one, but Radigan is surrounded by seasoned veterans that help inform a best path forward. “Working with Tampa Bay Estuary Program, as well as Pinellas County [Environmental Management] this year, there are so many years of field experience between all of our groups. Some of these people I’ve worked with for over 10 years. I’ve been in the field with them, so I trust their opinions.”

With safety concerns being paramount, the decision was made to pivot without sacrificing the initiative.

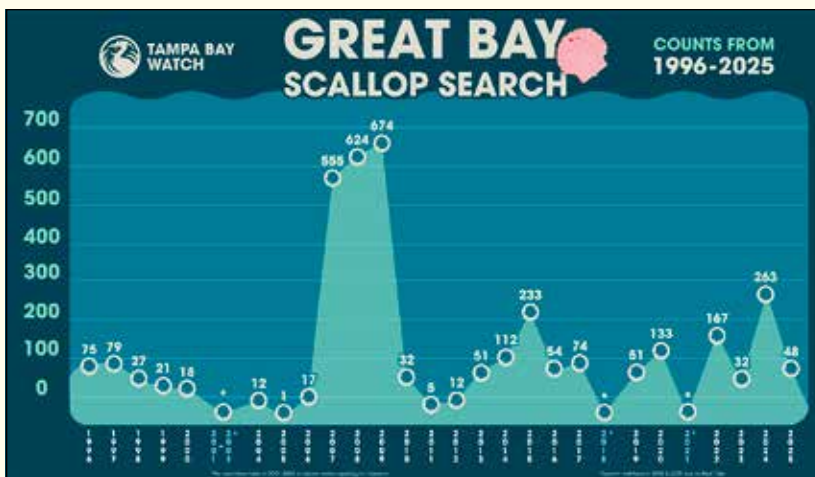
“We altered the format,” explained Radigan. “We took a single three-hour event where everybody gets together, and we extended it throughout the month of August.” Citizen scientists picked up their required equipment (a bucket with 50m weighted line and buoy, and PVC depth and width transect guides), downloaded the Survey123 app, and set out onto the waters on their own schedules to ensure this legacy data set logged another critical year. And generous support from manufacturing company Owens Corning meant the pivot didn’t have a negative financial impact on Tampa Bay Watch.

“Everybody’s been so incredibly understanding, which has been really refreshing. It’s really encouraging and inspirational that people care enough that they’re still getting out and doing the scallop search,” said Radigan, adding, “it makes my job so much more fulfilling.”

At the time of writing, the window to participate in the search was still open and the data set was incomplete. But for Radigan, all data is useful data. “Zeroes are as much of a data point as 100 scallops,” he said. Early returns indicated another year of decline, which if confirmed by the complete data set,



Richard Radigan demonstrated search equipment at the 2025 event.



doesn’t necessarily spell doom and gloom... but it is a message.

So, why do a scallop search? In terms of the search: looking for them is fun. Like an underwater Easter egg hunt – if the eggs were mobile, expelling water from between their halves to propel themselves and hide. And the community event aspect of the search

promotes stewardship for the Bay, through which citizens personally invest in the care and wellbeing of the ecosystems.

But why scallops? They are an indicator species. They are very sensitive to water quality changes including rapid shifts in temperature, algal blooms, and minerals in the water. Scallops are filter-feeders, and an adult bay scallop can filter over 90 gallons of water a day. They need clear saltwater to flourish. They also require sea grass for their habitat, and restoring healthy sea grass beds continues to be an objective in parts of Tampa Bay. But there is more to the story of our Bay scallop numbers.

Scallops are a food source for animals such as sharks and rays whose population numbers have increased as their conservation efforts have proven successful. Even the scallop’s own life cycle creates obstacles for a robust resurgence. Their life span is approximately 12 months, which, while helpful for planning an annual event, is a narrow window for a creature to mature and spawn. A single scallop can spawn around 12 million eggs, but on average, only one will make it to adulthood. Not one million... just one.

Even with all the compounding factors, scallop trends are an important tool for assessing water conditions and shaping guidance. As Tampa Bay Watch Founder Peter Clark told *The Gabber Newspaper* at last year’s event, “It’s all a matter of dialing back the nutrients so that we have good water quality. Good light going through the water to the seagrass beds and getting those seagrasses to grow will continue to improve water quality. It’s a cycle, and you want to be on the good side of the cycle.”

Decades ago, scallops could be harvested in Tampa Bay. But by the 1960s, their population disappeared, likely due to overharvesting and degraded water conditions. Among the efforts that began in the 1990s to restore both the seagrass and the scallops, the Great Bay Scallop Search has become a cornerstone initiative for the organization.

“This is literally our longest running community monitoring program,” said Clark. Over the 30-year data set, the record high was in 2009 with 674 scallops found. And the record low was just four years earlier, when the search in 2005 identified one single scallop.



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The scallop counts for the last 15 years have fluctuated but remain nominal for the size of the area being surveyed. The full story of the scallops and the watershed is comprised, not only of compounding factors in the water, but of complex land-based factors – many of which residents can control. Or, at least, influence.

“I think it’s really important for people who live throughout Pinellas County to understand that their actions, even in the center of the county, can have profound effects on our waters,” Radigan said. “These major weather events, which we take as our summertime storms, dump a lot of water – two to three inches of water – throughout a neighborhood. That’s hundreds of thousands of gallons of water

that’s being washed into the Bay.” Stormwater runoff carrying fertilizer, automotive fluids, pet waste, lawn clippings, construction sediment, debris, and microplastics contaminates lakes, rivers, Tampa Bay, and eventually the Gulf of Mexico. And pollution in the water affects everything, from the aquatic ecosystem to our own health.

Tampa Bay Estuary Program’s website, tbep.org, shares several simple steps to make positive impacts. One of the most effective is cleaning up after our pets. There are an estimated half a million dogs living around the Tampa Bay watershed and they deposit 125 tons of waste on the ground every day. Pet waste in local bodies of water is an outsized contributor to disease-causing bacteria – and one of the easiest pollutants we can prevent.

They also branded “Be Floridian,” an initiative to promote native planting and remind residents to forego the fertilizer. You can also join them and other water-focused nonprofits at the 2026 Tampa Bay Debris Derby, scheduled for Saturday, September 26 – a gamifying of trash collection by land or by water with big prizes and a big sense of community pride.

Richard Radigan can’t wait to foster that sense of community at the next Annual



Required equipment for volunteer citizen scientists at the Annual Scallop Search photographed in 2025.

Great Bay Scallop Search. “An event like this, I start planning on day-plus-one,” he said, smiling. Which means the 32nd Annual is already in the works. And weather permitting, in late summer 2027, Tampa Bay Watch will see you at 9 am on the beach. ●



In addition to the annual scallop search, there are a number of other volunteer events to get involved in helping the Bay. Visit tampabaywatch.org to learn more.



Tampa Bay Watch founder Peter Clark checking in with volunteers at the 2025 event.

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Totally Metal: The Wild Art of Scott Rogers



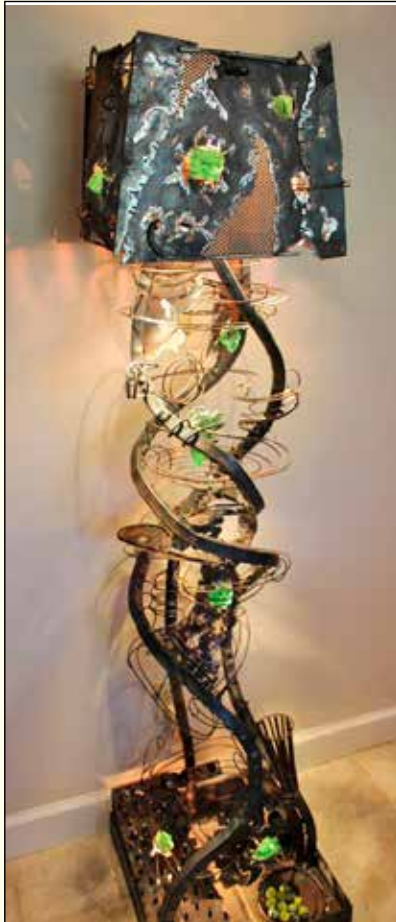
The precise art of HIS/HERS MIRRORS.



Detail from DAY OF THE DEAD, shown below.



Scott's latest project, MEDUSA.



Scott's favorite piece, KRYPTON.

Brandy Stark

This article has an unusual start. The *Northeast Journal's* own Julie Johnston, the creative behind the look of our publication, came across local artist Scott Rogers at a street art fair in St. Petersburg and "fell in love with his metal artwork."

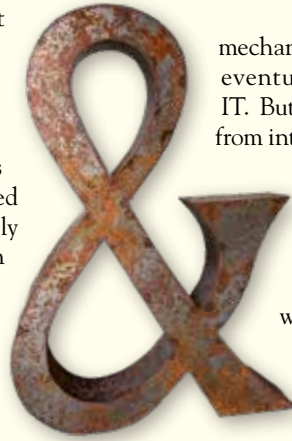
Julie took his business card and later contacted him, and she now "proudly owns an 18-inch-high ampersand" made by the artist. She later dropped off metal scraps and tools that she had been saving for "an abandoned art project of my own." She was delighted to see Scott's art studio and try her hand at welding. "It's not easy!"

In noting her admiration for his work, Julie says: "I'm a graphic designer, and his art speaks to my graphic sense, in its order and logic. Plus it's just super cool."

Growing up in Bradenton, Scott is a native of the tri-county area, but he moved to St. Petersburg in 2010.

"I had gotten a job in Tampa, but my wife and I had family in Bradenton. We were looking for something in between both locations," he explains. "We rented a house in the Old Northeast for two years." Later, Scott and his family moved to a house on a canal in the Northeast Parkshore area, near Crisp Park. "I love my neighborhood. We take turns hosting get-togethers for major holidays. Mine is the 4th of July."

Artistically, Scott's career had a bit of a winding start. In college, he worked on designing lofts for other students living in dorms, helping others to find more room to live in a small space. His day job, as a



Scott Rogers in his metal-art shop with Romeo. Below: The AMPERSAND Scott made for Julie. Bottom: GOLIATH.

mechanical engineer for Motorola, eventually transitioning into IT. But his artistic side was born from international connections and the impact of 9/11.

"I was living in London when 9/11 happened, and the consulting company I worked for asked people to take six months off, then come back when the economy got better," Scott explains. "I decided to go back to Bradenton for a month."

While home, Scott visited a friend whose wife was a very successful painter. She had inspired her husband to get into welding.

"I went to their house to experience and experiment with the arts, and within a week, I made a clock," Scott says. "It was the coolest thing ever, and from there, I was hooked."

When he moved back home from London a year later, Scott built a shop on the side of his house and began acquiring

equipment. Metal won his heart, he says, because "it's so permanent and you can basically make anything" with it.

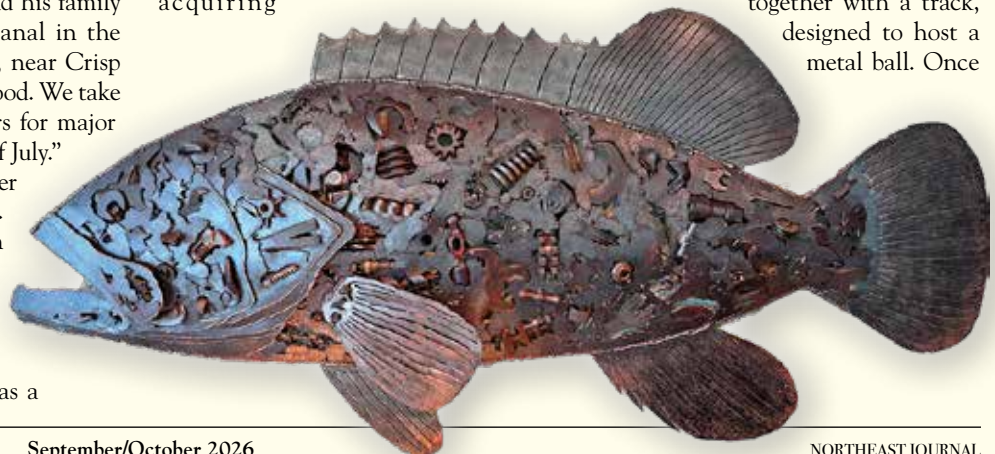
Scott started by making functional items like lamps, mirrors, and clocks – items familiar to his engineering background. With experimentation and practice, however, he stretched into more creative endeavors.

Scott has now made about 60 pieces in the past 30 years, noting that his works take time. There are occasions when he has to scrap a portion of a project to start over. Sometimes, it's like a giant puzzle.

"It is not an organized process," he explains. "I have a general idea of what I want to do, and I start to put things together. Occasionally, with more of the artistic pieces, I will put something together and take it apart. For my

current project, a rather crazy lamp, I had to get rid of a part that was supposed to have a fluid flow to it and, instead, it folded like a straw. It is a bit of trial and error."

His favorite work from his collection is *Krypton*. It's a multi-media piece with a variety of textures and shapes pulled together with a track, designed to host a metal ball. Once





Above: LABRYNTH. Below: THE GUMBALL MACHINE.

released from the top, the ball works its way through the various components of the sculpture, zipping along various track pieces that spiral, whirl, and dip throughout. The effect is the gentle grating of metal on metal to delight the ear while the eye is pulled along with the ball to every part of the piece. It takes just over a minute for the ball's journey to be completed.

"It's like a maze with optical courses," he adds. "And the glass pieces are from the slag of the green Pepsi bottles manufactured in the Tropicana factory in Bradenton."

It also inspired the name of the work as the color reminded him of the material from Superman's home planet.

"It was my first rolling-ball sculpture and took me over a year to make. It turned out amazing, and everyone loves it," he says.

Scott maintains a studio at his house and rarely does art shows due to a hectic schedule.



However, he is excited about his acceptance to an upcoming inaugural Art Fair Tampa, October 15-18. This show features contemporary works in the Tampa Bay Convention Center. Pieces were selected from a global jury process.

"My goal, and I've told my wife this many times, is to retire at 60," he says. "I want to have enough life in me to do art. However, I don't want to focus on it for money as it creates a sense of constraint. I want to make works because I want to make them, not make the same thing over and over again to get my bread and butter."

Scott says he has a vision of creating a miniature monster truck complete with a cooler that can deliver drinks.

"I'm curious to see who would buy it, but I know that I won't be mass producing it. I hope to make a little extra money in my golden years," he says, but ultimately that's not the goal. "I do it to do something creative and to have that outlet."

See Scott's work at craftedsteel.com or in person at Art Fair Tampa coming up October 15-18.

"How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!" - Psalm 133:1

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Waterside at Coquina Key South, open Little Bayou view, 2/2
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5164 Beach Dr SE, Unit B

Waterside at Coquina Key South, canal view with Skyway off patio, 1/1
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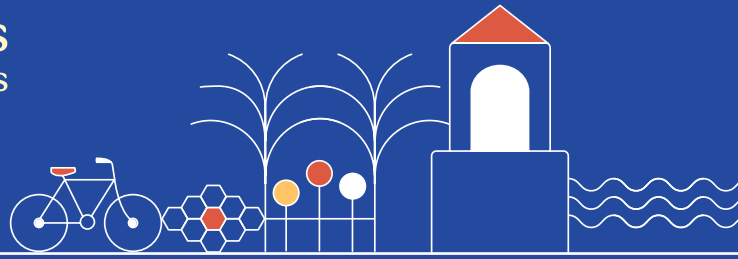
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Neighborhood News

Events & Community Updates

HONNA.org
Rick Carson / editor
rickcarson1@aol.com



Meeting to Feature "HONNA Honey" Beekeeper and More

The upcoming gathering will include an update on the Westminster Church property and an overview of fall season happenings in the ONE. The meeting will take place on Monday, September 21, at 7 pm at Westminster Palms (939 Beach Drive NE).

Ever wonder what it would be like to host a beehive in your back yard? Or wonder how the delicious HONNA Honey is produced? Local beekeeper Dave Schneider will answer these questions and more.

Attendees will also get an exciting update from Christian Yepes about progress on the Westminster Church property redevelopment at 11th Avenue NE and 1st Street. HONNA President

Nick Bell also will provide some insights into this fall season's happenings.

Dave has been a beekeeper for nearly 10 years. He tends numerous hives in the Bay area, including a couple at his Kenwood home. The HONNA hives are at the home of HONNA Board Member Doug O'Dowd. They are on top of his garage where they have plenty of privacy. Dave and Doug have a good partnership. "Doug makes a great salesman," Dave says with a smile. "I produce the honey, and he sells it."

Dave has been curious about bees since he was a child. "I had a great uncle who kept bees and that always intrigued me; I guess that stayed with me. And I just love honey!"



Bees have had a hard time in recent years. It's estimated 40% of the nation's bee population died in 2024 for unknown reasons. And in "normal" years it's not unusual for the population to decline by 25%. Luckily, Dave points out, they are very robust creatures and are able to replenish their population.



Bees play a critical environmental role, pollinating everything from our urban landscapes to the food we consume. Dave says it's not too difficult to start your own hive in your backyard as long as you provide a clear flight path to the hive and create about a five-foot privacy perimeter around the hive. He will provide additional details about becoming a beekeeper.

Meeting attendees will also be treated to a tasting of HONNA Honey vs. another St. Pete neighborhood's sweet nectar. And bring your wallet so you can take a bottle home with you – a portion of the proceeds go to HONNA.

All residents of the Historic Old Northeast neighborhood are invited and encouraged to attend. Light refreshments will be courtesy of *Stroll Magazine*. Note on your calendar that the final quarterly meeting of the year is set for Monday, November 16. ●



Purchase Old NE Merchandise

Men's and women's t-shirts and orange, yellow, and blue tote bags featuring the new neighborhood brand identity are for sale in HONNA's merchandise store. The shop is the latest component of the HONNA Board of Directors' new brand identity program directed by Old Northeast resident Samar Ibrahim. Purchased flags to display your love for The ONE with several color combinations: hunter green, burgundy, patriotic, diversity, and the new centennial flag and garden banner. Additional items will be added to the store as the new brand identity continues its rollout this year. Visit the online store and start stocking up! To purchase Old NE merchandise, go to honna.org/gift-shop. ●

★ HONNA'S SHINING STARS ★

To honor ONE homeowners for preserving or updating their home or property and investing to keep the character and history of their homes intact, HONNA recognizes them with the Neighborhood STAR Award.

Here are the STARS for Sept. & Oct: 106 20th Avenue N & 116 20th Avenue NE

Watch for new STARS each month, on HONNA.org and HONNA's Facebook page. Have a home to honor? Send info to Charleen McGrath: cfmcgrath@msn.com. ●



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A Volunteer Opportunity in The Historic Old Northeast

Westminster Palms has ongoing volunteer positions available in its Life Planning Community located right here in the neighborhood. Adult volunteers are needed, though volunteers can be as young as 14 years of age. Highschool students can volunteer, and those hours can qualify towards Bright Futures and/or the International Baccalaureate (IB) programs.

Here's what is offered:

- Year-round or seasonal volunteer positions
- Flexible hours (day, evening, weekends)
- Opportunity to enhance the community with talent/time
- Opportunity to meet, work, and play with wonderful older adults, which will enrich their lives and yours

Some volunteer opportunities:

- Visiting with residents
- Assisting staff with various scheduled activities (parties, events, outings, music programs, etc.)
- Walking with residents
- Playing games with residents
- Accompanying residents to events and activities within the Old Northeast
- Sharing or offering activities that showcase your talents such as singing, crafts, dancing, fishing, computer/tech assistance and more. Group volunteering opportunities as well.

Call or email Jason Martino, director of volunteers, at 727-894-2102 ext 284 or jmartino@wservices.org for info. ●



Autumn Weather Ushers in Porch Parties and the 28th Annual Candlelight Home Tour

The temperature suddenly decreases from a stifling 95 degrees to a reasonable daytime high of 80 and suddenly it's autumn in the Tampa Bay tropics! And in the Historic ONE that means time to get out, socialize and meet friends and neighbors who've been "hibernating" for the greater portion of June-August.

HONNA makes it easy and fun for neighbors to get together with a Porch Party the third Friday of most months. Friends and neighbors gather at a resident's home between 7:30-10 pm to catch up, meet new Old Northeast residents, and reconnect with ones we've missed seeing. Porch Parties are free for HONNA members. Non-member residents of the ONE and members' guests are welcome to attend, but the association requests a donation at the door to help defray party costs. Participants will enjoy lite bites and non-alcoholic beverages. Attendees are welcome to bring along their "spirit" drinks of choice.

The Porch Party season kicks off Friday, September 18, at the impressive home of Leslie Pappas at 445 21st Avenue NE. Leslie is a recent resident of the 'hood. Hurricane Milton flooded her former home on Boca Ciega Bay, so she restored it, sold it, and hired an architect to design her Old Northeast home that has a lodge-like feel with its cathedral ceilings.



One of the most anticipated events of the fall for HONNA members is Frank Hays and Steve Deal's annual "Come as You Aren't" Halloween party the Friday before the hallowed holiday. This year's spookfest happens the night before Halloween, October 30. So, start working on those costumes now! Speaking of Halloween, there's a rumor that HONNA may be planning a special holiday event. Stay tuned!

November's Porch Party will take place on Friday, November 20, at the home of Susan and Larry Wildes at 105 17th Avenue NE. A seasonal favorite is the HONNA Holiday Party in December for HONNA members and their guests. Watch for additional party details coming soon.

The Candlelight Tour Committee has been hard at work since June preparing for the 28th annual holiday tradition set for Sunday, December 6, from 3-8 pm. According to Committee Captain Anna Broshears, this year's lineup of tour homes is outstanding. "In all the years I've been involved in the tour, I don't think I've ever been as excited as I am this year," she says. "Every home this year is a showstopper." Featured residences include a 1940s Mediterranean Revival on Coffee Pot Boulevard, an historic Granda Terrace beauty and a large four-square that's been meticulously restored. The committee is planning several updates and additions to this year's event that will be sure to please tour guests. Tickets will go on sale early November at honna.org. ●

A New Season in St. Pete

We hope everyone had a wonderful summer! As fall gets underway and we settle back into our routines, we're reminded how quickly the years fly by – and how lucky we are to spend them here in Old Northeast. Cooler weather and plenty of treats are just around the corner. Hope to see you around the neighborhood!

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Volunteer for the Candlelight Tour of Homes and Share the Holiday Spirit

One of the area's favorite holiday traditions is back! On Sunday, December 6, from 3-8 pm, the spectacular HONNA Candlelight Tour of Homes will light up the night for the 28th year. It is our largest annual fundraiser, and every dollar raised goes directly to support the neighborhood association activities and local charities.

To pull off this magical evening, it truly takes a village – or in this case, over 100 wonderful volunteers! Volunteering is the perfect way to meet your neighbors, show off our community's historic charm, and kick off the holiday season with tons of fun.

We have a role for everyone, whether you want to be in the

center of the action or help behind the scenes. Here are just a few of the volunteer opportunities:

- **House Docents:** Greet guests and share the unique history of our beautiful tour homes.
- **Trolley Hosts:** Keep the holiday energy high and engage with tour guests as they ride between stops.
- **Hospitality Center Crews:** Serve up warmth, smiles, and good cheer.
- **Registration Teams:** Welcome attendees, check tickets, and hand out tour guidebooks.



Shift times are flexible, the atmosphere is festive, and it's a great way to support our community. Volunteers get to tour the beautiful homes for free and enjoy a post-tour celebration. Sign up today by emailing your name and contact information to president@honna.org. Help make this year's tour the brightest one yet! ♦



Get Your Rowdies Tickets

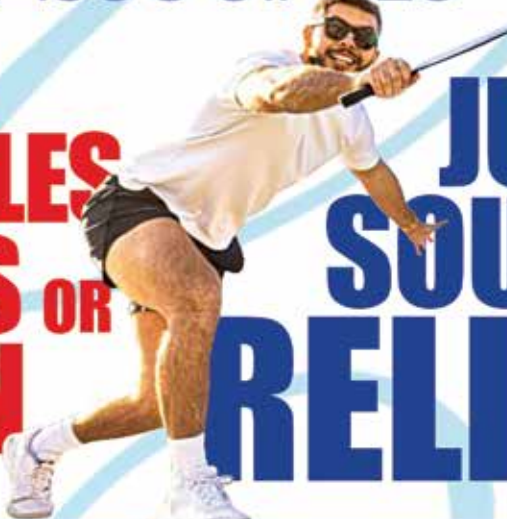
Join your Old Northeast neighbors for the "Old Northeast Night at the Rowdies" Saturday, October 17, when the league-leading Rowdies will be taking on Detroit at Al Lang Stadium. As part of the occasion, residents will be able to buy tickets in sections 300, 301, and 302 for \$26, \$5 of which will be donated to HONNA.

The Rowdies will highlight the ONE during the game, and folks are welcome to tailgate prior to the game in the adjacent parking lot. Go to Rowdies vs Detroit City FC – MyProVenue™ to grab your tickets for a fun night with your neighbors while supporting your neighborhood association! ♦





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Becca McCoy Finds Beauty in the Ephemeral



This October, The Off-Central will host a solo gallery exhibit by award-winning multi-disciplinary artist, and *Northeast Journal* contributor, Becca McCoy.

Everything is Fragile: An Exploration in Cyanotype is a series that combines film negatives, digital negatives, botanicals, and objects to explore “fragility, permanence, and the ephemeral.”

“As my photography practice has evolved, I’ve become more intrigued by alternative processing methods and ways to elevate images,” says McCoy. “The cyanotype process feels like magic to me every time. The learning curve is minimal, the materials are affordable, and the creative possibilities are limitless.”

The cyanotype process is nearly as old as photography itself. Developed in 1842 by Sir John F. W. Herschel, it involves combining light-sensitive iron salts – potassium ferricyanide and ferric ammonium citrate – which react to ultraviolet light. An image is created by pressing a negative or object directly on the treated paper and exposing it to sunlight or a UV lamp. Rinsing in plain water develops the print and a splash of hydrogen peroxide will instantly oxidize it, revealing its signature deep Prussian blue. The process was also used extensively for copying architectural plans, hence the term “blueprint.”

“Now squarely middle-aged, I’ve found myself spending more time looking backwards than forwards,” says McCoy. “*Everything is Fragile* is an opportunity to be vulnerable – to sit with the past and use it to formulate thoughts towards the future. And the title applies to the delicacy of materials themselves: paper, fabric, film negatives, flowers – literally everything comprising the work is fragile.”

“We are thrilled to welcome Becca and her incredible work to our space and share it with our audience,” says Alan Mohny, Jr., Managing Director of The Off-Central. “*Everything is Fragile* reflects The Off-Central Players’ commitment to creating experiences that engage our community in new and meaningful ways while reinforcing our belief that the arts, in all their forms, have the power to connect us.”

The exhibition will hang during the run of The Off-Central’s second production of the 2026-27 season, *Constellations*. While a theater ticket is not required to view the exhibit, the artwork is meant to complement the play, and vice versa.

Everything is Fragile: An Exploration in Cyanotype is supported by a Gobioff Foundation Microgrant and will be on display from October 15-25. Additionally, there is an Artist Talk on Tuesday, October 20 at 7 pm at The Off-Central with Becca speaking about the work and the cyanotype process. More at theoffcentral.com. ●



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First-Ever Museum Week Showcases Arts and Culture in the 'Burg

Jennifer Amato

St. Pete is quickly become a museum destination. Now, the 'Burg is about to experience its first-ever Museum Week, with perks that include discounted admission fees, movie screenings, art activities, and storytelling events, and more for residents and visitors alike.

"We wanted a big event to kick off Art Everywhere – something that would appeal to both visitors and residents," said Margaret Murray, CEO of Creative Pinellas. "Museum Week is an opportunity for us to showcase the global breadth of our museum programming, and we cannot be more excited to see this weeklong slate of events roll out in early November."

Pinellas County is home to more art per square mile than anywhere else in Florida. Art Everywhere is a collaborative effort taking place throughout November and December, with Visit St. Pete-Clearwater providing funding and marketing, Creative Pinellas leading the granting process, and St. Petersburg and Clearwater arts alliances providing outreach support. The mission is to celebrate culture and creativity.

Around the Old Northeast area, the following museums will be participating in Museum Week from November 1 to 8, with other events following:

The Dalí Museum's opening night celebration for its new special exhibition, *Dalí: Disruption & Devotion*, co-organized with the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, will explore Salvador Dalí's artistic dialogue with influential European painters. (November 6)

The Florida Holocaust Museum will host an intimate salon performance of *RISE: The Rock Musical*, with selected pieces chronicling the Kashariyot, a young Jewish women who crossed Nazi checkpoints to arm the resistance. That will be followed by an in-depth Q&A with the writer, composer, and director. (November 8)

The James Museum of Western & Wildlife Art will hold a Native American Heritage Month Celebration, with a family-friendly gathering celebrating the vibrant cultures, rich histories and living traditions of Indigenous peoples through art, music, dance and storytelling – as well as free museum admission. (November 8)

Museum of Fine Arts, will hold a community celebration of African and diasporic masquerade traditions to complement the traveling exhibition *New African Masquerades: Artistic Innovations & Collaborations*, featuring hands-on artmaking, a panel discussion, dance performances, and traditional African food. (November 7)

The newly opened **Penny Lane Beatles Museum** will debut *Here, There, and Everywhere*, which is a weeklong celebration of The Beatles through live music, a film series, a history speaker, and free admission mornings. (November 1-8)

St. Pete Reads! Lit Fest, presented by the Cultured Books Literacy Foundation, will be a



Visitors engage at the newly renovated Florida Holocaust Museum.



A reading with the Al Downing Tampa Bay Jazz Association in the Legacy Garden at the Woodson African American Museum. Photo by Élan Vital Visuals



The James Museum has curated a wide array of Western and Native American art.

literary arts festival with nationally recognized children's book creators, live illustration, musical story times, poetry performances, and artist-designed activations at The Woodson African American Museum of Florida. (November 7)

Sami Mangione and the KINETIC Immersive Dance Experience will be an immersive dance showcase inside the Duncan McClellan Glass sculpture garden. (November 14)

Tigertail Asian Film Festival is an Asian cinema and cultural experience that will include the premiere of *100 Stories, 100 Seconds*, as well as live Asian cultural performances, filmmakers, local artists, Asian food and community storytelling at the Imagine Museum. (November 14 and 17)

"The beauty of our museum community is that each has a distinct curatorial vision, often on either specific artists – as in the case of the Dalí and the Penny Lane Beatles Museum – or to honor a particular historic moment and community," Murray said. "Yet all are committed to welcoming and engaging audiences through wildly entertaining and thought-provoking programming and exhibitions."

Art Everywhere extends from the first week of November to the first week of December, where nearly 30 creative minds will present a variety of dynamic cultural offerings throughout the St. Pete-Clearwater area, such as music festivals, art shows, hands-on public art projects, film and theater premieres, literary events, and dance showcases at area beaches, parks, museums and galleries, theaters, and other local attractions.

"Art Everywhere is designed to showcase our world-class museums, interactive cultural experiences, and amazing local creators," said Visit St. Pete-Clearwater President/CEO Brian Lowack. "This addition to our lineup of major annual events in the destination creates a collection of must-see experiences to help drive visitation to St. Pete-Clearwater during a typically lighter fall season for tourist traffic. The month-long celebration of the arts provides visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves throughout the destination as they explore the artistic side of our beach culture."

Creative Pinellas has other art ventures in the works too, such as the *AMPED* exhibition, a dynamic new group show featuring more than 40 artists from Pinellas and Hillsborough counties, on view at the FloridaRama Gallery until November 1.

The organization is also kicking off a new film series, *Craft Club Cinema*, through a partnership between Green Light Cinema and The Common Thread Yarn Shop & Cafe. Upcoming showings are *The Princess Bride* on September 20 and *Cocoon* on October 25. ●

For the full list of participating institutions, visit creativepinellas.org/series/art-everywhere-celebration-of-culture-creativity.

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construction or awaiting repair. Many residents lost or have not yet returned to their homes.

Sadly, such devastation was not a “one off” but part of a pattern of accelerating extreme weather. The 2024 hurricanes highlighted infrastructure vulnerabilities and water service disruptions. The storms threatened two of St. Petersburg’s three wastewater treatment plants with flooding, ruptured water pipes citywide, forced shutdowns of both water and sewer, and caused sewer spills.

While many neighborhoods were flooded throughout the city, one of the hardest hit was Shore Acres. One of our city’s largest neighborhoods, Shore Acres has approximately 2,700 homes and experienced a record-breaking 6.3-foot storm surge from Hurricane Helene. According to city staff, approximately 2,200 Shore Acres homes were flooded during Helene and Milton. Water levels in some homes reached as high as four feet, and streets were not drivable. Property values plummeted. While Shore Acres has a wide range of property values, in the past year 55% of homes were sold or have a contract pending below \$400,000.

Shore Acres is the lowest lying neighborhood in the city. While the hurricanes impacted Shore Acres severely, the neighborhood also experiences elevated flooding from “Sunny Day” flooding due to gradual sea level rise and King Tides. A major reason for all of this is the neighborhood’s geology. It is shaped like a saucer with roughly one to two feet above mean sea level in some areas. Conventional gravity drainage becomes ineffective as tide levels rise.

There are similar challenges in other neighborhoods. For example, the topography surrounding Emerald Lake in North Kenwood is shaped like a bowl. Normally stormwater is handled by draining into Emerald Lake and then is piped to Bayboro Harbor. But during the 2024 storms the outflow pipes could not handle the extreme rainfall, flooding homes throughout the 93 acres surrounding the lake.

The city has done extensive planning and committed substantial funding to mitigate flooding in Shore Acres. Recently the city received a \$2 million state grant for a pump station on Denver Street that will pump stormwater water into the bay and cost a total of \$25 million. It is currently in the design phase and expected to be completed in 2028. The project will reduce flooding for nearby homes and keep streets in that area clear from tidal and rainfall flooding. (It will not help against storm surge flooding, other than to more quickly drain water out after a surge. During a surge, drainage pipes exiting water into the bay are delayed or blocked by the higher surge water.)

The Denver Street project will be the second pump station for Shore Acres. The first is the \$32 million Connecticut Avenue Station approved by the council last December. The Connecticut Avenue project is expected to break ground in the spring of 2027. Two additional pump stations are planned for Shore Acres in the Arizona Avenue area and near the Shore Acres Recreation Center (4230 Shore Acres Blvd).

According to Public Works administrator Claude Tankersley, once all four pump stations are installed they will be able to pump away the equivalent of four Olympic swimming pools every minute. There are presently four operating pump stations in the city, located across Riviera Bay, Emerald Lake, and 38th Avenue North.

Despite the 2024 flooding, Shore Acres continues to be a resilient community where neighbors take



An aerial photo of early Shore Acres, circa 1926. The development on the water is one of the lowest elevations in the city.



Pumping stations like this one will help alleviate some of the flooding issues in Shore Acres and other part of the city.



One of the completed SPAR projects, an AquaFence installed to protects a vital wastewater lift station near Albert Whitted.

Courtesy of the City of St. Pete

care of each other. With each storm, lessons are learned, not just for the neighborhood, but the entire city, and consequent improvements are made in flood control planning and technology to better mitigate future storms.

Spar Program

All of this is part of the city’s St. Pete Agile Resilience Plan (SPAR), which includes an array of projects designed to address stormwater flooding, sewer backups, sewer spills, and drinking-water-service disruptions.

The plan is designed to be “agile.” That means the city can adjust projects over time based on infrastructure needs, engineering feasibility, cost, funding availability, community benefit, changing conditions, and lessons learned from completed and active projects.

General Obligation Bonds

For the fiscal years 2027 through 2050, city capital projects for stormwater, drinking water, and wastewater disposal are estimated at \$4.4 billion, of

which SPAR projects represent \$2.7 billion. SPAR projects currently are paid for using utility rate funding, which means costs are paid by the public through monthly utility bills, and projects are undertaken as funds become available.

Rather than increase utility rates to accelerate SPAR projects, the city is proposing the issuance of \$600 million in General Obligation (GO) Bonds. If adopted and approved by voters on November 3, the General Obligation Bonds will increase the city’s capacity to deliver SPAR projects much more quickly and reduce consequent flooding and related damage much sooner.

Bonds will fund three types of improvements: Stormwater, Drinking Water, and Wastewater Infrastructure.

Stormwater Mitigation

The city estimates approximately 42% of bond revenue would be used for prevention and mitigation of stormwater flooding affecting homes, businesses, and critical public infrastructure. While this includes

Representative Stormwater Infrastructure Projects Are Proposed for These Locations

Drinking Water & Wastewater Improvements Are City-Wide:

116th Avenue North

63rd Avenue South & 16th Street/
Greater Pinellas Pt

Walnut Street NE/Northeast Park

Golf Creek & 9th Avenue/Azalea

7th Street South & 18th Avenue/
Bartlett Park

Bear Creek/Pasadena

Edgemoor

Emerald Lake/North Kenwood

Jorgensen Lake/Central Oak Park

Clam Bayou/Twin Brooks/
Perry/Childs Park

Shore Acres

Snell Isle

Walter Fuller Lake Area

Lake Maggiore Area



The city has committed substantial funding to mitigate flooding in Shore Acres.

Photo by Ray Moore

flooding from hurricanes and other catastrophic storms, also included is flooding from intense afternoon thunderstorms and King Tides. Possible improvements include upsizing pipes and culverts, expanding capacity in canals, creeks, and ditches, elevating roads, increasing water collection and storage, backflow preventors, and pump stations. Funds may also be used to mitigate surge, including use of living shorelines, living seawalls, “sponge parks” and other natural “blue green infrastructure” strategies.

Safeguarding Drinking Water

Some 16% of the bond revenue would be used for improvement of drinking water infrastructure. The drinking water supply is subject to disruption during severe weather events, sometimes leading to water contamination. Projects would include construction of new and improved pipelines, replacement of corroded pipes, and improving interconnection between pipelines.

Wastewater Disposal Improvements

The remaining 42% of bond revenue would be used for wastewater infrastructure improvements to reduce sewer treatment disruption, backups, and

overflows. Improvements would include upsizing existing pipes; reduction of pipe inflow and infiltration from stormwater; protecting and upgrading sewer lift stations; constructing wet-weather express sewer pipelines; elevating critical plant equipment; installing flood barriers; enhancing emergency backup power; and providing for emergency storage of sewage. Without immediate infrastructure upgrades, the next storm could mean more sewer spills and water or sewer service disruptions for hundreds of thousands of residents.

Looking at the Numbers

Many studies document the cost savings of such an investment. For example, the National Institute of Building Sciences has determined that every \$1 spent on federal hazard mitigation saves approximately \$6 in future disaster losses. Investing in flood control prevents or mitigates damage to property, reduces insurance costs, increases property values, and minimizes economic disruption including business closings and job displacement. Above all, there is the human cost of physical and mental trauma.

Bonds would be repaid through a dedicated property tax. The entire \$600 million would not be

issued at once, but only as required over time. Assuming the bonds were issued at once, the city estimates the effect on property taxpayers would be approximately on average \$96 per year per \$100,000 of taxable value. If the first bond issue were for \$150 million, the repayment associated with that would be approximately \$24 per \$100,000 taxable assessed value, etc. The city has determined issuance of bonds would be significantly less costly than an increase in utility bills for 89% of property taxpayers.

Resiliency for the Future

Both the Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA) and the Sierra Club support the GO Bond alternative. The CONA statement reads in part, “CONA supports significant, responsible investment to strengthen critical infrastructure and prepare St. Petersburg for the future.”

CONA also emphasizes the need to provide a strong oversight committee with significant neighborhood representation for implementation of SPAR projects funded through the Bond Initiative. Also emphasized are the importance of blue green infrastructure and further planning and development of projects to mitigate surge.

The Sierra Club statement notes the “bond is urgent triage for woefully outdated stormwater, wastewater, and potable-water infrastructure.” The Sierra statement also emphasizes blue green infrastructure, an oversight committee, and development of a more comprehensive citywide resilience plan which includes significant mitigation of surge. The City Council Health, Energy, Resilience, and Sustainability (HERS) Committee will address these measures at their September meeting.

For more information on the SPAR Plan, General Obligation Bonds, and proposed flood control, wastewater, and potable-water projects, including an interactive map showing the locations of proposed projects visit stpete.org/residents/sustainability/spar/index.php. ●

Will Michaels is a former executive director and trustee of the St. Petersburg Museum of History. He serves as chair of the Council of Neighborhood Associations Committee on Flood Control Planning and Resiliency. Email him at wmichaels2222@gmail.com

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Beatlemania Comes to St. Pete with Dedicated Museum



Founder Dr. Robert is thrilled to bring his expansive collection to St. Pete.

Jennifer Amato

It's estimated that 73 million people tuned in to see The Fab Four from their living rooms when The Beatles made their historic US debut on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1964. That's nearly forty percent of the country's population at the time.

In the intervening years, The Beatles place in the pantheon of iconic bands was cemented, and here in the 'Burg, Beatlemania lives on as the only dedicated Beatles museum in the country relocates to downtown St. Pete.

Beatles fans may be familiar with the original Penny Lane Beatles Museum, located in Dunedin for the past nine years. Dr. Robert Entel (aka Dr. Robert, from the song) realized an expansion was greatly needed to house the 40 years' worth of memorabilia he had collected, starting from when he studied abroad in the United Kingdom. After looking at other locations, he realized St. Pete was ideal because it has 13 museums of its own, making it a well-known destination, according to Craig Bachner, executive director of the PLBM.

"Dr. Robert loves his collection and loves that people from the outside are loving it," Bachner said on behalf of Entel, who prefers to keep out of the spotlight.

Phase One of the museum will transform a former commercial bank at 146 2nd Street N into 2,100 square feet of space to showcase 1,000 artifacts, 90 percent of which are from Entel himself; he has more

than 1,600 pieces in his collection that will rotate in from the warehouse over time in an area that is more than four times the size of the original museum.

"This is for the fans because it was collected by a fan," said curator Allison Holuban, who spent four months cataloguing every item.

The museum will tell The Beatles' story chronologically, sharing the band's musical, social, and cultural impact during their popularity as a band (not as individual solo acts). It was designed by Creative Arts Unlimited out of Pinellas Park, and includes items like a telephone shaped like a Liverpool bus, a rare (and fragile) Beatles Magic Slate, glasses worn by John Lennon, one of Ringo's drum sets, a serape worn by Ringo and his wife Barbara, long johns worn by John, the clothing and instruments they used in India, guitars signed by Paul McCartney, and, Dr. Robert's personal favorite, Ringo's cookies.

Sue Was Swept Off Her Feet

Longtime St. Pete resident Sue Z. was living her best life. She is a retired nurse who was enjoying her active and well earned retirement when severe fatigue sidelined her last January. After many appointments and lab tests, her doctors found that she had a type of cancer called multiple myeloma. "Fortunately for me, they diagnosed the cancer before it was able to cause more damage," Sue stated. The struggles she had to go through were just getting started though. "The fatigue had been rough, but once the cancer treatments started I was knocked off of my feet. There was so much pain in my feet that I couldn't walk. Things got so bad that I had to hire a home health aid to come to my house five days a week." Sue was suffering from a common side effect of cancer treatment called Chemotherapy Induced Peripheral Neuropathy (CIPN).

CIPN occurs when the harsh chemotherapy drugs damage the nerves of the hands and feet. This leads to symptoms of burning pain, tingling, and reduced sensation. The pain is often so bad that people have difficulty walking during the day and sleeping at night. These symptoms are usually worse during treatment and have the potential to last for years.

Sue is no stranger to acupuncture. "I used it to treat knee pain before I had replacement surgery and it was extremely helpful. My Oncologist recommended I reach out to Dr. Matthew Mann at St. Petersburg Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine." Dr. Matthew Mann DAOM, AP uses the evidence-based science of acupuncture with other integrative techniques like ATP Resonance Biotherapy™ that assist in improving blood flow which is critical when trying to help the nerves regenerate. Dr. Mann has been practicing acupuncture and East Asian medicine for over a decade. He offers non-surgical, non-drug options, specializing in complex chronic cases of pain and internal medicine. Especially cases like Sue's where prescription pain medications rarely help. "I'm so thankful for Dr. Mann! His treatments helped me get around again. Now I only have a home health aid come on days I get chemo."

If neuropathy or chronic pain has kept you from enjoying the life you imagined living in our beautiful sunshine city, give Dr. Mann and his caring team at St. Petersburg Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine a call at 727 - 235 - 0435. Like Sue, we can help you get back on your feet!

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"Nobody else has these, so I find it really interesting to talk to people about these things," said Harlan Brown, the museum's senior docent since 2017, who was so inspired by The Beatles that he was a drummer for 50 years.

Holuban, a huge Beatles fan herself, was particularly enamored by George Harrison's 1955 guitar. "My hands were shaking so much, being in the same room with this, let alone seeing it or touching it," she said.

Brown said he enjoys when people add their own stories into what is being presented at the museum. "People like to see a signed guitar or sitar... or a signed invoice... or other people have memories of playing one of the games as a kid," he said.

Bachner was one of the millions of people watching *The Ed Sullivan Show* that fateful night, has his own special memory: he said that his family did not have a TV. Going to his aunt's house on a Sunday night was already a special occasion but watching the iconic broadcast that made it that much more memorable – and he was hooked. "It stayed with me forever," he said.

"The impact of having memories of real-life events," Bachner added, "is most meaningful when drawing people in emotionally that way."

One of his favorite stories, he explained, involved "a gentleman from Surrey, England, who visited a couple of years ago. He returned this year and brought a picture of himself as a child with the same guitar he is now standing next to in the display. How cool is that?"

Playing off of the childhood wonder, a designated Children's Area inside the museum will be interactive to captivate new fans, with activities such as dressing the band with magnetic clothes, putting their heads behind a board for photos, and a see-through area with access to the Beatles universe.

With half of the memorabilia still in the storage, there are already plans in motion to expand the museum to the neighboring space in early 2028, for an additional 1,700 square feet. That would be a permanent home for an interactive yellow submarine built as a children's exhibit – 11.5 feet long and 4 feet in diameter, with porthole windows to look inside a movie set's worth of Beatles merchandise – that will be used now during events.

This fan destination hopes to attract the attention of the legends themselves, too. Although members have been invited to visit the museum before, Brown said he has "high hopes" that either Ringo or Paul will come to St. Pete.

In the meantime, the museum will cater to local residents and visitors. During St. Pete's first-ever Museum Week (vs. the annual Free Museum Day), the Penny Lane Beatles Museum has a host of activities planned for November 1 to 8, including free admission on certain mornings, a guest speaker from the University of South Florida who teaches Beatles courses, a performance by renowned Paul McCartney tribute artist John Babcock, and the showing of three different Beatles films.

The museum is also in talks with The Florida Orchestra to provide lobby displays during their *Revolution: The Music of the Beatles: A Symphonic Experience* on October 9 and 10; as well as with the Tampa Theatre to supply materials during *The Fab Four: Tribute to The Beatles' A Hard Day's Night* on December 12.

The dedicated team behind the PLBM hopes to impart the magical nostalgia and connection for those who remember Beatlemania – and for those who are creating all new impressions.

"It all stems from The Beatles and it's incredible to see that through the guests who come in," said Holuban, who especially loves seeing items with some wear and tear, or fan-made clothing, or personal letters and scrapbooks from fans. "I hope this museum overwhelms fans in the best way possible." ●

For more information, visit pennylanebeatlesmuseum.com.

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Arts Roundup: Spooktacularly Creative

Brandy Stark

Fall, such as it is, has arrived in the 'Burg! It might not be cooler, but suddenly 12-foot skeletons are popping up all over as folks get ready for one of the most creative holidays of the year. Here are a few of our favorite events from the season.

Art Centers

Florida CraftArt: *Formed by Fire*. 510 Central Ave. Through Oct 24. floridacraftart.org

This exhibition looks at metal through a dual lens, and examines the material, process, and craftsmanship – and how they impact form and meaning.



Tiger Tamer digital illustration by Palehorse

Courtesy of Palehorse

Morean Art Center: *Shapeshifter: New and Select Works by Palehorse*. 801 Central Ave. Oct 10-Dec 31. moreanartscenter.org

Artist Chris Parks, known as Palehorse, an internationally known illustrator, muralist, studio artist, and spiritual seeker, showcases how he remade himself throughout his career. Palehorse also highlights the works of 30 other artists with *Practice Dying: A Skull & Bones Exhibit*, reimagining the skull and skeleton. On display through Oct 30.



The Werk Gallery features paintings and illustrations by Clearwater artist C. Michael Erickson.



Museum Day features a host of St. Pete art locations offering free admission.

Courtesy of the MFA St. Pete

Morean Center for Clay: *Contemporary Woodfire Potters of Georgia* Through Oct 3. 420 22nd St S. MoreanArtsCenter.org

Eleven traditional woodfire ceramic artists are guests at the Morean Center for Clay, and the group plans to feature Japanese kiln traditions, folk pottery lineages, and contemporary ceramic artistry, all of which are integral to Georgia's artist scene. View demonstrations and talk to the artists in this free public exhibition in the Warehouse Arts District.

Museums

Arts Alive! Free Museum Day: Various locations. September 20.

Free gallery admission for Pinellas County residents on September 20. Locations that have participated in the past include the Dali, Museum of Fine Arts, The James Museum of Western & Wildlife Art, The Florida Holocaust Museum, Imagine Museum, and The Woodson African American Museum of Florida. Be sure to check museum websites in case registration is needed. Don't forget to check for SunRunner and Looper routes, too, for easy transport!

Galleries

The Werk Gallery: *Tradition and Impulse: Deconstructing the Modern Myth*. Through Sept 27. 2210 1st Ave S.

Featuring paintings and illustrations by Clearwater artist C. Michael Erickson. Drawing inspiration from global myths and the European Middle Ages, Erickson's work aims to reconnect to history through the myths, stories, and ideas that shape our thinking and storytelling today.

Memento Mori, Oct 2-Nov 1, ties into the Halloween season as local artists answered the call to show their best spooky pieces!

Spots Around Town

Bar@548: *Sacred Flesh*. Through Oct 3. 548 Central Ave.

September needs some spicing up, and this show will do it: an intentional exploration of intimacy, vulnerability, and the body as powerful and human. (18+ show) October features *Dark Matter*, an inquiry into alternate universes, unseen forces, surreal realities and the mysteries just beyond perception.



Artist Paul Nucci presents his dramatic pastel works in the Chapel Gallery.

First Presbyterian Church: *The Extraordinary Ordinary*. 701 Beach Drive NE. Oct 23- Nov 15. fpcstpete.com

Artist Paul Nucci presents his dramatic pastel works in the Chapel Gallery. Nucci has created art for over six decades, and he is drawn to moments that often pass unnoticed, and is inspired by his travels through Europe, Asia, and the American West.

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church: *The Mosaic Art of Donna Slawsky*. 1200 Snell Isle Blvd NE. Through October. stthomasstpete.org/art-project.html

Inspired by designs on fine china, found objects, stained glass, religion, and in the natural world, award-winning artist Slawsky creates from broken objects. She has been featured in local museums and galleries and teaches mosaics at the Morean.

Events

ArtLofts: *Spookyzarre*. Oct 4, 11-3 pm. Second floor of Florida CraftArt.

Back for its third year, this local-themed fun craft show features 13 spooky artists and their bizarre wares! The event is free for selected artists to participate, and they keep 100% of their sales. Support locals with this fun burst of Halloween spirit.

Grand Central District: *Halloween on Central*. Oct 25, 12-5 pm. Central Avenue, 22 blocks, Dr. MLK Jr. St. to 31st St., (Grand Central & EDGE districts). grandcentraldistrict.org/halloween-on-central

It's baaaack! One of the largest celebrations of all things creepy in the South, returns for a spectacular afternoon of costumes, trick-or-treating, events, and vendors. Open and free; pets welcome. Come and get your spook on! ●

PEOPLE AND PETS

Calling all residents of the Old Northeast, Snell Isle, Venetian Isles, Crescent Lake, Crescent Heights, and Downtown!

Email your HIGH-RES digital photo to editor@northeastjournal.org.

Please include your name, address, phone number, and pet's name. Photos by Brandy Stark.



John with Walter in Woodlawn



Nicole and Ben with Maddie and Annie, Crescent Lake



Carolyn with pup Mack in Historic Uptown



NEJ contributor Brandy Stark with her newest cuddle bug, one of ten rescue pups



Jack and Hopie are our designer's co-workers, and they ask you to share your People and Pets photos! Email **high-res photos** to editor@northeastjournal.org with **your name, address, phone number, and pet's name.** *~JH*



Joe with puppy Enzo in Allendale

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New Paranormal Investigations Reveal Old Haunts in St. Pete



The SPIRITS new hearse, Spirit, for community events

Brandy Stark

This year has been a busy one for the SPIRITS of St. Petersburg. We've revised and rebranded our walking ghost tour, put up a new website, and acquired an all-white hearse we named Spirit. She serves as a portable paranormal museum, loaded up with haunted dolls, a cooling coffin, a tombstone for a cat from New Orleans – the cat's owner was murdered and had a string of odd deaths in her life – and even magazines donated to us by Nancy Reeser, granddaughter of Mary, the most famous case of spontaneous human combustion in the US.

Of course, the most exciting events have been our investigations. The first was The Chattaway. We'd investigated the restaurant in 2008 with a follow-up visit until 2011. However, the impending sale and rumors that it was closing prompted us to check it out again. Our offer was graciously accepted by Greg Kitto, son of Jillian Frers, who has run the spot for decades. Now in her 90s, she is preparing to retire.

The location hosting The Chattaway dates to 1922, when it was first listed as the Four Corners Grocery. It had a soda counter run by retired trapeze artists from the Ringling Brothers Circus and was known for its loud parrot who alerted workers when someone came into the store. They expanded to include a peanut porch, where these snacks were roasted and sold. The shells were left behind on the dirt floor. After Prohibition ended, they added beer and wine to their stock, and it evolved into the Chattaway Drive-In, complete with car hops.

In the mid-1940s, the Younts took over, and hamburgers were added to the menu. The business changed hands several times, and each owner added or changed the site. The grocery was replaced by a recreation room with tables, chairs, and two shuffleboard courts. When Helen Lund took over in 1951, she altered the menu and introduced The Chattaway's staple dish, the Chattaburger. Her son Everett, a singer and local theater actor, joined her in 1954. He married Jillian, the current matron, around that time.



The Chattaway has been a St. Pete staple since the 1950s.

Courtesy of The Chattaway

When the building went up for sale, locals helped the Lunds buy the site. They added the tearoom for Jillian. Helen passed away in the 1990s and it was her ghost that was said to watch over the property. As per our original investigations, the tearoom was still the main area of activity.

One thing that was different this time, however, is that the remains of Helen Lund, who had been cremated, were returned to the family in 2025. Her urn was stored on the property and brought out for us to see. One member felt a presence walk up behind her. During the spirit box session – in which a radio scans the airwaves, as ghosts are thought to use radio waves and static to communicate – there were answers to our questions. When we asked, "Who are you?" the box responded with "Hel-len" very quietly, then repeated the name. During the session, the name was clearly heard, and during the review, we found that the name had been repeated about five times. Helen was letting us know that she was still there.

We'll be curious to see what happens as The Chattaway changes owners. Will Helen stay and continue her watch over the property?



A peek inside Rocket Fizz, where ghosts tell of an old robbery

We were also invited to investigate, of all places, Rocket Fizz in downtown St. Petersburg. The building that hosts this carnival-like candy shop dates to 1923, and the exact store location hosted Coastal Realty in 1925. It also housed a luggage shop, a coin shop, a store that sold cash registers, an art gallery, an appliance store, a deli, and, finally, Uptons, Fubar, and now Rocket Fizz.

There are two areas of activity there. One seems related to the period in which it was a coin store; the second is from the Fubar era. There are also small vortexes, or energy centers, in the store that may help these ghosts to keep a foothold. When we came in, the store employees reported mysterious sounds of falling items when nothing had fallen, and the occasional piece of merchandise that had moved inexplicably. In a couple of instances, employees witnessed items "jumping" from a basket.

When the SPIRITS did their investigations, several things happened. The area behind the cash register began to cool, and the temperature changes, via infrared thermometer, were recorded on video. A clipboard that was hung up started to swing on its own. We heard one of the falling



Jack Kerouac, at home in St. Petersburg

Courtesy of The Jack Kerouac House

noises and found nothing out of place. The thermal imager captured a small blue orb in one of the vortex areas. The spirit box picked up the name Shawn, a patron from the Fubar who passed away unexpectedly, the nickname of the store team leader, Cindy, and even the word "candy."

The words "help me," "Jim," and "it was stolen" were also captured. The SPIRITS's sensitives picked up that there was a robbery during the time that the place was a coin shop. Though no archival information was found, a chance meeting with a relative of the man who owned the store revealed that there was, indeed, a robbery and a person of concern named Jim.

The shop ghosts are relatively inactive during the day but seem to be protective of the building after hours. They have a sense of humor, which works well with Rocket Fizz, and, according to team lead Cynthia Muscat, they also listen to the staff to "knock it off" when needed.

Our third stop this year was the Jack Kerouac House of St. Petersburg. Located in Disston Heights, this was the final residence for the author and his family. For years since it reopened, I had heard stories of potential haunts. Jack, his wife Stella, and his mother Gabrielle-Ange, all had strong connections to the home.

SPIRITS had a six-person investigation during the evening and three members stayed overnight. The strongest presence there was Stella, who delighted in showing off her house, however Jack was there, too. They set off balloon lights, light sensors and REM pods throughout the night. Whispers are also captured via EVP (electronic voice phenomena).

At least once, Jack turned on one of the light sensors on request.

Sensitives felt drawn to Stella's books, left in the house at her death along with about half of the furniture, dishware, and playing cards from the family. Inside the books we found the Haslam's Bookstore stamp and a receipt from Maas Brothers, the department store located where the downtown St. Petersburg College campus is now.

The SPIRITS of St. Petersburg is tentatively penciled in to offer interactive paranormal tours and investigation of the house for the National Day of Ghost Hunting 2027.

More locations are coming up for investigation even now, and we look forward to sharing the shadows of the Sunshine City during this fall season and beyond. ●



Found inside of Stella's books – an old Maas Brother's receipt and tag.

So Much to Savor: A Culinary Adventure That Gives Back

Nanette Wiser

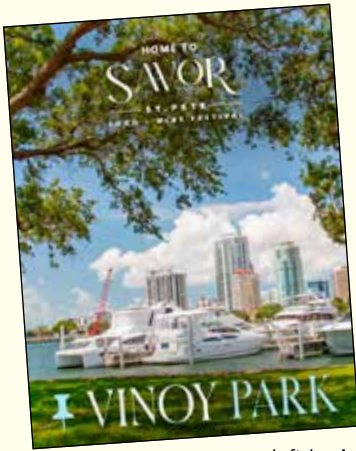
Tampa Bay's favorite food and wine festival celebrates 14 years this fall, and founder Tammy Gail and her culinary posse will be whisking up one tasty two-day party, November 7-8 at the Vinoy Park.

"We outgrew Clearwater Beach and found a fabulous home in downtown St. Pete and this year will be the best yet," says Gail, "featuring our friendly chef competition, the popular Patron station, new brands, trending new tastes, and sips plus our VIP experience."

Some local chefs will once again grace the stage, including Savor Chef Ambassador Lee Aquino, executive chef/culinary director for Teak, Pier Teaki, and Driftwood Café, who has been part of Savor since 2019. This year's featured chefs, both local and national, include Quiote's Chef Felicia, Uno Mas and Hail Mary's Chef David Reyes, Elevage at Epicurean's Chef Jon Atanacio, Sal y Mar's Chef Cris, Parasol's Chef Hans Bien-Aime, Juno & Peacock's Tim Lentsch, Sal Y Mar's Chef Ruiz, Luma's Chef Ryan Van Dusen, and Allelo's Chef Nick Ocando.

The festival will include chef demos and the competition, and Chef Aquino is looking forward to helping to make that happen.

"Whatever they need – a frying pan, where to get an ingredient – I love helping out the visiting chefs as well as participating in the chef contest, judged by local media and influencers," says the chef. "Last year was pumpkin and BBQ-inspired, but I'm still playing with this [year's theme]."



Left: Lee Aquino, executive chef/culinary director for Teak, Pier Teaki, and Driftwood Café, is this year's Savor Chef Ambassador.

Center: Chef Hans Bien-Aime from the Vinoy will be one of Savor's featured chefs. Right: Savor founder Tammy Gail says this year will be the best festival yet.

And what's trending around town? "Smash burgers, anything Latin-inspired, seasonal Florida flavors, and whatever I cooked for dinner last night at home," he says, laughing. When he's not working, which is usually, he is nurturing the next generation of chefs at Pinellas Tech and a local high school.

Understanding the art of cooking and showcasing the chefs' creations is part of the charm. Says Gail, "Tampa Bay and St. Pete have grown into a huge culinary destination with world-class talent. People want to understand what goes into making a dish taste great and look beautiful, and at Savor, you can experience that first-hand."

To tingle the tastebuds in advance of the big weekend, Savor also introduced a new boutique dinner series where guests can get a sneak peek of the Savor experience at several area restaurants.

Gail, the visionary behind Savor, combines her lifelong passion for culinary experiences with a talent for creating unforgettable events. With a background in media, Gail says she set out to curate an elevated culinary festival that celebrates not only the flavors, but also the stories behind their creation. While Savor has attracted

world-renowned chefs, passionate food artisans, and curious epicureans, the festival also has a mission to give back.

Beyond her love of culinary culture, Gail is deeply committed to philanthropy. She leads fundraising efforts for Glam-A-THON, a breast cancer charity supporting women undergoing mental health, nutrition, and lifestyle therapies throughout their breast cancer journey at Moffitt Cancer Center. As a breast cancer survivor, Gail is passionate about ensuring women have access to the resources necessary for quality care and lifestyle support, delivered with dignity and compassion. While unused food from the festival goes to local charities and food banks, Savor is also a benefit, and Gail hopes to make another big donation this year for women with cancer.

So, bring your friends, your appetite, and your sense of adventure to Savor St. Pete. Whether you're a foodie, wine lover, or just looking for a fun and flavorful escape, this culinary experience will ignite your taste buds and lift your spirits. ●

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