

Winter Edition 2025
Dec • Jan • Feb



Newsletter

CHNA

Crescent Heights Neighborhood Association Newsletter



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Attention all homeowners and renters in Crescent Heights! Everyone who calls this wonderful neighborhood home can help sustain its natural beauty, livelihood and sense of community by becoming a member of the Crescent Heights Neighborhood Association (CHNA).

For \$25 a year, you can take delight in knowing your contributions will help foster a safe, vibrant and engaging place to live for people from all walks and stages of life.

As a member, you'll receive exclusive invitations to special neighborhood events such as porch parties, family-friendly celebrations and business socials. You'll also be the first to know about important neighborhood and city news and have chances to meet local leaders and vote on critical issues that impact Crescent Heights.

Join online at crescentheightsneighborhood.com, or bring cash or check made payable to CHNA to any neighborhood meeting or event. We accept PayPal and additional donations. Questions about CHNA Membership? Contact Ziba Mohammadi, membership chair, at membership.chna.ziba@gmail.com

Stay in the know! Subscribe to CHNA emails.

Each month, CHNA emails subscribers important information about neighborhood news, happenings and events. If you are not currently receiving these monthly updates and would like to, please contact Laura Lorenzen at lauraliam5@gmail.com or text 813-431-0478.

Crescent Heights Neighborhood Association, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. Donations to the organization for which no goods or services are received are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Your membership contribution mayor may not be tax deductible. Please consult a tax advisor regarding your specific tax situation.

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CHNA Merchandise

Show off your neighborhood pride with CHNA merchandise! Visit crescentheightsneighborhood.com to shop flags, t-shirts and tote bags.



CHNA neighborhood graphic by: Peter Bramley (1945-2005)

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CHNA President
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Join us at Crescent Heights' Annual Lights in the Heights: A Night of Community Cheer and Giving Back • by Sara Howe

On Saturday, Dec. 7, Crescent Heights will transform into a winter wonderland for the highly anticipated annual Lights in the Heights event. Thanks to the sponsorship of Jenny Roche and the contributions of so many in our community, this year's Lights in the Heights is shaping up to be our best yet. From 6 to 9 p.m., neighbors and friends will gather on 8th St. between 25th Ave. N. and 26th Ave. N. to celebrate the season in true Crescent Heights style, with a blend of holiday joy, community spirit and giving back.

The festivities will kick off at 5 p.m. with a walking parade led by none other than the St. Pete High School Marching Band and Santa Claus himself. The parade will wind through our beautifully decorated neighborhood, setting the tone for a magical evening, before culminating at the block party site.

This year's block party promises something for everyone. Get ready to browse our first-ever Holiday Handmade Gift Market, where local artisans will showcase unique gifts and crafts—perfect for finishing up your holiday shopping. For those interested in showcasing their talents at the Holiday Handmade Gift Market, reach out to Amy Youngs at amyyoungs1981@yahoo.com. There's no fee to participate, but be sure to bring any necessary setup items, like tables or chairs.

Plus, kids and adults alike can enjoy the hot cocoa bar, cookie decorating and festive holiday crafts. S'mores around the fire and a delightful grazing table will add to the cozy atmosphere, while DJ Jessica will keep the party alive with

holiday hits. Don't forget to bring your own beverages (BYOB) and a dessert to share with neighbors. Water and beer from Rally will also be provided.

The evening will also feature a little friendly competition! Be sure to dress in your festive best for a chance to win Most Festive Attire, and don't forget to light up your home for the Best Holiday Home Display contest. Winners will be announced at the block party, so bring your holiday spirit and creativity.

To make this night a success, we rely on the time and talents of our wonderful volunteers. From setting up to running activities, there are plenty of ways to pitch in. If you'd like to lend a hand, please sign up online at bit.ly/4eQscit and be part of what makes Lights in the Heights so special.

In the spirit of the season, this event is about more than celebration—it's about giving back. We will be collecting donations to support those impacted by the recent hurricanes through Reach St. Pete. The mission of Reach St. Pete is to provide essential resources to individuals experiencing financial hardships, inequities, homelessness or at-risk situations while removing barriers that hinder access to a better life. You can support this cause directly at the event or via the organization's Amazon Wish List or donation portal at reachstpete.org/donate. Together, we can make a meaningful impact on our neighbors in need.

We hope to see you at this unforgettable night of joy, connection and holiday cheer.

Sponsored by; Jenny Roche, Broker • RE/MAX Realty Unlimited

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My husband and I moved to Crescent Heights from Snell Isle in 2015. Our home there had never flooded, reported by original owners that lived behind us. Years later the worst happened.

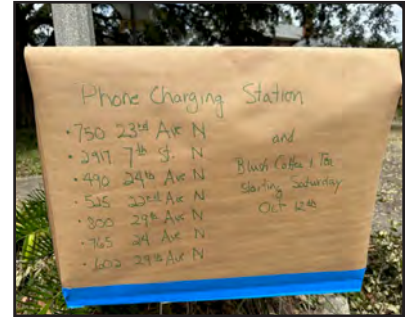
While we are grateful for our elevation in Crescent Heights, we are so much more than that! Our CHNA CommUNITY was on full display after the storms. With the help of our Council Member Lisset Hanewicz, CHNA was able to provide timely updates through email and Facebook during and after the storm. We asked for those with power to set up charging stations where those without power could charge their devices, and several neighbors immediately responded. Neighbors helped each other clean up our homes, alleys and streets. One shut in resident even received special attention from the City of St Petersburg after two large trees fell on her home and destroyed her garage door.

The Stronger Together theme from St Pete CONA (Council of Neighborhood Associations) certainly describes our Crescent Heights community, and not just post Hurricanes. We now have more people engaged in planning our events and their committee meets monthly. Although we sadly had to cancel the Halloween Block party, our Lights in the Heights event will be bigger and better than ever this year! As usual, whatever we need this neighborhood provides! We had about 20 people help clean up the debris in the party location.

For 2025 we will build on this momentum, and we need our membership to continue to grow to support the organization's activities. Please join or renew if you have not already!



CHNA President Amy Kelso



Charging station locations



Hurricane clean-up in the Heights...it takes a village.



461 26th Ave. 2 trees on garage door, City N-Team removed the door and installed a wood barrier with a white paint job



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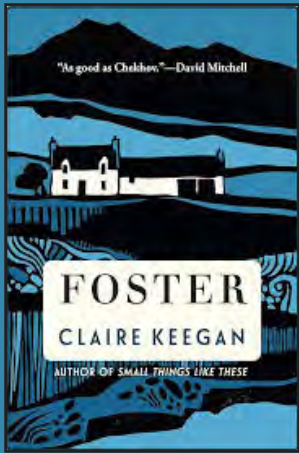
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BOOK NOOK



Book Group 1 meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 7:00-9:00 PM
Leader: Joanne Beckman
Contact: ejbeckman@comcast.net



Foster
by Claire Keegan
Feb 2025

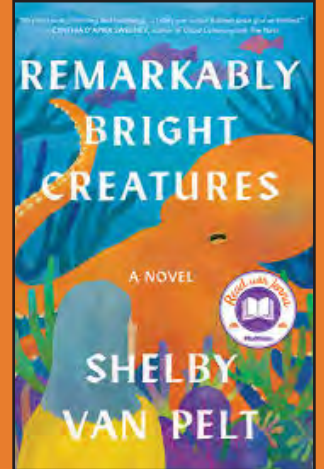
A small girl is sent to live with foster parents on a farm in rural Ireland where she finds a warmth and affection she had not previously known. When a secret is revealed, she suddenly realizes the fragility of this idyllic life.

Book Nook

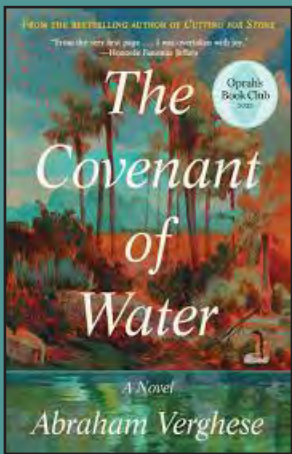
Thanks to the neighborhood's great interest in CHNA's Book Club, we now have two Book Groups, each with its own distinct membership. Participation is open to any resident of Crescent Heights. If you are interested in joining one of the book groups, please contact the email address listed here. In the event that the membership is full, you will be placed on the waiting list.

Remarkably Bright Creatures
by Shelby Van Pelt
Jan 2025

Tova's son vanished on a boat in Puget Sound over 30 years ago. Following her husband's recent death, she begins working the night shift at the Sowell Bay Aquarium where she forms a friendship with Marcellus, a giant octopus. This unlikely friendship serves to unearth the truth about her son's long ago disappearance.



Book Group 2 meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Co-leaders: Melinda Borthick & Sharon Dubble
Contact: chreads@gmail.com



The Covenant of Water
by Abraham Verghese
Feb 2025

Spanning the years 1900 to 1977, *The Covenant of Water* is set in Kerala, on South India's Malabar Coast, and follows three generations of a family that suffers a peculiar affliction: in every generation, at least one person dies by drowning. A shimmering

evocation of a bygone India, *The Covenant of Water* is a hymn to progress in medicine and to human understanding. It is one of the most masterful literary novels published in recent years.



The Wind Knows My Name
by Isabel Allende
Jan 2025

Intertwining past and present, *The Wind Knows My Name* tells the tale of two unforgettable characters, both in search of family and home. It is both a testament to the sacrifices that parents make and a love letter to the children who survive the most unfathomable dangers—and never stop dreaming.

December Decisions!

During December, each group holds a festive evening during which they decide on a list of books to read during the next annual cycle (March 2025 – February 2026).

Neighborhood News

Save the Date: Crescent Heights Centennial Home Celebration is Feb. 8th!

On Saturday, Feb. 8, 2025, Crescent Heights will honor its rich history with the Centennial Home Celebration, celebrating 100 years of some of our neighborhood's most cherished homes. This special event will highlight the timeless charm and enduring craftsmanship of these historic treasures. Join us for an afternoon filled with community pride, storytelling and festivities. Whether you're a history buff, an architecture enthusiast or simply love Crescent Heights, this event is not to be missed. Stay tuned for more details as we approach this milestone celebration! Follow Crescent Heights Neighborhood Association (CHNA) on Facebook or bookmark our website at crescentheightsneighborhood.com. Interested in getting involved? Contact Amy Youngs at amyyoungs1981@yahoo.com.

CHNA Board Update

The CHNA Board remains committed to enhancing the quality of life in Crescent Heights by fostering neighborly connections, addressing community needs, sharing valuable resources and offering a platform for resolving issues.

Following the CHNA Board elections held in November, we're excited to welcome Nancy Warner as the newly elected Secretary. Nancy will play an instrumental role in keeping the association organized, informed and effective in achieving its goals.

Our heartfelt thank-you goes to Rob Asselin for his three years of dedicated service as Secretary. Please join us in extending our appreciation to Rob for the countless hours he invested in making our neighborhood a stronger, more connected community. Thank you, Rob!

We're also thrilled to announce that Wendy Smith has been appointed Communications Director. For years, Wendy has gone above and beyond in her long standing role as the newsletter layout designer, using her creativity to keep residents engaged and up to date. We look forward to seeing how Wendy and her talent will positively impact the neighborhood. Speaking of, be sure to check out CHNA's new merch, including flags and t-shirts, that were designed by Wendy herself!

Shop online at crescentheightsneighborhood.com.

Together, the board and community will continue working to make Crescent Heights a thriving, vibrant neighborhood. Become a member today and join us in shaping the future of our wonderful community!

Neighborhood Meet-up: Three Birds Tavern

We had a great turnout at Three Birds Tavern on November 14th...over 50 people attended! Beautiful evening and good food.



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While we in Crescent Heights did not have to worry about storm surge during Hurricanes Helene and Milton because of our elevation, I'm sure that the ferocious winds and rain were enough to terrify most of us. I felt secure inside our house during Helene, with our hurricane windows and a standby generator, but I occasionally wondered how wildlife dealt with such extreme environmental conditions. Our squirrels, racoons and opossums could probably find tree holes or crawl spaces in which to take shelter. Our small resident birds like cardinals and bluejays could hunker down on the ground in the shelter of bushes or buildings. Larger hawks and owls might snuggle up against tree trunks (beneficial unless the tree is blown down...). But amidst all the TV and internet coverage of the hurricanes and their horrendous aftermath, one small story relating to wildlife caught my eye.

Hurricanes are now monitored with a relatively new type of radar called dual pole doppler. This radar has the capability to distinguish between different kinds of objects being detected. As Helene was approaching the Big Bend, an interesting blue "blob" appeared on the radar in the eye of the storm. Detailed analysis of the "blob" indicated that it was radar reflections of birds and insects massed in the center of the roaring storm.

Helene's eye, as it approached landfall, was 30 miles wide. Air in the eye was still and the sun shone brightly. But for a creature to attempt to exit the eye, they would have to pass through an eye wall with winds of 100 mph! As a result, birds captured in the eye travel within it until the storm degrades and wind speeds drop. They then may end up hundreds of miles from their normal habitat. You might recall the influx of flamingoes into Florida resulting from last year's hurricanes. With Helene, petrels and frigate birds, both normally living on open seas, were spotted in central Georgia and Tennessee as the storm moved inland and dissipated. Sooty terns, native to the Caribbean, were found more than 1,000 miles away in Indiana. This may be unfortunate for the birds, but probably created a wonderful opportunity for dedicated birders maintaining a life list of sightings.

Another characteristic of migratory birds that has always amazed me is their ability to detect weather changes so that they can take advantage of winds flowing in the direction in which they are migrating. The general thought is that they can detect changes in air pressure, but how that also informs them of the wind direction is to me a mystery. The most magical instance of this phenomenon that I ever witnessed was when I was living in Maryland near the Chesapeake Bay. Migratory tundra swans winter in Chesapeake Bay and migrate in the spring to breeding grounds in Canada.

One spring morning, as I went out in the dark to pick up the morning paper, I heard the beautiful yodels of swans. I looked up to see flock after flock of swans, as hundreds passed overhead taking advantage of winds from the south propelling them northward. With a full moon shining down on them, their white wings looked translucent. It was a magical moment.

In the case of Helene, the hurricane's movement inland coincided with the time of southern migration of many bird species. Radar recordings showed over a half billion birds migrated south along the west side of the storm in what is called the Mississippi Flyway, passing through places like Texas and Louisiana instead of Florida and taking advantage of the strong south winds on that side of the storm. In the days following Hurricane Helene, an "explosion" of birds resumed their normal Atlantic Flyway migration route once the skies cleared.

Of course, not all wildlife survived hurricane impacts. While turtle nesting season neared its end in October, many remaining turtle nests along the east coast of Florida were destroyed as a result of shoreline erosion from Hurricane Milton. Strong winds stripped fruits and berries as well as insects from trees and shrubs, reducing food supplies for both local and migratory birds, undoubtedly resulting in indirect mortalities. And in Indian Rocks Shores, two boys, ages 4 and 2, got credit for saving some birds in distress. Walking along the shore after the hurricane, they encountered several impaired cormorants, one with its head barely visible under the seagrass and another struggling to escape a few feet away. Those birds were transported to a bird recovery facility, but one can only speculate about how many other killed or injured birds would never be seen or found.

It's difficult to document or quantify the manner in which flooding from storm surge or hurricane precipitation affects all types of wildlife that occupy the habitats being flooded. The frequent and numerous stories of alligators gliding down streets and all varieties of snakes slithering into flooded homes are so common they no longer get much attention. But almost all animals have home ranges, areas in which they settled, matured and lived. Displaced from their home ranges, they then face the trauma of finding new home ranges and competing with others of their kind for what suitable habitat remains. This situation appears remarkably like that faced by the many Florida residents flooded out of their homes. What a perfect example of how humans and wildlife face similar impacts from massive environmental disasters that may well be a consequence of mankind's actions.



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From Great Challenges to Great Pride: The Journey of a Century-Old Home • Jim Tomlinson

Recent storms, hurricanes, and the subsequent family tragedies have been a challenge for many residents. Perhaps in sharing some of the history of our home may help some with coping. We purchased our home at 602 24th Ave. N. during 1980 and later would meet Fern (the last surviving Remington). She provided us with the following home history.

In the spring of 1925, Clyde and Mattie Remington, with their three children, Lela (10), Gayle (8) and Fern (2), left Jackson, Michigan, driving a Model T truck and a Model T touring car bound for Pinellas Park on the advice of family friends. They purchased land on the south side of what is now 78th Ave. and the west side of 57th St. to be recorded in 1928 as 7616 57th St.

Mr. Remington was a master carpenter and general contractor. Mrs. Remington taught school at the schoolhouse in Pinellas Park and later achieved the position of principal.

It is this heritage of a “pioneer” spirit moving to a new “frontier,” to strive for a better life, to settle and build a family home, and to do so with family unity, strength and perseverance that is a heritage worthy of noting.

The Remingtons, along with other “pioneers,” were successful, yet many others failed and quit, leaving the area to never return. The “pioneers” had many obstacles to overcome. Flooding, hurricanes, and the coming of the Great Depression and War years were just a few of these obstacles. In the case of the Remingtons, they suffered a great loss during the Great Depression, which resulted in a bank foreclosure on their home in 1937. Dr. F. Kumm and his wife, Violet, purchased the bank note and had the home moved to 602 24th Ave. N. in St. Petersburg on October 16, 1939.

Initially, they lived out of the two-car garage Mr. Remington built on the site and was employed at the Henry Lumber Company. As they prospered, they instituted a loan from the Florida National Bank to facilitate the construction of their dream home. Mr. Remington built the home with assistance from his family and occasionally family friends. They began living in their home in 1928.

The home has had several owners since, yet it still remains remarkably intact after soon-to-be 100 years. This longevity is a testament to the initial builder, Mr. Remington. His choice of materials, attention to detail, and his endeavor to do his best to build a home for his family has succeeded not only in providing for his family, but also for every family who has lived in it since. This exhibits the independence, integrity, perseverance and pride in one’s work to do their very best, that this is also worthy of noting as to the culture of the time. The Remingtons survived and later recovered financially, to again build another home in Pinellas Park.



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Clyde and Mattie Remington



Eva and Jessica Tomlinson

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- Tim S.

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- Michaela K.

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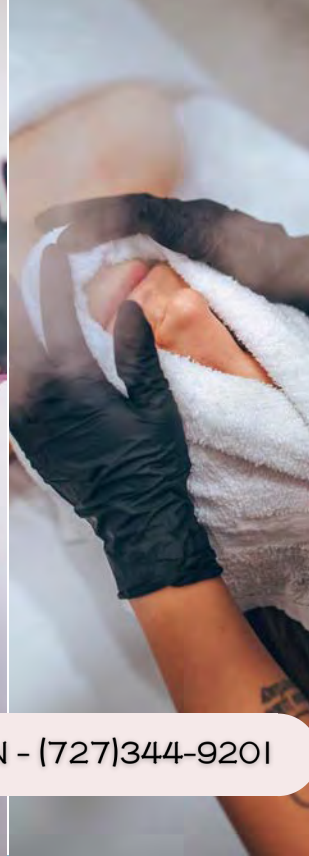
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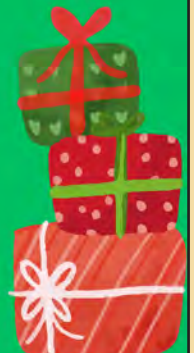
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Business Spotlight

Welcome to the Neighborhood:

The Violet Stone • by Sara Howe

It wasn't too long ago when we could stroll over to Crescent Lake and grab a slice of Philadelphia-style pizza from one of St. Pete's most beloved local food trucks: The Violet Stone.

With its growing popularity and devoted customer base, owners Dan Fekete and Brittany Costello took their mobile pizzeria to a small shop in Kenwood in early 2023. If you've ever been, you've likely encountered a line that stretches out the door. Even notoriously harsh pizza critic Dave Portnoy of Barstool Sports sought them out, giving them a glowing 7.9 rating in his "One Bite Pizza Review" series.

Thanks to its loyal following and huge number of daily food orders, The Violet Stone will be moving to a larger brick and mortar in Crescent Heights. The new location at 2609 Dr. MLK Jr. St. N. is set to open in early 2025.

The space, previously home to the House of Pipes and Cigars and Neighborhood Joe, offers ample opportunity for growth. The walls were removed between the former cigar shop and vegan restaurant, allowing for an open kitchen that will give diners a glimpse into how The Violet Stone makes everything on its menu from scratch with simple, fresh ingredients like Bianca DiNapoli organic tomatoes for their tomato sauce.

The restaurant will also feature 85 seats, a back room for catering parties and additional pizza ovens to keep up with the high demand for pies while continuously improving the menu and maintaining focus on food quality. All of The Violet Stone's pies are well done with charred edges and zero flop, topped with fresh basil, shredded Parmigiano Reggiano.

While pizza is what they're known for, The Violet Stone also serves hearty sandwiches. (Portnoy tried the cheesesteak during his visit, too, giving it an impressive 9.2 rating and saying it was the "real deal." That's easy to understand as the pizzeria sells 300 cheesesteaks each day.) They'll also introduce homemade pasta, as well as beer and wine at an inside-outside bar.

What sets The Violet Stone apart from other pizzerias is its attention to detail and its approach to cooking. Unlike many chefs, Dan didn't grow up in a kitchen or receive formal culinary training. Instead, he learned through trial and error, constantly refining his recipes until he achieved the perfect results. For example, he studied French pastry and bread making to come up with their recipe and process for bread-like dough that sets their crust apart from competitors. This hands-on, experimental approach has been key to the pizzeria's success, as Dan continues to be actively involved in the kitchen, crafting pizzas himself.

As the business grows, The Violet Stone plans to hire additional kitchen staff for the new location, which will operate six days a week, from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., closed on Tuesdays.

For the latest news and updates, follow The Violet Stone on Facebook and Instagram. Keep an eye out for the grand opening in January! Visit thevioletstone.com to learn more.



Pizza and cheesesteak...YUM!



Violet Stone Staff with Dave Portnoy of Barstool Sports.

Meet Your Neighbor: Bonnie Suits • by Sara Howe

At 79 years young, Bonnie Suits is an inspiration to all who meet her. Whether she's riding her old-fashioned yellow cruiser, taking a morning walk, or attending a Silver Sneakers class, Bonnie embraces every opportunity to stay active in nature, engage with the community and love her family.

Originally from a small town in southern Indiana, Bonnie moved to St. Petersburg in March 2014. She first settled into a rental on 23rd Avenue North in Crescent Heights before moving in with her son, Sean, and daughter-in-law, Sarah, in a cozy mother-in-law suite on 29th Avenue North. "I couldn't be happier here," she says. "I don't miss the winters one bit!" Now in the Sunshine City, Bonnie loves being close to her family, especially her 14-year-old grandson, whom she takes delight in watching grow up.

A dedicated fitness enthusiast, Bonnie hits the gym nearly every morning for strength and flexibility exercises. She enjoys the social aspect of the class and the opportunity to stay strong, which complements her other physical activities like walking and biking.

Her love for the outdoors is equally strong. Whether biking up to Central Avenue to explore the shops or hiking through local nature preserves, Bonnie is always looking for new ways to connect with nature. Her favorite spots include Boyd Hill Nature Preserve, Sawgrass Lake Park, and Weedon Island Preserve. "There's so much beauty to discover in St. Pete," she says, and she loves sharing her favorite gems with anyone who asks.

Bonnie also has a deep appreciation for our neighborhood, especially the wonderful people who make Crescent Heights so special. "The neighbors are amazing. We're all there looking out for each other, and that means a lot," she says.

As she approaches her 80th birthday on January 5, Bonnie reflects on a life well-lived. "I've had such a wonderful life. I'm so proud to be a mom and grandmother, and so happy to live in Crescent Heights," she says.

The next time you see the little old lady on her yellow cruiser, give her a wave—she's a living testament to the joy of living life to the fullest, no matter your age.



Bonnie & grandson Sully



Bonnie in Memphis



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- Current 1099-K change for third party Amount drops from 20000 to 5000
- Retirement Funds Distributions Turn 73 in 2023 or later can keep money in your account for another year
- Tax Brackets and rates remain unchanged

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to call me

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Neighborhood Events:

Save the Date - CHNA Lights in the Heights!
Dec. 7 @ 6-9 p.m.

Interested in hosting a Porch Party?
Contact Amy Youngs, CHNA events director, at events.chna@gmail.com or 813-300-4504.

Crescent Lake Cleanup
sponsored by Stewards of our Urban Lakes (SoUL)
Saturday, Dec. 14 at 9 a.m.

Coffee with a Cop:
Come and chat with our Community Service Officer Luis Martinez
Wednesday, Dec 18 at 8 a.m.
La Segunda St. Petersburg

Crescent Heights Centennial Home Celebration
Saturday, Feb 8
More details to come!

What's Up Around Town:

The Nutcracker,
St. Petersburg Ballet Company production
Dec. 6-8, times vary
Hough Hall, The Palladium

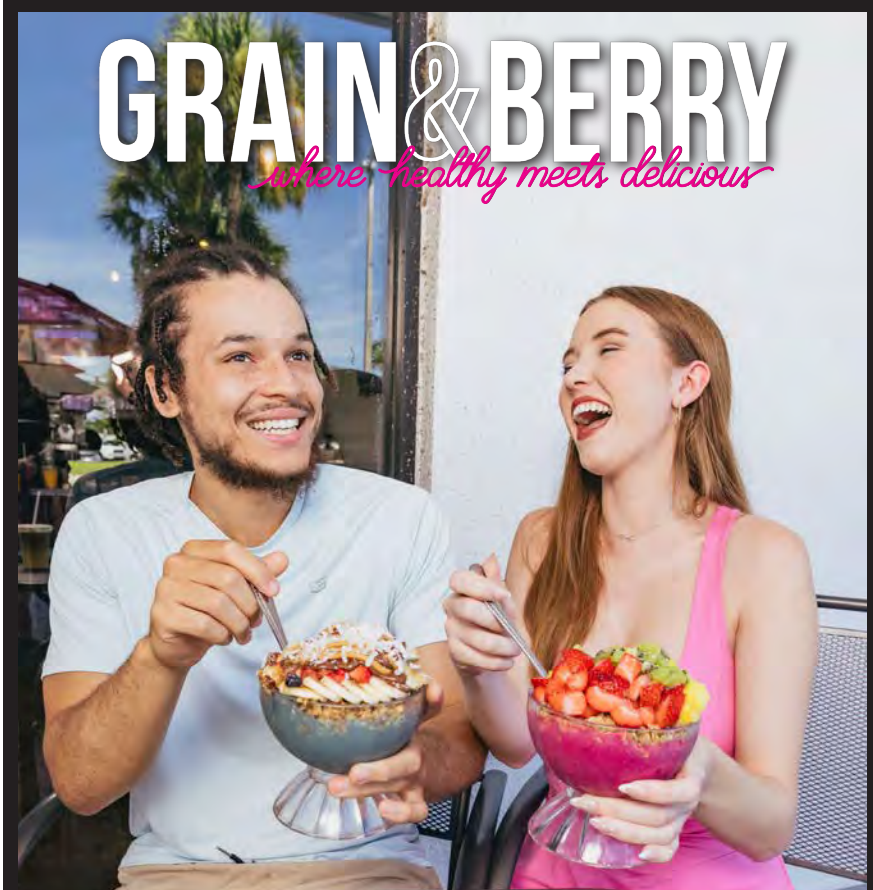
St. Petersburg Fall Seafood & Music Festival
Dec. 6-8, times vary
Albert Whitted Park

Snowfest
Dec. 7, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
North Straub Park

Holiday Movies in the Park at 6:30 p.m.
Dec. 7 "Nightmare Before Christmas"
at Huggins-Stengal Field
Dec. 14 "The Grinch" at Vinoy Park
Dec. 21 Movie and Location TBD

9th Annual St. Pete Ugly Sweater Bar Crawl
Dec. 14, 5-11 p.m.
Thirsty First

S'mores with Santa
Dec. 14-23, 6-8 p.m.
North Straub Park



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Holiday Sparkle, presented by St. Petersburg Opera
Dec. 17-18, 7:30 p.m.
Hough Hall, The Palladium

New Year's Eve at the Pier
Dec. 31, 8 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

Meddling: The Women Who Built St. Pete
Thru Dec. 31
St. Petersburg Museum of History

Tampa Bay BBQ Festival & Competition
Jan. 11-12
Vinoy Park

St Pete Science Festival and MarineQuest
Feb. 8, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
USF St Pete Campus and Poynter Park

St. Petersburg Fine Art Festival
Feb. 8-9, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
South Straub Park

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