

CHNA

AT HOME IN CRESCENT HEIGHTS

*Celebrating the
moments, places, and
people that shape our
neighborhood.*

Hidden Crescent Heights

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than meets the eye.

Fall Edition: 2026

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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).

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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 crescentheights.president@gmail.com.

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 may or may not be tax deductible.

Please consult a tax advisor regarding your specific tax situation.

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

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The theme of this edition is Hidden Crescent Heights. Did you know that many of our residents work behind the scenes throughout the year to keep CHNA running smoothly? This month, I'd like to shine a light on some of our "Hidden Crescent Heights" volunteers and recognize the many contributions they make to our neighborhood.

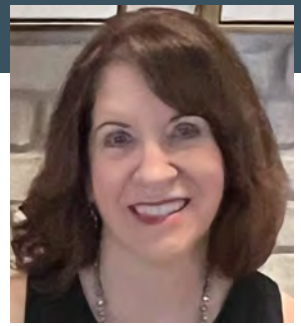
As a group, our Board members help guide CHNA by planning activities, making financial decisions, and supporting the many programs we provide. Here is a look at some of the important work they are doing individually:

Nancy Wildfeir-Field (CHNA Vice President) prospects for and secures advertisers for our newsletter. She also ensures that advertising copy is received and updated for each edition. **John Sullivan (CHNA Treasurer)** pays the bills and carefully tracks our spending, revenue, and financial goals. **Lindsay Ceron (CHNA Secretary)** records the minutes of our Board and general meetings and assists with CHNA email communications. **Jordan Postma (CHNA Events Director and Communications Director)** is managing both of these important roles and doing an outstanding job with each! Jordan chairs a committee of more than 15 volunteers who plan and organize CHNA events, including the Halloween and Lights in the Heights block parties. The Historic Home Tour was organized by a subcommittee chaired by **Nioma Brown** and **Rhona Hermann**. The CHNA Kids Club and its kickoff event were the brainchild of Jordan and **Taiss Lewis**. Jordan oversees the production of our quarterly newsletter. Her husband, **Steve Postma**, designs the newsletter layout, while **Thomas Paterek** serves as editor. Many Crescent Heights residents also contribute articles and stories. **Nancy Warner** and **Bob Lehner** coordinate newsletter delivery with the help of several neighborhood volunteers. Jordan also serves as administrator for CHNA's Instagram and Facebook accounts. **Brian Merrill** manages the CHNA website, and **Laura Lorenzen** assists with the President's emails. **Darlene Asselin (CHNA Membership Director)** maintains accurate membership records and sends timely renewal reminders. She also chairs the **CHNA Ambassador Group**, whose members help promote membership on their blocks, distribute our annual door hangers, and prepare and deliver welcome packets to new residents. **Taiss Lewis** oversees CHNA merchandise sales and works closely with Darlene. In 2026, Darlene also formed a CHNA Mahjong group, creating another enjoyable way for neighbors to connect.

My apologies to anyone I may have unintentionally missed or not named individually. We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributes their time, talents, and energy to CHNA. Our neighborhood association would not be as active, welcoming, or successful without the many volunteers who work behind the scenes.

So, when will you step out of the shadows and join CHNA? We would love to have you get involved!

- Amy



CHNA President
Amy Kelso

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

There are the parts of Crescent Heights everyone knows. Crescent Lake on a Saturday morning. The familiar houses and tree-lined streets. The neighbors and dogs you see almost every day. But then there are the things you can live here for years and somehow never notice.

That's what this fall issue is about: **Hidden Crescent Heights**.

I've always thought one of the best ways to experience our neighborhood is simply to walk it. No destination, no particular route, just wandering down a street you don't normally take. It's amazing what you find when you slow down enough to actually look around. A house tucked behind landscaping you've never noticed. A massive old tree that has probably been standing there longer than any of us. A tiny garden, piece of art, or strange architectural detail you've walked past a hundred times.

And sometimes the hidden gems aren't places at all. They're people.

One of my favorite things about working on this newsletter has been discovering how many interesting people live just a few doors or blocks away. Artists, business owners, volunteers, longtime residents, newcomers and people quietly doing things that make Crescent Heights a better place. You might wave to someone for years before eventually learning their story.

Fall also feels like the perfect time to explore a little more. Eventually, hopefully, the humidity breaks. Windows open again. Porch season returns. Evening walks get longer, and suddenly being outside doesn't feel like a survival exercise.

So for this issue, we wanted to look a little closer at the neighborhood we call home. Some of the stories are about places you may have passed without noticing. Others are about neighbors, history, nature and little details hiding in plain sight.

My challenge to you this fall is simple: take a different street home. Look up. Wander a little farther than usual. Talk to someone you haven't met yet.

You might be surprised by what has been right around the corner all along.

- Thomas



CHNA Newsletter Editor
Thomas Paterek

OFFICER TIPS

FALL SAFETY REMINDERS FOR CRESCENT HEIGHTS

As fall arrives, it's a great time to refresh a few simple habits that help keep Crescent Heights safe. From the return of school traffic to cooler weather and seasonal decorations, a little extra awareness goes a long way.

SCHOOL IS BACK IN SESSION

As kids return to school, be mindful while driving. Give yourself plenty of time to reach your destination, as school zones slow traffic and children aren't always paying attention when crossing the street. Watch for students walking and riding to school.

SECURE YOUR HOME

Cooler weather means windows and doors are often left open. If you're running to the store "real quick," remember to lock your doors and windows before leaving. Quick trips don't always stay quick.

DECORATE SAFELY

When putting up fall decorations, make sure they don't create a tripping hazard or obstruct sidewalks. Walkways should remain clear for everyone.

LOCK YOUR VEHICLE

Don't forget to lock your vehicle and take valuables with you rather than leaving them inside. Thank you for helping keep Crescent Heights a safe place to live.

Officer Jonathan Schweiger

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Community Service Officer
Jon Schweiger



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"I cannot say enough good things about Leah and her team. They were knowledgeable, kind, and available every step of the way. We signed with Leah and we had an offer in less than two weeks! She and her team have helped us through every step of the process, answering our questions and putting us at ease during what could have been a stressful season. I never thought selling a home could be such a pleasant experience but they have made it one. We are so grateful and I'm leaving a review because I want more people to find them and have an experience like ours!" - Jen J.

"We had an amazing experience working with Leah and the team at Herzwurm Homes. After a few months of conversation, she guided us through any necessary prep and strategy, then listed and sold our house in just 4 days! The entire process was so quick, smooth, and completely stress-free. Leah was so easy and pleasant to work with, and she handled everything with professionalism and care. We had been through a very stressful year prior, and having this process be so simple and seamless was exactly what we needed. We are so grateful for the expertise of the Herzwurm Homes team and would absolutely recommend Leah to anyone looking to buy or sell a home." - Lesley D.

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IF THESE HOUSES COULD TALK

by **Orshi Hajnali**

Founder & Principal Designer,
Astral House Interior Design

I walk around Crescent Heights all the time, usually with my dog, and I'm constantly noticing houses I swear I've never seen before. A porch hidden behind landscaping, an unusual window, an old brick chimney, a tiny architectural detail I must have walked past a hundred times.

Maybe it's because I'm an interior designer, but I always find myself wondering what's original, what's been changed, and what these houses looked like when they were first built.

So I started digging into the history of our homes, and found a few things I didn't know.

For one, there really isn't a single "Crescent Heights style." The neighborhood developed over several decades, which is why we have such an interesting mix. Craftsman homes from the 1920s make up a significant part of the neighborhood, alongside 1930s Minimal Traditional homes, postwar houses from the 1950s, and smaller numbers of Tudor, Dutch Colonial and other styles.

Once you start looking for the differences, walking around becomes a little architectural scavenger hunt.

The deep porches and generous roof overhangs on many of our older homes weren't just charming design choices. Before air conditioning, houses had to work much harder with the Florida climate. Shade and natural airflow were part of the architecture.

Another detail I loved discovering: many early Crescent Heights houses were built as winter homes. One house on 7th Street North was reportedly the winter residence of Mrs. Mueller of Mueller's Macaroni.

And at 605 24th Avenue North, the Crescent Lake Apartments reportedly once housed baseball players, including Babe Ruth, while the Yankees were in St. Petersburg for spring training.



Imagine casually passing Babe Ruth on your morning walk.

There are smaller clues hiding around the neighborhood, too. One of my favorites is the reported remains of an old fruit-loading chute extending from the second story of a garage on 27th Avenue North. Now I want to find it.

As a designer, I think this is part of what makes older homes so interesting. Not everything old needs to stay simply because it's old, but I do think it's worth understanding what you have before taking it away. Original floors, built-ins, windows, fireplaces, porches and even strange little details can tell you how a house was once lived in.

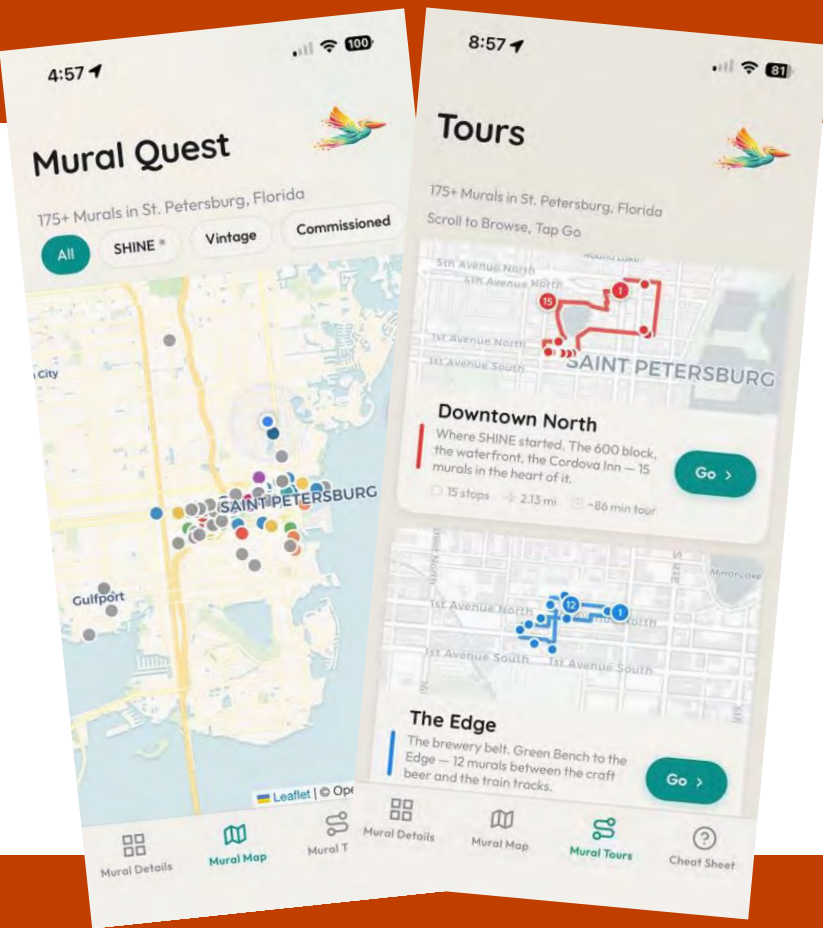
So next time you're out walking, look at the houses instead of just walking past them.

You might discover something that's been hiding there all along.

Orshi Hajnali is a Crescent Heights resident and founder of Astral House Interior Design in St. Petersburg.

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CHNA CLUBS

THE BOOK CLUB

Contact Joanne at ejbeckman88@gmail.com to join

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22: THE ARGUMENT BY VICTORIA JENKINS

After a forbidden party sparks an explosive argument, 15-year-old Olivia suddenly stops speaking to her mother. What initially seems like typical teenage defiance soon reveals a darker secret that threatens to tear their family apart.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27: THE CORRESPONDENT BY VIRGINIA EVANS

Sybil Van Antwerp has spent her life making sense of the world through letters. When correspondence from her past resurfaces painful memories, the accomplished lawyer, mother and grandmother must finally confront an unsent letter—and discover whether forgiveness will allow her to move forward.

BOOKNIKS

Contact Melinda at mjborthick@gmail.com to join

Bookniks meet on the second Tuesday of the month, and this fall we are reading *The Correspondent* by Virginia Evans, *Raising Hare* by Chloe Dalton, and *North Woods* by Daniel Mason. If you are interested in getting on our wait list, please contact our co-leader at mjborthick@gmail.com

NON-FICTION BOOK CLUB

Contact Tami at tami@tamievens.com to join.

Nonfiction Readers meet four times a year and are starting our new season on September 17 with *American Rambler: Walking the Trail of Johnny Appleseed* by Isaac Fitzgerald. Other titles this year will include *An Immense World: How Animals Sense a Hidden Realm Around Us*, *Cleopatra: A Life*, and *Hidden Valley Road: Inside the Mind of an American Family*. Attendance is open to the first 12 respondents. Please email tami@tamievens.com for information.

THRILLER-THEMED FICTION BOOK CLUB

Contact Dana at danaelizabethwood@gmail.com to join

The first meeting of CHNA's newest fiction book club, themed around the growing genre of high-level thrillers penned by women authors, is scheduled for October 6 at the home of Club lead Dana Wood Schoenbeck.

For our debut get-together, we've selected the New York Times bestselling *Beautiful Lies*. The first novel by St. Petersburg's very own (wildly successful and prolific!) Lisa Unger, this "tightly written thriller" has been described as "suspenseful, sensitive, sexy and subtle" with "perfect pitch."

Interested in joining our group? Please reach out to Dana at 917.302.0605 or danaelizabethwood@gmail.com.

MAHJONG CLUB

Contact Darlene at darlene.j.asselin@gmail.com to join

Come play on the third Monday of every month at Roberts Rec Center with your fellow Crescent Heights neighbors. We play from 12:45 to 3:00 PM and it is open to all CH neighbors but registration through our Signup Genius registration is highly appreciated. Email Darlene.j.asselin@gmail.com for information.

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TENNIS, ANYONE?

BY EARLY NEXT YEAR, THE NEWLY REFURBISHED COURTS AT CRESCENT LAKE PARK SHOULD BE OPEN FOR PLAY.

by **Dana Wood Schoenbeck**
Crescent Heights Neighbor

Never has a big pile of dirt looked so promising.

On a recent visit to Crescent Lake Park to check the status of the under-construction tennis courts, it was evident that they're finally happening. The previous unlevel, unloved surface has been fully removed and a backhoe loader was zipping around, depositing the soil that will soon support the new hardcourt playing surfaces.

And while there's no sign of it yet, one assumes a replacement backboard will also be part of the equation.

In other words, despite the massive popularity of pickleball, all that "dinking" will be confined to the existing six asphalt courts flanking Crescent Lake Drive.

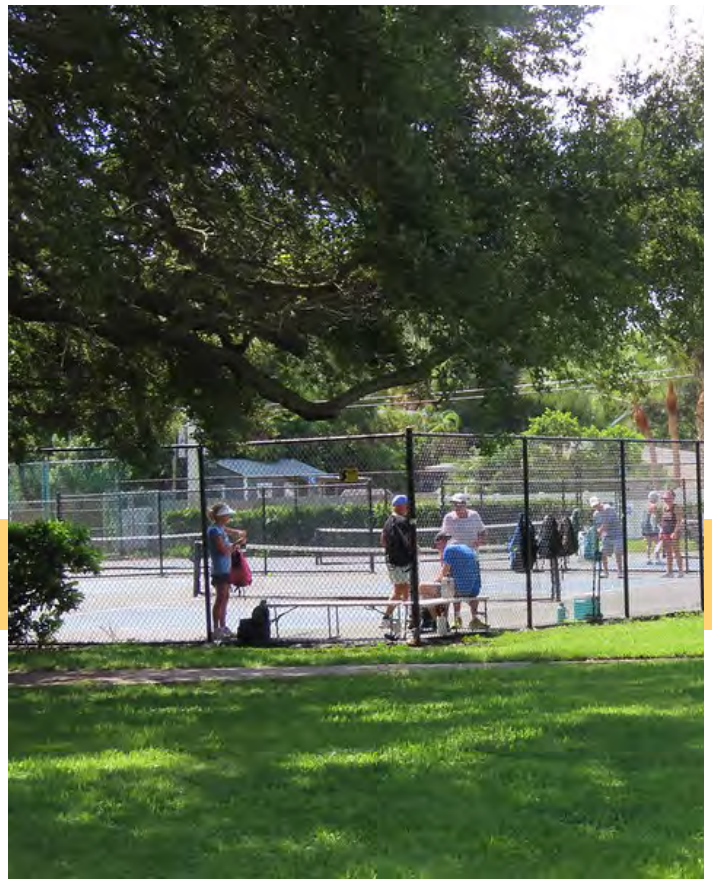
For avid tennis players like me, the fact that pickleball hasn't completely swallowed the courts at our cherished local park is great news. While I mainly play at the Racquet Club and St. Pete Country Club, having Crescent in my "back pocket" is fantastic.

Especially on summer mornings after a heavy rain, when the clay courts at my two clubs are unplayable. I'm also looking forward to practicing my solo shots against the backboard, if the city does in fact hang one.

And I know I'll have plenty of company. Although it can sometimes feel like pickleball is taking over our beautiful city (we're looking at you, St. Pete Athletic), tennis in the 'Burg is booming.

A few quick facts...

There are 30+ free municipal hard courts at parks sprinkled all over town (North Shore, Puryear, Azalea, Coquina Key, etc.). Also open to the public, but for a nominal fee, are the 20 Har-Tru courts at St. Pete Tennis Center. And then there are the member-only courts at the Vinoy, RCSP, SPCC, etc., which are a mix of Har-Tru and hard. That brings the total number of courts in St. Pete – of all surfaces – north of 140.



According to the St. Pete Parks & Rec website, the tennis reno is part of an overall "Crescent Lake Park Improvement Project" and is intended to "enhance playability, safety, and the long-term condition of the public courts."

Kicked-off on June 1, completion is expected within six months, which hopefully puts us in the "New Year, New You" timeframe. With all the physical, mental and social benefits "the world's healthiest sport" confers, it's no wonder it lands on so many annual resolutions lists.

Wondering what some of those benefits are? According to the USTA website --- home to that "world's healthiest sport" tagline --- tennis enthusiasts enjoy:

- 9.7 more years of life compared to sedentary individuals
- 56% lower cardiovascular risk by playing just three hours per week
- 20% higher self-reported mental health vs participants in other sports and activities

As for how much our court glow-up is costing, Parks & Rec won't say. Although with a little digging, it's fairly easy to surface a proposal submitted to the City of St. Petersburg Council for Fiscal Year 2023 that ballpark the refurb at \$300,000.

If Parks & Rec has managed to save a few bucks here and there on the tennis court rebuild – and we have no way of knowing if that's the case -- maybe the much-requested public bathrooms will be next on the improvement agenda.

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NATURE WATCH SOUTH

LET'S GET DOWN TO BEES-NIS

by **Bill Richkus**

Crescent Heights Neighbor



Sharon and I take a morning walk each day, leaving our home on 29th Ave N and walking around Crescent Lake via 5th St N and 7th St N. On one walk during the last week of July, as we were returning from the lake on 5th N, we approached 27th Ave N and noticed a broken wooden box on the grass near the curb. It was either a bat house or an owl nest box, which I had noticed high in the oak tree there during past walks. The box had fallen and broken apart. What the broken box revealed was a honey bee colony that had chosen the box as home. A substantial amount of honey comb was exposed, all of it covered with masses of worker bees moving about as if nothing was amiss. Clearly the queen bee was secure under the piles of honey comb and hadn't yet decided to abandon her damaged home. Feeling sorry for what appeared to be a pending disaster for the colony, I was delighted several days later to pass by and see a beekeeper working on the broken box. In white protective gear and hood, I presume he was there to capture the queen and relocate the hive to a more appropriate location.

In my vegetable gardening at home, I often wondered where the honey bees visiting my cucumber and tomato plants were coming from, thinking perhaps someone near me was keeping a bee hive. Going online, I learned that honey bees are long distance foragers. While they generally forage within one or two miles of their hive, they can travel as far as five miles in order to find adequate food sources. So the bees visiting my back yard could be coming from hives most anywhere in much of St. Petersburg.

I knew that honey bees are not native to North America, but I was surprised to learn that the first hives were brought to the east coast of the continent by colonists in the late 1600s. Over the next several centuries, the bees expanded their range to the far west. If you have ever experienced a honey bee swarm, you could appreciate that once a hive is established it would be highly likely that swarms would escape from captivity, become wild colonies and expand the range of the introduced species. I've had several experiences with swarms, each one exciting and somewhat scary. In one instance, I was sitting outside reading in late afternoon when I began to hear a loud buzzing sound. When I took my eyes off my book and looked up, I realized I was surrounded by hundreds of bees, swirling about. I never moved, and within minutes, the buzzing ceased and I looked up into a nearby tree to see an undulating mass of

bees, aggregated in the shape of a large fruit. The queen had obviously landed on a branch, and the hundreds of her workers bees has massed around her. By the next morning, that mass of bees was nowhere to be seen. Clearly the queen had found a new home for her and all her followers.

Bee swarms typically occur once a year and are triggered when the hive becomes overcrowded. The existing queen generally departs with about half the workers. But for the existing hive to remain viable, a new reproductively viable queen must emerge. The means by which a new queen is established reads like a thriller romance novel. After the old queen leaves the hive, workers begin to feed several larvae a special diet that will cause them to develop into queens. The first virgin queen to emerge from her queen cell proceeds to search the hive for any other developing queens so that she can sting them to death and eliminate rivals. While she is a virgin, she must not mate with drone males from her own hive to prevent potential detrimental impacts from inbreeding. So she takes off in a nuptial flight to a Drone Congregation Area (DCA). DCAs are invisible, specific locations in the sky—often 30 to 100 feet in the air—where thousands of male drone bees from dozens of neighboring colonies naturally gather every afternoon to wait for passing queens. How the queen finds the DCA is not known. To ensure high genetic diversity for her future workforce, the queen mates with 10 to 20 different drones sequentially while flying in mid-air, after which she returns to her hive (Whew!!). As long as her flight was successful, this single afternoon of mating allows the new queen to lay up to 1,500 to 2,000 viable eggs per day for the next 2 to 5 years without ever needing to mate again. What a story!!

While honey bees may do the yeomen's work of pollinating lots of our fruits and vegetables, there are between 310 and 315 species of native bees found throughout the state of Florida. In fact, Pinellas County is uniquely recognized by the Xerces Society as the first "Bee City USA" county in Florida. I enjoy seeing some of the native bees that frequent the pollinator bed at our community garden. The big iridescent black carpenter bees cause flowers to droop from their weight, while bumble bees truly seem to bumble and iridescent green sweat bees zip around. Nature is truly beautiful, amazing and wonderful!

ZIBA

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MEET HANK

THE HIDDEN GEM HUNTER OF CRESCENT HEIGHTS

by **Thomas Paterek**, Newsletter Editor
Rebecca, Owner

If you've spent time walking through Crescent Heights, chances are you've passed one of the neighborhood's best-kept secrets without even realizing it. His name is Hank.

Hank is a ten-month-old West Highland Terrier, better known as a Westie, and despite his young age, he's already become an expert at uncovering the hidden gems that inspired this issue of the newsletter.

Hank's story actually began with family. While helping a neighbor choose a Westie puppy named Josie, Hank made a decision of his own. He picked Rebecca and her family instead, ensuring he'd live just a block away from his sister so he could keep an eye on her.

When it comes to neighborhood adventures, Hank has his route figured out. His favorite stretch is 27th Avenue North, where the lush landscaping provides endless hiding spots for lizards and plenty of neighborhood dogs to greet along the way. One stop is non-negotiable: the home at 795 27th Avenue North, where the colorful flowers and variety of ground textures always earn a closer inspection.

Like many Crescent Heights residents, Hank also has a favorite local hangout. You'll occasionally find him dining on the porch at Hollander House, where the salmon is his meal of choice. The rest of the day, he's hard at work as the family's "shop dog," keeping watch while furniture is designed, built, and refinished.

Although some Westie enthusiasts have commented that Hank has what they call a "show head," his owners are more



impressed by his personality. Unlike the stubborn reputation terriers sometimes have, Hank loves meeting other dogs and happily greets canines throughout the neighborhood. At home, he's equally content curling up for bedtime snuggles.

One of Hank's newest discoveries came after this summer's heavy rains. He recently learned just how much fun puddles and the little "rain rivers" flowing along neighborhood streets can be. Now, every walk after a storm becomes an opportunity to splash through the water until he reaches the next intersection.

When asked to share his favorite hidden gem in Crescent Heights, Hank's answer wasn't a restaurant or a park. Instead, he pointed upward. For him, the neighborhood's greatest treasures are its towering live oaks and giant fig trees. Nearly every block offers another magnificent canopy, filling the air with a sweet aroma and quietly watching over the streets below.

It's a reminder that sometimes the best hidden gems aren't hidden at all. Sometimes, they're right above us.



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CHNA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NEIGHBORHOOD EVENTS

Porch Party at Kristina's
Saturday, September 19, 4:00 - 6:00 PM
450 26th Avenue N

Halloween Block Party
Saturday, October 24, 6:00 - 8:00 PM
7th Street N, between 25th and 26th Avenues N

TBD Kids Club Event
November
Additional details to come.

Neighborhood Shuffle Showdown
Sunday, November 8, 3:00 - 8:00 PM
St. Petersburg Shuffleboard Club, 540 4th Avenue N

CHNA Members-Only Evening
Holiday Shopping at Marion's
Wednesday, November 11, 6:00 - 8:00 PM
Marion's, 1301 4th Street N

Lights in the Heights
Saturday, December 5, 5:00 - 7:00 PM
8th Street N, between 25th and 26th Avenues N

Interested in hosting a Porch Party?
Contact Jordan Postma, CHNA Events Director, at
communications.chna@gmail.com or 334-559-4086.

WHAT'S UP AROUND TOWN

Tampa Bay Rays
Final Home Game vs. Boston Red Sox
Saturday, September 20, 1:40 PM
Tropicana Field, 1 Tropicana Drive

St. Pete Night Market
Wednesday, September 30, 6:00 PM
1320 Central Avenue

Piertoberfest 2026
Sat, October 3, 12:00 PM
800 2nd Avenue NE

Tampa Bay Rowdies Fan Appreciation Night
Saturday, October 24, 7:30 PM
Al Lang Stadium, 230 1st Street SE

Halloween on Central
Sunday, October 25, 12:00 - 5:00 PM
22 Block in The Grand Central and Edge Districts

St Petersburg Museum of History
Century of Baseball History Trolley Tour
Saturday, November 14, 9:00 - 11:00 AM
335 2nd Avenue NE

Mezzo Market
Saturday, November 21, 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Baum Avenue N & 11th Street N

CRESCENT HEIGHTS KIDS CLUB BLOCK PARTY

PRESENTED BY

