Hi Neighbors!

Happy Earth Month, St Petersburg!!! Welcome to my favorite month of the year. April is an opportunity to reflect on our planet and the role we serve in being good stewards to the environment that we call home.

This month's issue is all about how we address issues head on that will maintain the sustainability and resiliency of our community for the long term. Your city council, staff and administration are working overtime on a proactive approach as it pertains to sea level rise, climate change, and environmental protection of our community. I am excited to share in these measures with you and I encourage you to get out and do something good for yourself and the Earth this month!

Brandi

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Sea Level Rise & Flood Mitigation

As a flood insurance advocate and the council member who represents a district of which 95% of property parcels lie in a special flood hazard area, sea level rise and its effects on the sustainability of our community is of paramount importance to me.

FEMA has had a long standing program that assists residents with mitigation efforts to raise their homes up out of harm’s way or even to demolish them and build new homes that are above the base flood elevation. Doing this work not only makes a home more resilient to flooding but also decreases the flood insurance rates. While this is an important program available to residents in repetitive loss neighborhoods such as Shore Acres and Riviera Bay the process of approval at the federal level is cumbersome and oftentimes feels arbitrary in its outcome.

Therefore, I fundamentally believe that because our city is ground zero for the long term effects of coastal flooding we must do more to assist our residents! While we need to continue to appeal to Congress to make funding more robust and cut the red tape that stands in the way of accessing these funds, we also have an opportunity to put our money where our mouth is and be the leader in this arena. On March 14th (Flood Awareness Day), the Health Energy and Resiliency and Sustainability committee heard the first of what I anticipate to be many conversations on a new business item I presented regarding the creation of a Flood Mitigation Program that I hope to see set up by our city. The details are a long way from becoming a reality but as the number of homes affected by coastal flooding concerns are likely to grow in the coming years and flood insurance rates continue to rise, I believe we are at a place where doing nothing is no longer an option. I would love to discuss this concept with residents as we move forward, so please reach out if this is an issue that directly affects you.

For more information and access to current resources click [here](#).
St. Petersburg
6th Annual
Earth Day Festival

Learn more about what you can do to help save our earth!

On April 13, 2019 from 10:00 am - 5:00 pm St. Petersburg will celebrate Earth Day with a community celebration to be held in Historic Williams Park.

Earth Day is celebrated by over a billion people in hundreds of countries around the globe.

By celebrating Earth Day, we join with others and share our common reverence and respect for this beautiful but fragile planet. We’ll have great food and music, local arts and crafts, plenty of activities for kids, incredible information on sustainable living, an electric vehicle show, and Friends of Boyd Hill Nature Preserve will be on hand with their animal ambassadors.

Saturday, April 13, 2019
10:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Historic Williams Park
350 2nd Avenue North
St Petersburg Florida 33701

For more information:
https://www.earthdaysp.com/

This free event is Hosted by Chart 411 and The City Of St Petersburg.

Paddle The Preserve
Earth Day at Weedon Island

Celebrate Earth Day 2019

This guided paddle will complete the FULL 4-mile South Paddling Trail (weather and tides dependent) with stops along the way to appreciate the beauty of the Preserve’s coastal habitats and native wildlife.

WE WILL PROVIDE CANOES, PADDLES, LIFE VESTS and WHISTLES.
All participants must be 10 years or older. Any participants under 18 years old must be accompanied by an adult with a ratio of 1 adult: 1 youth.

Participants will meet inside the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center to go over safety procedures and sign canoe waivers before departing as a group for the water.

Ticket Price $20 - $30
Saturday, April 13, 2019
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Weedon Island Preserve
1800 Weedon Dr NE
St. Petersburg, Florida 33702

For more information:
Libby Carnahan
lcarnahan@ufl.edu
727-453-6522

2019 Legislative Session: Tallahassee

On March 20th and 21st a delegation from St Petersburg City Council and the St Pete Chamber headed to Tallahassee to meet with our
legislators on behalf of the residents of St Petersburg.

We had numerous appropriation asks including funding for the St Pete History Museum and the Carter G Woodson African American Museum along with transportation funding requests.

In addition we spoke with lawmakers regarding bills moving through session such as affordable housing funding, mobility option regulation, derelict vessels, and community gardens. There are many issues that can and may affect our ability serve our residents at the local level that individually were discussed with our lawmakers. These topics however were top of mind and are ones that collectively the city and the chamber are in support of.

Regular sessions of the Legislature begin on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March and continue for 60 consecutive days.

Florida Senate Website: https://www.flsenate.gov/
Florida House of Representatives Website: https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/

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**St. Pete Recycles**

Since late June 2015, St. Petersburg residents have successfully reduced the amount of trash sent to the landfill by participating in the city’s recycling program. Residents not only played a major role in helping the city achieve a much-lower-than-expected contamination rate during the program’s first few months, they also helped Pinellas County achieve the highest rate of recycling statewide.

Click HERE for your complete St. Petersburg Recycling Guide.

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**Business Tool Kits**

In 2018, St. Petersburg’s City Council approved ordinances limiting single-use plastic straws and expanded polystyrene (EPS or "Styrofoam") in food service establishments.

During 2019, businesses are encouraged to only provide plastic straws upon request and explore alternatives to plastic straws and Styrofoam. The ordinances take effect on January 1, 2020.

The City has developed a resource to assist businesses impacted by the recently approved ordinance.

Click HERE for your Eco Friendly Business Tool Kit