



3rd Quarter 2025

[www.Jungle-Terrace.org](http://www.Jungle-Terrace.org)

**Meeting Monday, July 21, 2025**

**Walter Fuller Center-7891 26th Av N ~ 7 pm**

**Speakers: Rep. Linda Chaney, FL House of Representatives  
Councilman Mike Harting, City Council**



**President John Hoke catches HUGE Tarpon ~ 180 pounds!!**





**President John Hoke welcomes our Jungle Terrace neighbors!**

**Accolades from New York** ~ Alexandria Peterson: We used to live in the Jungle & are so happy and grateful to see the contributions of JTCA in the newsletter. Thank you to all volunteers for your efforts in keeping a beautiful place beautiful for all :)



**Full attention by audience!**





**County Commissioner Vince Nowicki enthralls all neighbors.**



**C.C. Nowicki**



**FIRE Capt. Mike Lewis with Dr. Ed**



**Door Hanger**



**Dr. Ed and Pres. John in intense conversation with Commissioner Nowicki.**





**Refreshment Table! Treasurer Jill, Presidential Assistant Dr. Ed. Provider and Photographer Lani.**



**Moon over bay . . .**

# New vision: Trop site without the Rays? “St. Pete Commons”

Rick Baker, 2 Times Mayor

<https://www.tampabay.com/opinion/2025/05/08/st-pete-doesnt-need-rays-baseball-new-vision-trop-site-column/>

## See also: “Forward looking autopsy of Failed Rays stadium”

<https://www.tampabay.com/opinion/2025/05/15/forward-looking-autopsy-failed-rays-stadium-deal-column/>



It is time for St. Pete to take control of its future and develop a plan for [Tropicana Field](#) site post 2028. A future that does **not** include major league baseball.

The thought of [losing baseball](#) is not easy. Since 1908, when St. Pete Saints played an exhibition game against the Cincinnati Reds, followed by decades of spring training, the ‘burg has had a long history of baseball. I get it.



Like countless others, I was a foot soldier in the baseball effort, serving on the Chamber of Commerce stadium committee in the late 1980s and walking door to door getting petitions signed for a major league stadium. As mayor, I attended many games — including the World Series — and once threw out the first ball to my young son, Jacob. I even named my book on St. Petersburg history “Mangroves to Major League.”

Times were different when St. Pete first pursued major league baseball. Many felt the city needed to kickstart its city center. As it turned out, St. Pete’s downtown blossomed in a big way. In my view, baseball had a limited impact on that growth.

Professional sports teams can have many positive effects on a city; however, for St. Petersburg, the cost of baseball has become too great, and the benefit is too little. The 30-year lease on the current stadium expires in a few years. After a failed Rays effort to move the team to Tampa’s Ybor City in 2018, St. Petersburg and Pinellas County agreed to help fund a new Rays stadium in St. Pete and turn over 86 acres of downtown land for redevelopment. According to a city summary, over the coming decades, the deal required “Grand Total Debt Payments” from St. Petersburg of over \$700 million and debt service from the county of over \$580 million. That is a huge amount of public money.

Too huge. To make the deal worse, the Rays flatly refused to name the team after St. Petersburg, despite requesting hundreds of millions of dollars from taxpayers.

Fortunately, the Rays recently dropped out of the deal. According to media reports, the Rays later floated an idea for the city and county to spend \$400 million to renovate the Trop and extend the lease by 10 years. Again, lots of taxpayer money for limited benefit. The better option is to let the Rays leave at the end of their current lease, which appears to be through the 2028 season.

It is time to focus on St. Petersburg’s future and let the Rays focus on their own.

Our city has one of the most vibrant, walkable and amazing downtowns in the country. With 86 acres of prime downtown land to redevelop, we can come up with better options than continuing to fund hundreds of millions of dollars of St. Peter taxpayer money to house a team named after Tampa — a fine city, but not St. Pete — in an enterprise that has limited economic impact on our downtown. One might wonder whether our large, bustling Saturday Morning Farmer’s Market provides a greater benefit for downtown St. Pete, given baseball’s huge price tag.

**We can do better.**

I suggest we consider less density — not more. It is not as if we hear people in our neighborhoods saying: “Gee, I wish we could cram lots more people, buildings and traffic into downtown.” I hear quite the opposite.

Rather than a baseball stadium, let’s build a significant west downtown park — St. Pete Commons — on 30 acres, about a third of the available 86 acres. Think of the 50-acre Boston Common, a magnificent public park amenity. Water features, outdoor concerts in the park, playgrounds, wading pools, bandstands, monuments, carousels, gardens, coffee stands, fountains and more.

St. Pete Commons would be three times the size of St. Pete’s Vinoy Park and five times the size of North Straub Park. Our beautiful park system has been the backbone of St. Petersburg’s success. With more people coming downtown, let’s add more green space.

St. Pete Commons would be enjoyed by our residents 100 years from now — and beyond. If we build another baseball stadium today, how long before talk begins again to replace it?

In addition to the Commons, weave the downtown road grid into the site and create a pedestrian-friendly new urban design, with businesses, multi-family housing, sidewalk cafes, hotels, live event venues, public facilities and cultural assets, such as the proposed African American History Museum. The arts have anchored our downtown’s renaissance of the past 25 years — let’s build on that.

Rather than turning the site over to another master developer, let’s establish the 30-acre Commons, reconnect the road grid, and then let city leaders, citizens, and the market decide what should go on the remaining blocks. We should also limit the height of buildings directly across from the Commons — as we did when we built much of Beach Drive.

Sell the blocks to pay for the public improvements and help fund more affordable housing citywide, a worthy effort and one of Mayor Welch’s top priorities. Perhaps, start with expanded health care facilities, providing good jobs at all economic levels. Other employers would follow.

The end game? A 30-acre St. Pete Commons green space for the entire community, surrounded by jobs and amenities for our citizens. The development would merge seamlessly into the rest of downtown and the nearby neighborhoods, without spending over a billion dollars of taxpayer money. Sounds very St. Pete.

## Harvest #4 of Floating Wetland Island in Jungle Lake.



**LOTS of foliage in 4 Months!!!!**



**Trimmed mats in front of Bench.**

**Removing Mass of Foliage.**

**Floating Wetland Island is 5 x 25' long mats connected together.**

Jungle Terrace Civic Association installed the FWI in 2023.

“Harvested” and analyzed every 4 months to renew effectiveness.

JTCA sponsors “Harvests” for Stewards of Our Urban Lakes. [www.SOULinc.org](http://www.SOULinc.org)







Jungle Terrace Team on Jungle Lake: Dr. Ed, Lani, John Hoke  
+ Scott, Nick and Miguel

## **BLESSED to Live in The JUNGLE!~!**



### **The Healing Power of Trees**

Adding 8,000 trees to a neighborhood in Louisville, KY, improves health conditions linked to heart disease, stroke and some types of cancer.

<https://www.nature.org/en-us/magazine/magazine-articles/tree-planting-human-health-louisville/>



## **Volunteers Garden ~Amaryllis Show!**



**And ... our Mulberry Tree has mulberries!**



# **FREE FOOD to ALL Pinellas County Residents**

<https://thespfc.org/food-hygiene/>

Two Locations in St. Pete

863 3rd Ave North

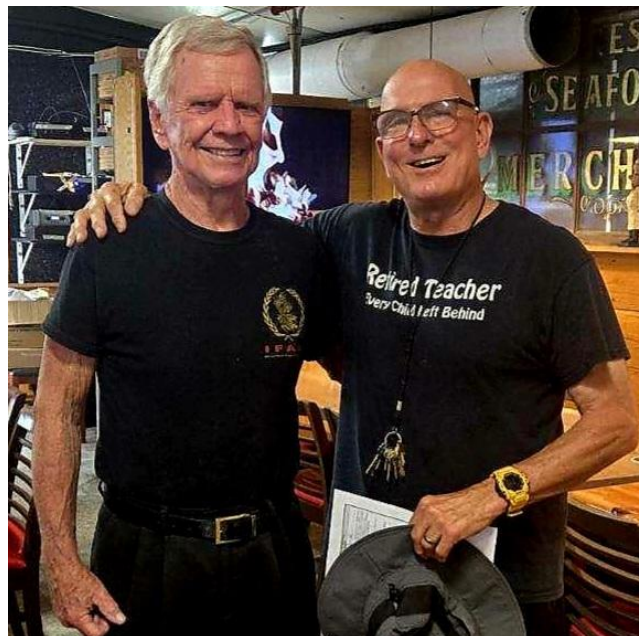
Drive Thru ~ 22nd St. South (Deuces) ~ 2198 15th Ave South

Twice each month for each Pinellas resident.

## **PICKLEBALL Pinellas Pets Fundraiser at FERG's Sports Bar**



**Pro Instructor, his Mom, Lani, Dr. Ed**



**Dr. Ed with Ferg . . . Both were at Southside Jr. High**

<https://www.fergssportsbar.com/fergs-story/>



# Shorecrest High School students Planting Jungle Lake



**Jim Bays showing how lake functions.**



**Planting 167 Bull Rush in Our Lake!**



**Litter Patrol – 2 Canoes. 36 Bags of Dead Grass + 17 Bags prior week=53**



## Self-storage firm buys former Raytheon land



Self-storage could be joining a massive redevelopment at the former [Raytheon](#) site. A Scottsdale-based self-storage company, 1784 Holdings, acquired nearly 10 acres of land off 22nd Ave. No., just northwest of the 29-acre site, once home to the defense company known as [Raytheon, that's being developed into 1,000 residential units](#), 300 of which will be workforce and affordable housing. The April 30 transaction granted the company 9.67 acres for \$5.1 million. The site was owned by Raytheon, which acquired it from the city in 2003.

### Annual Membership Dues

Please fill out form. Send your dues/donation to address below, or go online to website. Credit Card or PayPal: Click Donate button.

This is your neighborhood association. We work for you and our neighborhood. Include \$40.00 per member, one member/vote per household.

Honorary/Scholarship Dues \$20. Donations in addition are hugely appreciated!

We utilize the funds to publish and email your newsletter, hold regular membership meetings and continue improvements to the health, safety and beauty of Jungle Terrace neighborhood.

JTCA is a 501(c)3 Tax Deductible Non-profit organization.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues: \$40.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Donation Amount: \_\_\_\_\_ Total: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Jungle Terrace Civic Assn or JTCA.

Mail: JTCA, Jill Silverstein 8045 28th Av N, St. Pete, FL 33710 Ph 727-488-7696

## **Polk County makes history with Mexican cartel drug busts, Sheriff Grady Judd says**

**Bust seizes 35 pounds of fentanyl ... arrests 8 cartel members.**



**“Our detectives and our agents from the federal, the state, and the local level potentially saved the lives of up to 14.5 million people,” said Judd.**

**“Drugs came across the border from Mexico to Phoenix and ultimately to us.”**  
<https://www.clickorlando.com/news/local/2025/06/23/polk-county-makes-history-with-mexican-cartel-drug-busts-sheriff-says/>

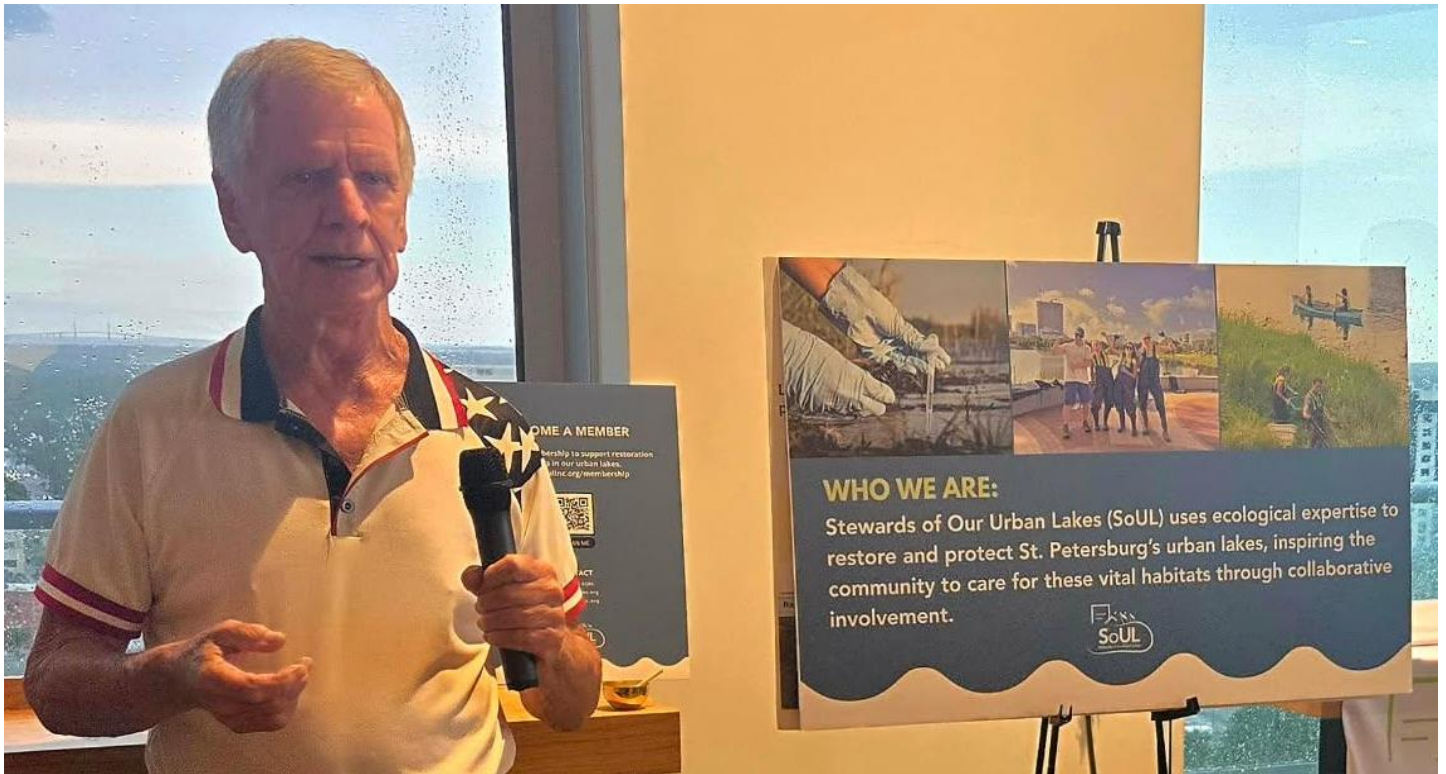
## **Governor Ron DeSantis Announces State Employees Will Receive an Extra Day Off for July 4th Weekend**

**“In anticipation of America’s upcoming semiquincentennial celebration in 2026, I am giving state employees a longer weekend this year to celebrate,” said Governor Ron DeSantis.** “I hope our state employees use this additional time off to enjoy Florida’s Freedom Summer with their loved ones and reflect on the importance and meaning of our nation’s founding.”

The governor also approved a **2% raise** for state employees, effective July 1, 2025. At the Governor’s request, this raise will not be applied to the salary of the Governor. This benefits nearly 100,000 people in the State Personnel System.



**Stewards of Our Urban Lakes, SOUL, Inc., Event: 90+ Participants**  
**St. Pete has 80+ Lakes**  
<https://www.soulinec.org/>



**Dr. Ed, “Captain” for Jungle Lake Presenting**



**Public Works Director  
Claude Tankersley with Dr. Ed**



## SunRunner could lose part of its dedicated lane



### New ridership threshold imperils transit initiatives.

The SunRunner debuted in October 2022, the chorus of naysayers grew. Soon Gov. Ron DeSantis joined in.

“We all see the near-empty or completely empty buses running all over the county,” wrote Barbara Haselden, on the Pinellas transit agency board.

This year, Haselden was appointed to the state transportation commission, which reviews and makes recommendations on Florida transportation policies.

“This signed bill ... is going to prevent localities from **agenda-motivated lane reductions to force people out of their cars.**” DeSantis

Requires SunRunner successors to have **6,000 riders per day** during the opening year to move forward.

No buses in Tampa Bay currently serve that many riders.

From October last year to now, 2,000 per day rode the SunRunner.

SunRunner could lose part of its lane. That loss **could force Pinellas to return money to federal government**, which awarded \$22 million based on special lane.

AND “The 34th Street bus project was evaluated, and the decision was made to **not move forward** as the project did not meet established criteria

Rest of article is whiney excuse-making "stories" and "theories." (Editor)

<https://www.tampabay.com/news/business/2025/06/23/sunrunner-lane-central-avenue-st-petersburg-traffic-light-rail/>

“Reality takes time to set in! Unfortunately, that takes oodles of dollars.” Anon



# **Post Office warns Americans of new ‘brushing’ scam, says to treat personal info ‘like cash’.**

If a mystery package shows up on your doorstep, don’t assume it’s a lucky break. It could mean your personal information has been exposed.

The U.S. Postal Service is warning Americans about a fast-growing scheme known as a “brushing” scam. It may look like a harmless delivery, like a keychain, socks, a random kitchen gadget, but it’s often a red flag that cybercriminals have gotten hold of your name and address.

Worse, experts say these schemes can be just the beginning of a broader attempt to exploit your identity or financial accounts.

## **Here’s how scam works, what it means for your data, what to do if you’ve been targeted.**

What is a brushing scam?

Brushing scams involve unsolicited deliveries from third-party online sellers looking to boost their product ratings and visibility. These sellers send cheap, low-value items to real names and addresses, then leave fake “verified” reviews, often posing as the recipient.

“These scams occur when a customer receives unsolicited packages containing low-cost items like household goods,” U.S. Postal Inspector Kelly McNulty told KOB 4 News in Albuquerque. “These packages are often sent by online retailers or third parties who use compromised personal information to create fake transactions.”

In other words: if you get a package you didn’t order, someone may already have your data, and they’re using it for profit.

### **Why you should care**

At first glance, a free item might not raise alarms. But it should.

Brushing scams don’t just manipulate e-commerce platforms. They suggest that your personal details, including your full name, phone number, home address and possibly even payment info, have been scraped, sold or stolen. That’s information that can be used in identity theft, credit fraud, phishing scams or even attempts to bypass two-factor authentication.

“This is about more than just a package,” McNulty warned.

“Treat your personal information like cash.”

### **Part of a larger problem**

The brushing scam warning comes as part of a broader initiative by the USPS called “Project Safe Delivery,” launched in 2023 to combat mail-related crime. Since its rollout, the program has led to **2,800 arrests**, including over 1,200 this year alone, tied to mail theft and attacks on postal workers.

Now, the USPS is working to raise awareness about fraud tactics targeting consumers directly, especially as scams become more personalized and harder to detect.

### **What to do if a strange package shows up**

If you receive a mystery box in the mail, don’t panic, but do take action. Here’s what the Postal Service and cybersecurity experts recommend:

Report it: Go to [USPIS.gov](https://uspis.gov) and file a report with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. Reporting these scams helps federal investigators trace the origin and stop future incidents.



**Audit your accounts:** Check your online shopping, banking and credit card accounts for any unusual charges. It's also smart to request a free credit report from Equifax, Experian or TransUnion to spot any suspicious activity.

**Update your passwords:** Even if you don't see fraud, it's a good idea to change your passwords, especially for your email, Amazon, bank and any accounts where financial or personal data is stored.

**Use a password manager:** Password managers generate and store complex, unique passwords for every account, making it harder for hackers to break in if your data has already been exposed.

**Don't engage:** You are not obligated to return or review the item. In fact, doing so may validate your address to scammers and lead to more unwanted deliveries.

**Most importantly:** don't scan any QR codes on the package. These codes can lead to malicious websites that steal personal data, install malware or phish for sensitive information. postal workers say.

### **Don't fall for fake stamps, either**

While brushing scams are grabbing attention, USPS is also flagging **another fraud** risk: counterfeit postage.

"If you see large discounts on stamps, like 40 to 50% off, it's probably too good to be true," McNulty said. These fakes often pop up on social media or discount sites and can result in your mail being rejected or you facing penalties. To stay safe, always buy stamps directly from USPS or licensed retailers.

### **The bottom line**

Scams like brushing or counterfeit postage don't just waste your time, they can open the door to financial and identity theft.

So, if something feels off, a strange delivery, a fishy discount, or a request for personal info, don't ignore it.

Protect yourself by treating your personal data the same way you'd treat your debit card or Social Security number: carefully, and with skepticism.

