



Friends
of the
St. Pete Beach
Library

SPRING 2019

TIDINGS

Farewell, Friend

Story by Steve Traiman

When Lance Peterson passed away March 8 at age 78 due to complications from cancer and heart disease, his life had touched many thousands in the Tampa Bay Area. He left his mark with long-time service to the St. Pete Beach Public Library, the Gulf Beaches Historical Museum, the Veterans of South Pinellas County (VSPC), and the City of St. Pete Beach, among others.

Lance and his family moved to St. Pete Beach from Jamestown, NY, in 1955 and he graduated from Boca Ciega High School in 1958. He joined the Air Force in 1960 and after that service spent a short time with the NSA before returning to his studies. He graduated from the USF School of Business and had a 30-year career with the Veterans Administration, with a short hiatus for a brief oil industry foray.

After retiring, Lance and his wife Kay, who passed away several years ago, returned to St. Pete Beach and bought a house not far from his boyhood home. They were both very active with the Gulf Beaches Historical Museum on the board of directors, and it could be said Lance was the “heart and soul” of the iconic attraction. Lance was very active in the community, developing historical presentations, giving his last just a few weeks before his passing at the SPB Library.

He was appointed to the St. Pete Beach City Planning Board, and was a long-time member and Vice President of the Friends of the SPB Library. He also served on the St. Pete Beach Library Advisory Committee, and had been on the board of the VSPC.

At a “Celebration of Life” for Lance on April 14 at the Don Vista, more than 100 friends and family packed the upstairs conference room. Sharing fond memories were Harry Metz, VSPC president, who knew Lance since Boca Ciega High School, and some great stories of their “double trouble”. Bill Peterson, Lance’s kid brother, recalled how they grew up



Lance Peterson

together with older brother Butch, who passed away two years ago. “My wife Karen and I bought the family home in Buena Vista in 1956, and after retiring in 2000, he and Kay bought the house next door. He always loved the library and when he was stationed with the Air Force in Turkey, started a library on the base. The four of us spent many good times together and it was a real shock when he went so fast; we know how many folks he reached over the years.”

SPB Mayor Al Johnson cited Lance’s years of service on the Planning Board, the Library Advisory Board and the Friends of the Library, reading a proclamation for April 14 as “Lance Peterson Day”.

This reporter was privileged to know Lance since we moved down to St. Pete Beach from New Jersey. “We were both on the board of the Friends of the SPB Library and served on the City Library Advisory Committee. He was an outspoken voice in supporting a new Library, and more recently, vital necessary repairs to the roof and infrastructure. Lance was a true raconteur when it came to his theme presentations about the city and surrounding areas, bringing history to life time and again with his special flair. He was dedicated to carrying on the work of the Museum and will be missed by the many whose lives he touched over the years.”

Lance is survived by his brother, Bill Peterson (Karen) and stepsons Rob Moore (Monica), Clermont; and Gary Moore (Laura), Morrison, CO. He was buried next to wife Kay at Bay Pines National Cemetery. Donations may be made in his name to the Gulf Beaches Historical Museum, Friends of the SPB Public Library or the Veterans of South Pinellas.

(Portions excerpted from the April 2019 issue of Paradise News.)



Looking Backward and Forward

Some key dates in the history of the St. Pete Beach Library:

1951: The Long Key Library opened as a part-time project on Saturday, May 12, 1951 inside the St. Petersburg Beach Community Club at 7301 Blind Pass Road.

1952: The formal opening of the new home of the Long Key Library was held in the newly completed addition to the Beach Community Club on Tuesday, June 3, 1952.

1969: The St. Petersburg Beach Library held its official dedication ceremony on Sunday, October 5, 1969.

2019: The St. Pete Beach Library celebrates 50 years in this award-winning building with special events, give-a-ways, and redesigned Library cards!

Since January of this year we've been celebrating the 50 year anniversary with special programs including Chef Warren, Hungrytown Folk Duo, Jane Rosenbohm classical guitarist, What's it Worth? Antiques Appraisal, the St. Pete Sax Quartet, poetry reading by Florida's Poet Laureate, Peter Meinke, a Broadway Sing Along and a performance for children by DoDads Lab to kick off the summer reading season. And as they say on TV: But wait! That's not all! We've got more performers and special programs lined up through October which will include prize giveaways! Keep an eye on our webpage, SPBLibrary.com for updates.

After the celebration is over, we start renovating the library. It's time we spruce up this mid-century modern building so that she retains her glory. Designed by architect Glenn Q. Johnson, creator of the bird-cage homes in St. Petersburg (and featured in a Tampa Bay Times article on March 17, 2019) this is a gem we should keep polished. Plans for renovation include some expensive but decidedly unglamorous features, such as the roof, some air-conditioning components, and ceiling. Fortunately though, the renovation will also include some features which will greatly enhance the interior.

New carpeting and lighting will improve the aesthetics; new furniture will enhance the patron experience for those who stay to read materials, work on their devices or ours, hang out with the family, and attend programs. Changes to the services desks will ease the check in and check out process for both staff and patrons and create a more streamlined experience. One of the enhancements the staff is most looking forward to is the re-opening of the main doors on the 73rd Avenue side of the building. The low broad staircase flanked by benches and lovely landscaping will be inviting to visitors as well as our regular library patrons.

The city hopes to renovate the Library during the early months of 2020 which correspond with our dry season. There may be a point when the building is exposed to the elements during the roofing portion of the project. It also may be necessary to temporarily relocate library services while some of the project is underway. It's too soon to know many of the details and the possible implications but we'll certainly keep you updated along the way. The Blind Pass Road reconstruction is going well though getting to the Library can sometimes be a challenge. The good news is that both the library renovation and the road reconstruction should be completed by this time next year! In paradise especially, time goes by very quickly. We'll be all dressed up and ready to go before you know it!

The Library has a couple of new services we'd like to tell you about. Now you can check out a ukulele kit and learn to play! The easy-to-carry kit comes with a ukulele, a book and DVD, a chord chart and a tuner. It can be checked out for 28 days—just enough time to learn a song or two. Please remember to serenade the staff when you bring it back! RB Digital's "Artist Works" provides free lessons as well (ukulele, piano, voice lessons, and more!). The Library now also provides access to Kanopy which allows you to stream classic cinema, Indie films and top documentaries! Be sure to visit us soon and learn what more we have to offer!

Tidings News

First Encounters of the Library Kind

I can recall, as a child, my summer visits to the local beach community's library. It was in an old house. There was no such thing as air conditioning, so it always smelled moldy and musty, but held a treasure trove of books. My brothers and I were each expected to read at least two books a week and we

would ride to the library on our bikes and come home with the baskets full. These books were our rainy day and evening entertainment; no TV, no internet, no video games. And, if truth be told, it's still the same for me.



USA Today best-selling author Wendy Wax drew a nice crowd (above left) of more than 60 to the library May 19 for the launch of her latest novel, *My Ex-Best Girlfriend's Wedding*, hosted by the Friends of the Library. Lifetime Friends member and library clerk Bonnie Traiman (at left with Wendy Wax in right photo) won the drawing to have her name as a character in Wendy's next book, due early 2021.



Mimi Chavin, left, Director of "Run, Fun & Happy" for the annual St. Pete Beach Classic, presents a \$2,000 check to Friends of the St. Pete Beach Library to Treasurer Moon Metz, second from right, as Membership Director Judy Cohan and Vice President Steve Traiman look on. The Classic, started by Mayor Al Johnson's late wife, Wendy, has an annual economic impact of more than \$860,000 studies show.

Tidings News

Only a Few Days Left!

There's still time to bid at the Friends' silent auction, but it ends at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 12. There are ten baskets with the following themes: Authors of Florida, WWII Europe, Cookbooks, Wine, Iran/Afghanistan Wars, Desserts,

Israel, Dogs, and Art. There are also several "Buy-it-Now" baskets, for those who can't wait! Every basket contains little gifts that complement the books it contains.



New Amazon Program Enables Shoppers To Easily Donate To Their Favorite Nonprofits

**BUY FROM AMAZON =
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FRIENDS OF THE
ST. PETE BEACH
LIBRARY**

AMAZON has a fundraising program that's really simple to use. Part of every \$\$\$\$ you spend will be donated by Amazon directly to the Friends of the St Pete Beach Library.

It's really simple...when making a purchase from Amazon, use this new address: **www.smile.amazon.com**

In the preference box, just type in Friends of St. Pete Beach Library and make this your permanent choice of a "Charity".

That way, every time you shop, the Friends of the St. Pete Beach Library will receive a donation from Amazon.

You can even install the app on your mobile device or pc.



Tidings News

Power of Libraries

In 2017, Hurricane Irma damaged artifacts at the Gulf Beaches Historical Museum in St. Pete Beach, near Tampa, FL, USA.

This event, in combination with a conference session on digitizing efforts by the Digital Public Library of America, inspired the St. Pete Beach Public Library and University of South Florida Honors College to begin a collaborative effort to digitize the museum's collection.

In two semesters, students have digitized 14 oral histories



At a recent City Commission meeting, Library Administrator Betcinda Kettells and St. Pete Beach Mayor Al Johnson show off the award presented to the Library as a 2019 Power of Libraries winner.

and over 150 artifacts for the Gulf Beaches Historical Museum. The collection is accessible online at the Library's website SPBLibrary.com through the Pinellas Memory Project.

In coming semesters, USF students will continue this collaboration, as well as expand their digitizing efforts to other county historical sites.

For this collaborative effort, the St. Pete Beach Public Library has won a 2019 Power of Libraries award from Sirsi Dynix, the company that supplies our online card catalog.



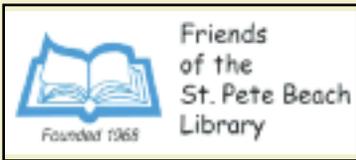
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Tidings is published by the Friends of the St Pete Beach Library to provide the community with news about the library's and the Friends' activities. New members are always welcome. To join, please use the membership form on the back of this newsletter.



2019 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

_____ **New** _____ **Renewal**

Membership dues and other donations to the Friends may be tax-deductible.
Ask your financial advisor.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone and Cell _____

Email _____

Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____ (Payable to Friends of the S.P.B. Library)

Suggested Membership Levels:

Individual \$15 • Family \$25 • Donor/Business \$50

Life \$100 Individual/\$150 Couple • Business \$250

Mail completed form and check to:

Friends of the Library

365 73rd Avenue, St. Pete Beach, FL 33706

or bring to the library during business hours.

I would like to help with:

___ Book Store/Sales ___ Publicity/Promotion

___ Programs ___ Fundraising

___ Membership ___ Board Officer

Friends of the St. Pete Beach Library
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St. Pete Beach, FL 33706