

# NORTHEAST JOURNAL

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St. Petersburg, FL

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## Dotty Stewart Celebrates 57 Years With Bob Lee's

— RICHARD DAILEY —

On June 23, 1963, John F. Kennedy was president, gas was 22 cents a gallon, and oil was 25 cents a can with a 2-cent rebate. It's also the day that Dotty Stewart started her job at Bob Lee's Tire Company on 4th Street North. This past June, Dotty celebrated her 57th consecutive year as a bookkeeper and accountant for the family-owned tire-and-auto-repair center.

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Todd Murrian, Madison Murrian, Bob Lee IV, and "Dotty" Stewart

## Harry and Jackie Piper: St. Pete's Archeological Detectives

— SCOTT BROWN —

I met Harry Piper at the St. Pete Racquet Club. For the tennis uninitiated, we have something called changeovers. After two games of tennis, everyone sits for a few minutes. During a changeover, I asked Harry what he did before he retired. "Archeologist," he replied, awaiting the quizzical look and follow-up questions.



Jackie and Harry Piper on vacation in Greece last year

Over a series of changeovers, I learned that Harry and his wife Jackie, now retired, were archeologists for hire who earned their living by delving, digging, and scuba diving into Florida's past.

Harry was a senior when he met freshman Jackie at Duke University. After college, Harry went into the military. When he was discharged from the navy in Jacksonville three years later, he went to visit Jackie in St. Pete. Harry had job opportunities back home in Tennessee, but he liked St. Pete; and clearly, he really liked Jackie. Jackie had just

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## St. Pete Panhellenic Alumnae Association Celebrates 95 Years



Lisa Brown and Carol O'Brien-Rogich receiving an award for Programming Excellence

— WILL MICHAELS —

The St. Petersburg Alumnae Panhellenic Association was established 95 years ago and continues to have 150 members representing some 16 different sororities. The goal of the Panhellenic Association is to promote the fraternity system for women. That includes educating women and their families about the collegiate sorority system, fostering member friendships, supporting higher education through giving scholarships, and "being a positive Greek role model in the community."

Panhellenic member Merrie Beth Neely recounts the Club's early history, "Our first meeting took place at the Homestead Tea Room on December 12, 1925. The meeting was quickly convened following one of the first Tampa Panhellenic Luncheons on December 5th at the Tampa Terrace Hotel. That luncheon was attended by at least seven forward-looking St. Petersburg ladies who made the trek across the new Gandy Bridge, a toll road that opened in 1924, shortening the drive from St. Pete to Tampa by 42 miles. The ladies most likely hatched the bright idea for their own St. Pete Panhellenic during that very gathering in Tampa."

The first St. Pete Panhellenic meeting took place at the Albemarle Hotel, 135 3rd Avenue N. The 25 members in attendance decided to host a weekday bridge party on December 22nd at the brand-new Soreno Hotel, and a holiday dance for the collegiate members who were home from school for winter break. Plans were made for future luncheons to be held on the second Saturday of every month, with business meetings on the third Wednesday evening.

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**PANHELLENIC** *Continued from page 1*

“Panhellenic Associations were relatively new at the time. While the organization was founded in 1902 with an inaugural nine sororities – and doubled to 18 by 1912 – city chapters like ours were just getting established,” said Neely.

During those early years Neely notes meetings were held at such venues as the Gypsy Inn Tea Room (now Orange Blossom Catering on 4th Street North); the Mason Hotel (renamed the Princess Martha); the St. Pete Yacht Club; the Vinoy Hotel; the Detroit Hotel on Central Avenue; and even a couple of ‘far-off’ places like the Jungle Gardens Country Club – way out in west St. Pete – and the Rolyat Hotel in Gulfport/South Pasadena.

Other early club meetings were held at the Huntington Hotel on 4th Avenue North; the Shrine Club at 145 4th Avenue NE (also known as the Blocker Home and still there); the Concord Hotel (Palais Royale on 2nd Street North, now home of the Chamber of Commerce); and the Pennsylvania Hotel, still operating on 4th Street N., a city landmark restored by the Marriot Corporation. While a few of the early venues are still serving, such as the Vinoy and the Yacht Club, most have given way to many new locations. Some events are held in members’ homes. The club also organizes trips to arts venues and sports games. In addition, the St. Pete Panhellenic participates annually in ‘Tri City’ events with the Panhellenic associations of Clearwater and Tampa.

Since 1985, the Club has awarded the Eleanor Jones Tanner Panhellenic Woman of the Year Award. Eleanor Jones Tanner was a long-active member and supporter of Panhellenic and an art teacher at Madeira



Top left: Panhellenic President Lisa Brown receiving glass plate Eleanor Jones Tanner Woman of the Year Award. Note images of the Coliseum and Vinoy Hotel in background. Top right: Panhellenic Club attends Tampa Bay Symphony performance, one of many Club events. Panhellenic member Laura Albee plays violin in the symphony. Above: Panhellenic Club night out at the St. Pete Shuffleboard Club.

Junior High School. Lisa Brown, the club’s current president, was the recipient of the award in 2019.

Lisa is an Alpha Sigma Alpha sorority member who attended Missouri Valley College and graduated from the University of South Florida. She has also served as president of the Tampa Bay Chapter of Alpha Sigma Alpha. Of her experience with Panhellenic, Lisa says: “St. Petersburg Panhellenic has given me the opportunity to be part of a group of extraordinary women who have enriched my lifetime sorority experience.” Professionally, Lisa enjoys a 32-year career as a health services manager with the Florida Department of Health. Her community activities include the Christmas Toy Shop board of directors; serving on the board of directors and as president and vice president of the ASAP Homeless Services, and volunteering at St. Raphael’s Church for Sunday School.

One of the Panhellenic Club’s major activities is raising funds to provide scholarships for women attending college. This has been a tradition since 1928. In the beginning, the scholarships were limited

to St. Petersburg (Junior) College, but now are available to sorority women whose home is in Pinellas County but attending any college, including out of state. Anne McIntyre, who has been a St. Pete Panhellenic member for 57 years, chairs the scholarship committee. Typically, three scholarships are awarded amounting to approximately \$2,000 each. One year, the scholarship went to a young woman whose mother had also been a scholarship recipient years before.

A future Club project will be support to the Kind Mouse, a not-for-profit organization distributing food through its Pack-A-Sack program to impoverished and hungry children in Pinellas County. This is a growing need during this time with the coronavirus pandemic and related economic downturn.

The St. Petersburg Panhellenic Alumnae Association is open to all women who are college graduates and members of a sorority. Information regarding membership or scholarships may be found on the Club’s website at [www.stpetepanhellenic.com](http://www.stpetepanhellenic.com) or by calling Lisa Brown at 727-410-4573. ●

- Member Sororities of the St. Petersburg Panhellenic Alumnae Association**
- Alpha Chi Omega
  - Alpha Gamma Delta
  - Alpha Omicron Pi
  - Alpha Phi
  - Alpha Sigma Alpha
  - Alpha Xi Delta
  - Chi Omega
  - Delta Delta Delta
  - Delta Gamma
  - Delta Zeta
  - Kappa Alpha Theta
  - Kappa Delta
  - Kappa Kappa Gamma
  - Pi Beta Phi
  - Sigma Kappa
  - Zeta Tau



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