

# WATERFRONT PARKS CENTENNIAL 1910 - 2010

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Centennial Sponsorships begin; Honorary Chair, Artist, Sponsor speak at Fundraiser**

[November 17, 2009 ~ St. Petersburg, Fla.] St. Petersburg Mayor Rick Baker, Honorary Chair of the St. Petersburg Waterfront Parks Centennial Celebration, greeted an enthusiastic crowd of over 200 gathered at the St. Petersburg Yacht Club on November 10 to learn more about the Centennial Celebration.

Earlier, Peter Belmont, chair of the Parks Centennial Celebration Steering Committee, noted that the first brochure, just printed that day, listed the lineup of sponsors for the year-long Celebration and series of events that will begin with an official kick-off at First Night St. Pete, December 31, 2009, and end on November 6, 2010, with an all-day festival incorporating all the parks along the waterfront from North Shore to Albert Whitted. The event within First Night will be called "Discover History in the Parks;" the November 2010 event will be called "Party in the Parks."

Sponsors include the City of St. Petersburg; Saint Petersburg Preservation, the nonprofit organization that suggested the Parks Centennial Celebration and created the Steering Committee as a 501(c)(3) arm to plan and organize the events; St. Petersburg Saturday Morning Market, Inc.; Progress Energy Florida; Sylvia P. Rusche Insurance Agency, Inc.; and Carrie Jadus, the artist whose original painting serves as the Celebration poster and whose other original artwork featured at the Yacht Club event brought close to \$4,000 to support community activities in the parks during the Centennial year.

Other sponsors announced were St. Pete Solar Energy, J Allan Studios, Zebra Color, Inc.; The Electric Marina, The UPS Store, 200 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South, St. Petersburg; and Defenders of Wildlife, St. Petersburg. The Florida Humanities Council has also awarded a grant for three programs during 2010 collectively called, "Perspectives on the Parks." The three will take place at different venues and dates, all to be announced.

Mayor Baker, who has authored a book on the history of St. Petersburg, recounted the way in which a coalition of citizens, led by *St. Petersburg Times* editor and publisher William Straub and developer Perry Snell, came together in 1909 to buy the first piece of waterfront parkland. The Board of Trade, forerunner to the Chamber of Commerce, was also instrumental in the creation of the waterfront parks as was the St. Petersburg Women's Club.

Artist Carrie Jadus, a native of the Tampa Bay area and resident of St. Petersburg with an engineering degree was introduced by City Council member Leslie Curran, owner of Interior Motives Gallery. The artist spoke about her love for the waterfront parks and her use of light, from sunrise to sunset, to give the effect of shadows and enrich the colors and intensity in her paintings.

Peter Belmont recognized Sylvia Rusche, owner of Sylvia P. Rusche Insurance Agency, Inc., who spoke eloquently about daily travel to her office, near the waterfront parks at First Avenue and First Street North. "The beauty of our waterfront that unfolds sets the tone for my day, and it is a tone of gratitude to live in such a beautiful place," she said.

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Rusche is sponsoring “May Movies in the Park,” a series of free movies shown in North Straub Park on successive Thursdays, May 6, 13, 20, and 27, 2010.

Copies of the poster from Carrie Jadus’ original painting will be for sale at events throughout the Centennial Celebration year.

As an all-volunteer nonprofit endeavor, the Centennial Celebration seeks tax deductible contributions through the Waterfront Parks Centennial Celebration website, [www.stpeteparks100.org](http://www.stpeteparks100.org) , or by sending checks, made payable to SPP Centennial Celebration Fund, to 200 Second Avenue South, #100, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701.

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