



COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Advocating For Our Community

PARCELS FROM *Paradise*

KEEPING VENETIAN RESIDENTS CONNECTED...

Published by the VGRCCA as a service to our members and residents of the Venetian Golf and River Club.

OCTOBER 2023

Parcels from Paradise is the monthly publication of the VGRCC Community Association. We thank those members who provide the financial resources for the costs associated with its publication. If you are reading this edition and are not a member of the Community Association, we would hope you would consider being one of the many members who financially supports its production.

CLOSE TO HOME

Forum Provides an Opportunity for Local Candidates

The Annual Candidate Forum, hosted by the Community Association was held on October 3rd at the River Club before a packed house. All four candidates...Joan Farrell, Mitzie Fiedler, Ron Smith and Dusty Feller fielded a host of questions on topical issues most likely they will face if elected. Key topics included the Laurel Road widening, access in and out of the Venetian, over development, affordable housing and city services. The two sessions were rather lengthy but necessary to allow the two candidates that face each other to have time to elaborate on their positions. The Forum was also videotaped and placed on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/MjROZgZMBIA> For those registered in Florida, don't forget to vote on **Tuesday, November 7th.**



OUTSIDE THE GATES

What is The Laurel Vista Project?

One of our Community Association Board Members attended a 9/26 neighborhood workshop on this topic presented by Vision Planning of Sarasota, architects who represent the developers (of which there are more than one). It was a Zoom only presentation and appeared lightly attended.

The hearing concerned the proposed construction of 216 apartment units being referred to as "Laurel Vista" and would be located on just under 17 acres of land roughly between the King's Gate mobile home park and the Sherriff Tom Knight facility off Laurel Road in Nokomis, **which is in the County, not the City of Venice.** Access to this land is currently via a dirt road called Twin Laurel Blvd, located roughly across Laurel Rd from the Venezia Publix main entrance. If the developers succeed in obtaining the several county approvals needed to allow higher density residences, construction might start in late 2024, but this is far from certain. The housing would be in the form of 8 large buildings: 6 buildings with 24 units each plus 2 buildings with 36 units each. Laurel Vista is only one of three major developments being pursued for this general area. Three other developers are working on a project called **Twin Laurel**, consisting of 421 residences and a hotel, while yet another developer is hoping to gain approval for 2 hotels. If all goes according to the developers' plans, it appears the many workers attracted by Sarasota Memorial Hospital may possibly have more affordable housing choices.

Thank you for reading Parcels. If you have a story idea click on "reply" and let us know.

VISIT: www.vgrcca.org

A Fitting Dedication

A member of the Community Association Board also was also in attendance at a special ceremony on September 23, 2023 at the downtown Heritage Park, at which time a flagpole and flag were raised in the park to honor the many past and present first responders. The flagpole originally stood at the first City firehouse on the City Hall campus and was restored by a member of the Public Works Department. This was a project created by the Leadership Class of the Venice Chamber of Commerce. See the pictures to get a feel of this wonderful dedication or better yet, when downtown, take a short walk to Heritage Park where the first responders' tribute is located.



A Busy Intersection for Sure

The Circle K at the corner of Pinebrook and Laurel seems to be moving along. Parcels has reached out to their corporate office, two times, with the goal of informing our readers about store details. However, as of this printing, they have not responded. It's sometimes hard to fathom, but it appears that Parcels doesn't have the same clout of the NY Times. Darn! What can be said is that this intersection will become quite busy in a few years. The Laurel Vista article above, plus the expansion of the hospital along with perimeter medical buildings, will consume the region. Outparcels at Plaza Venezia are likely to be sold. The County had the foresight, a number of years ago, to expand the roads and turn lanes in this area to accommodate the expected growth.



Strike Up the Band...but in London.

Little Ol' Venice, Florida, a speck on the big map, will be represented though their high school band in London, England. Yes, that's London England, not London Ohio. The band has been invited to participate in the City of London's 2025 (that's correct) New Year's Day Parade. They will see an audience of about 9,000 people. This is twice as big as the Macy's Day Parade. The cost is about \$3,800 per student. No doubt we may see some fundraisers but if you care to donate, you can go to www.vhsmusicboosters.com. Please note that because we are not an over 55 community there are – and always have been -- students (great ones at that!) who attend Venice H.S. living at the Venetian.



Wonderful Plant Sale

The University of Florida extension has been an excellent resource for many of our nature related speakers. They are having their 17th Annual Plant Sale and EdFest on **Saturday, October 14, 8:30 – 3 pm** at the Green Building, Twin Lakes Park, 6700 Clark Rd. in Sarasota. Check and cash only for plant sales. For additional information go to www.sarasota.ifas.ufl.edu/plantsale.

Quick Updates

No movement on the rezoning "Appeal". Also, city officials recently held a public input forum for the proposed northeast park. Few attended. As to the Laurel Rd. widening, the county is working to move forward on the right-of-way acquisition. It's a slow-moving process, but moving forward, nonetheless. There has been some discussion by the road design team about the road crossing at Veneto and what that will look like but nothing has been finalized.

NEW RULES

Smoke Gets in Your Eyes

No butts about it is the catchy phrase the County has used to let beachgoers know that it is no longer permissible to smoke on the beach. So, you want to know what happens if you light up? Violators could be fined up to \$100 for the first infraction, and \$200 to \$500 for further violations. Repeat violators could face up to 60 days in jail where, fyi, smoking is banned.



Got a Golf Cart?...Take Notice

Also beginning in October, a new Florida law which states that you have to be at least 15 with a learner's permit or 16 with a driver's license to drive a golf cart. If you're 18 and older, you must have valid government-issued identification. This new law has implications for those who allow their visiting grandchildren to drive their golf cart throughout the Venetian. All is well and good until (and we hope not) the possibility of an accident. Given the new law and given the youngster did not comply with the law, based on a conversation with a reputable insurance local representative, your insurance company will "most likely pay off any damage but it may lead to cancellation of your policy."

GETTING INVOLVED

Volunteer Opportunities

For many Floridians, the season begins in October. This also is the month when one begins to think about what to do with their time. The Community Association held a Volunteer Fair a number of years ago where residents engaged with representatives from various local agencies. Although not scheduled this year, the following list includes the website for many of these agencies which welcome volunteers:

- Children First <https://www.childrenfirst.net/>
- Big Brothers/Sister <https://www.bbbssun.org/>
- Good Samaritan Pharmacy and Clinic <https://goodsamrx.org/>
- Habitat for Humanity <https://www.habitatsouthsarasota.org/>
- Laurel Civic Association <https://www.laurelcivic.org/>
- Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program <https://ombudsman.elderaffairs.org/>
- Venice Area Mobile Meals <https://veniceareamobilemeals.com/>
- Sarasota County Schools <https://www.sarasotacountyschools.net/>



Getting involved in your community is a great way to spend your time. There are several advisory committees that provide advice to the CDD and POA. The Community Association is always looking for volunteers to assist with its Clean Up Laurel Road and its Patriotic Flag Placement (next one is Friday, November 10th, 8:30 am at the front gate) on three national holidays. Finally, the sign above was recently spotted at the Girl's Fast Pitch Softball field in Sarasota. It serves as an important reminder for all of us.

Seminars and Events Alert

This Season's Seminars – Knock Yor Sock Off

For those who are new to the VGRC, the Community Association has been sponsoring a series of educational seminars and events for residents. The Community Association has planned 17 seminars and events this year. Most of the seminars begin at 5 pm at the River Club and last for one hour. The VGRCCA prides themselves in starting all seminars on time. Most of the seminars involve a 45-minute uninterrupted speaker presentation, followed by questions from the audience. Most of the time the speaker will remain afterwards to address individual questions. In respect to the speaker, we ask that audience members refrain from leaving during the hour-long seminar.



For a full list of seminars and events, click on <https://vgrcca.org/about/seminars-and-events/>

There is a cost associated with the long list of seminars and events. Community Association members fund these events. We would hope that those who plan to attend any of these many events would contribute "their fair share" by completing the membership application at the end of this edition of Parcels.

CPR, October 18, Two Sessions, 10am & 2pm at the River Club Sessions last approximately 90 minutes. Registration will be placed on the Community Association web site, www.vgrcca.org. about a week before the event.

Mugshot, November 4th, 10am – TBD. It's a first-time event to bring your canine for his/her photo shoot by a professional photographer. And if you are the owner, we'll let you take one with Poochie, assuming Poochie grants permission. Again, due to limited number of spaces, there will be sign up registration placed on www.vgrcca.org as we get closer to the event.



A Chance to Live, November 6, 5pm at the River Club. Long-time Venetian resident Pieter Kohnstam and his parents were forced to flee from the Nuremberg/Furth area in Germany to Amsterdam during the early days of the Nazi regime. It was by chance that their apartment in Amsterdam was downstairs from the family of Anne Frank. Pieter's mother became a close friend of Anne's mother, and Anne became Pieter's babysitter. When Nazi persecution of Jews in The Netherlands became intolerable, the Franks went into hiding, but Pieter's parents decided to flee Amsterdam. After a year-long trek through Belgium, France and Spain, they reached safety and freedom in Argentina. Pieter's book, "A Chance to Live", about their flight from persecution was published in the US in 2006. No registration necessary for this event.

KEEPING YOU IN THE KNOW

Sometimes, we forget the importance of Clean Water. Many have read stories of the water crisis in Michigan. A visit to the Venice Eastside Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) is full of interesting discoveries. This facility is the primary wastewater treatment facility for the city where highly treated wastewater is turned into irrigation water, otherwise called "reclaimed water" or "reuse water". The facility, located just east of I-75 and off Laurel Road, is a complex of eight processes designed to take solids, phosphorus, nitrogen, bacteria and other waste out of the city's sewage so that the water can be recycled. WRF is operated 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year, including during hurricanes. The plant is currently processing approximately 2.5 million gallons per day, of which approximately 1 million gallons is from county sources. During peak season, processing may reach 3.5-4.0 million gallons per day. The capacity is 8 million gallons on a three-month average daily flow. A new Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) well is being designed that will store and recover excess reclaimed water after being processed by the WRF. An ASR has the potential to minimize seasonal fluctuations in supply and demand by allowing storage during the wet season when demand is low and recovery of water during dry periods when demand is high. Recycled water flows into five permitted bulk users' ponds. **These ponds include the one here at the Venetian.** The levels are monitored at the Eastside WRF. If the flows reach an extreme level as a result of a hurricane, the city has an agreement with Sarasota County to also use their deep well for storage. Tours can be arranged by calling (941) 882-7294.

FINAL THOUGHTS .. Especially For Those Loyal Parrotheads

Parcels is sensitive to the loss of the great one, Jimmy Buffett, and his many loyal followers aka "Parrotheads". Surely, there are many Parrotheads residing among us. But Buffett's memory may be kept alive given that Florida Senate Minority Leader Lauren Book, D-Davie, filed a bill (SB 84) for the 2024 legislative session that would require the Department of Transportation to establish the "Jimmy Buffett Highway" along the final stretch of the Overseas Highway entering Key West. Parrotheads will surely slow down on the highway to enjoy the ride while singing "Margaritaville". Listen in... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrF4nF8VUb4>



“Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much”
~ H. Keller



Membership Enrollment Form

Your Venetian Golf and River Club Community Association membership demonstrates the value you place on living in this community. For more information, visit our informative website, www.vgrcca.org

Your membership will provide the necessary financial support providing for the:

- Publication of the monthly Parcels from Paradise distributed to all Venetian households
- Continuation of the Hurricane Response Team, activated during an approaching hurricane
- Support for the Wall of Something, an electronic messaging board for members
- Scheduling of exciting seminars and events including Shredfest, Bike-O-Rama, CPR training and a host of presentations made by local experts

Quick Facts about the VGRCCA:

- Formed in 2008, the Community Association has a long and successful record of community engagement
- Managed by a volunteer Board of up to 11 members
- A history of approximately 60-70% of the Venetian residents who join
- Board meetings once a month, open to residents and accessible on Zoom
- Strong emphasis on communications to residents

There are two ways to join:

1. On-line at <http://www.vgrcca.org/membership>
We accept credit cards and use Pay Pal as our secure server.
2. Write a check, payable to **VGRC Community Association** and mail with this form to:
Treasurer
305 Martellago Dr.
North Venice, FL 34275

Membership Dues Per Household

(Please Check Appropriate Line):

SIGN UP	TERM DUES
<input type="checkbox"/> Three Years (best deal) \$70 (\$20 discount)
<input type="checkbox"/> Two Years \$50 (\$10 discount)
<input type="checkbox"/> One Year \$30

MEMBER INFORMATION (PLEASE PRINT AND PROVIDE ALL INFORMATION):

NAME: _____

PREFERRED TELEPHONE #: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

ADDITIONAL NAME: _____

PREFERRED TELEPHONE #: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

VENETIAN ADDRESS: _____

OTHER MAILING ADDRESS: _____