



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.

FEBRUARY 2024

*Parcels from Paradise is the monthly publication of the VGRC 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.*

## Open Invitation to Attend

The VGRC Community Association holds its monthly meetings on the second Monday of the month beginning at 3:45 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for **Monday, February 12th** at the River Club. Meetings are also zoomed. Based on past meetings, there are regular attendees at the meeting and we also extend a special invite to all of our residents to attend these efficiently run meetings.

We also encourage you to attend the POA meetings and the CDD meeting to get a better understanding how these two organizations fit into the total operation of the VGRC. The two organizations also send out an email indicating the date and time of their meetings. We're sure they will also be glad to see you.



### Heavy Traffic

Have you been to the Wall of Something lately? It's busier than the Long Island Expressway during rush hour. Go to [www.vgrcca.org/wallofsomething](http://www.vgrcca.org/wallofsomething) to see the traffic.

### I Love the Pressure

Articles about the City of Venice's new Water Booster Station have been in previous editions of Parcels. We are planning to have this subject as part of a presentation at the Town Hall Meeting in March. The Booster Pump Station should be operational in 2025. This should help all residents with a boost in water pressure. For project information and construction updates go to [www.VeniceWaterBoosterStation.com](http://www.VeniceWaterBoosterStation.com)

### Kosher or Dill?

The Pickleball Courts have opened and there are lessons offered to those who want to learn this popular game. Certainly, the CDD went through a lot in getting pickleball on property, but they eventually "pulled the trigger" and now three brand new courts are available to Venetian residents. We can't forget also that the inclusion of pickleball adds yet another amenity for our community. If you add up all the amenities and opportunities we have on property; such as, the various card games at the River Club, stretching classes, personal training, water aerobics and a beautiful 18-hole golf course, you should come up with a number over twenty. These amenities appeal to our current residents; as well as, the diverse buying needs of those seeking to purchase a home in our community.

## THE WALL OF SOMETHING

An Electronic Bulletin Board for all Venetian Residents!



Visit us at [www.vgrcca.us](http://www.vgrcca.us) and Click the wall of something

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

VISIT: [www.vgrcca.org](http://www.vgrcca.org)

## As the Annual Town Hall Meeting Approaches

The Annual Town Hall Meeting (“THM”) sponsored by the VGRC Community Association is a must for residents who wish to be informed about key issues in and around North Venice. This meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 18, 2024 at the Laurel Nokomis School down the road. In past years we have usually seen a packed house, demonstrating how homeowners are seeking information relating to the community in which they live. We will be putting out a more



comprehensive announcement about this event, but for the time being, consider the following:

- The THM will start a half hour earlier this year beginning at 5 pm.
- You will have an opportunity to meet face-to-face with the Hurricane Response Team (“HRT”) or HRT coordinator to learn more about this wonderful program and sign up for the team.
- A very detailed map will be provided to residents showing all the housing and business developments planned in this area. After seeing it, you will come away with one conclusion.
- There will be time set aside to ask questions and provide comments to those who will be speaking.
- You will learn more about the expansion of Sarasota Memorial Hospital-Venice.
- Representatives from the CDD, POA, and the Golf Club will be available from 4-5 pm to field your questions.
- We will share with you shortly the complete list of speakers which will include the new Sarasota County School Superintendent. It will be interesting to see if he will address how he is working through much of the controversy surrounding the district.

Finally, it must be mentioned that one reason to attend will be to demonstrate to the many decision makers who attend how engaged our residents are when it comes to both our community and northeast Venice.

Please put **Monday, March 18, 2024, 5 pm** on your calendar.

## Rolling Out the Red Carpet

The Venetian Golf and River Club Community Association will be providing *an Information/Meet and Greet* event to all new residents who moved to the Venetian in 2022 through 2024. It will be held on **Tuesday, February 13 from 10:00 am to 11:30 am** at the River Club. Refreshments will be provided, along with information about the Venetian as well as the City of Venice and surrounding area. This will also be an opportunity for our newest residents to meet each other. Invitations will be sent out when we get closer to the date requesting a RSVP. **Mark your calendars** and watch for more information to come.

## A REVIEW of WHAT WE DO

Since 2008, VGRC residents have volunteered their time, talents and expertise to serve as leaders for the Venetian Golf & River Club Community Association (“VGRCCA”), an independently run organization aimed at enhancing the quality of life for all Venetian residents. This unique organization brings to the community:

- ✓ A monthly newsletter, Parcels from Paradise, which features the latest news and events in and around VGRC.
- ✓ Long-time connections with key business owners, politicians and city/county officials to help stay abreast of changes.
- ✓ A history of advocating for our community (see accomplishments at [www.vgrcca.org](http://www.vgrcca.org)).
- ✓ Community Betterment Projects which provide funds to purchase items for the VGRC; such as lakefront and boardwalk benches, bike racks and a new River Club audio system.
- ✓ A series of educational seminars and informative events, including community wide CPR training.
- ✓ A well trained and highly organized group of resident volunteers who comprise the Hurricane Response Team (HRT).
- ✓ An electronic messaging board, The Wall of Something, advertising services and sales to our residents.
- ✓ An Annual Town Hall meeting which brings together key local decision makers to provide topical updates to residents.
- ✓ An awareness of issues in Northeast Venice, including new businesses, housing developments and infrastructure improvements.
- ✓ Charitable activities within the community, such as “Fill the Barrels” and “Supply the Supplies”, as well as community service including “Adopt a Road Cleanup Program” and placement of American flags on three national holidays.



## OUTSIDE THE GATES

### Laurel Rd. Widening

We like to update our readers as to progress with the Laurel Rd. widening project. Currently, the Neal-Stantec team is finalizing the road design, securing permits from various agencies; such as, the Florida Department of Transportation, and reviewing land parcels which will be necessary for purchasing/transferring to build the road. Once complete, RFP's will be solicited for construction, which should take place in late 2024 or early 2025. Stay tuned.

### The Attack of the Mosquito Fish

The county has recently broken ground on a major Mosquito Management Facility just a few miles down the road. If you exit from the interstate SOUTH to Laurel Rd., look to your right where you will see the construction of the facility. The \$12.7 million, 20,000 sq. ft. facility is to be located at the intersection of Honore and Laurel Road, across the street from the county Sheriff's Support Services facility and will be operational in 2025. One of the primary functions of the mosquito facility is to raise and harvest mosquito fish which eat mosquito larvae. The fish are released in countryside waterways to control the mosquito population. Sarasota County has one the largest aquaculture programs in Florida and this facility will improve and enlarge its program to combat mosquitos. The building will also contain an insectary which examines mosquitoes for resistance to pesticides and disease surveillance.



## Play Ball

February in Florida brings the start of “Baseball Spring Training“. If you haven’t attended a spring training game, it’s a great way to spend a leisurely afternoon. . . . and you may even find a few night games. Tickets are reasonably priced except for premium games usually with the Red Sox or Yankees. And, of course, as you are being “taken to the ball game”, you can’t forget cold beer, hot dogs, peanuts and Cracker Jacks ( Ed. note. . .not sure if they even sell the “jacks” but had to add them to the article). Within a relatively short drive you can see the Baltimore Orioles, Atlanta Braves, Tampa Bay Rays, Pittsburgh Pirates, Philadelphia Phillies and other MLB teams. Spring Training is very casual for both the players and the fans. To see the various schedules, go to the web sites provided by each team and remember, “1,2 3 and you’re out at the Ol’ Ball Game.”



## One liners

- Unofficial reports have it that Circle K will open in March, but it would be easier to get a call back from Spiro Agnew’s grandchild than a Circle K official to confirm the date.
- Word has it that a Sprouts Store will be built near the old Albertson Store in the vacant area of the shopping plaza where currently Ollie’s, Office Max and Firehouse Sub are now located.
- City Council at its January 23rd meeting indicated that they are considering a three-year term for Council members.
- Tony Danza will be performing at the Venice Performing Arts Center located on the grounds of Venice High School on March 9th at 7 pm. ( Ed. note. . .wonder if he will take an Uber or a “Taxi” to get to the venue).
- Nothing new to report regarding the Welcome Center according to the Golf Club’s GM.
- Seems that more residents are paying attention to the need to call the Security Gatehouse announcing their arriving guests and workers.
- The City of Venice may put up the “Not Welcome” sign to Arby’s, McDonald’s, Taco Bell, and other fast-food chains.
- Look for a zoom meeting at the end of February highlighting a proposed new 110 room hotel scheduled to be built on the vacant property on E. Laurel, across the street from the Shell Station and “Subway Plaza.”

## Oye....Was that Sandwich Good!!

The 30th annual Jewish Food Festival will take place on **Sunday, February 18th from 10 am to 3 pm** at the Jewish Congregation of Venice, 600 Auburn Road in Venice. The nice feature of this one-day festival is the proximity to the Venetian. . .about three miles away. There will be continuous entertainment, a raffle, vendor booths & a jewelry sale. Free admission and parking onsite are available. Visitors can stuff themselves with a variety of "Jewish Soul Food", including corned beef & pastrami sandwiches, stuffed cabbage, chopped liver, knishes, matzo ball & cabbage soups as well as homemade Jewish pastries & more. It’s a fun event which we guarantee you won’t go home hungry. It is encouraged to pre-order by going to the website of the Jewish congregation and picking up your order on Friday, February 16th or Saturday February 17th ([jewishcongregationofvenice.org](http://jewishcongregationofvenice.org)) as Sunday is usually very, very crowded.



### That's A Spicy Meatball

A very popular event which runs from **February 22 through February 25** is the Italian Festival on the grounds of Venice Airport. This event is four days of fun including live music, entertainment, plenty of food (guess what kind?), vendors and rides. Be ready to pay the \$10.00 parking fee to enter a very lively festival.



### THE SHOWTIME BENEFIT for VENICE THEATRE'S REBUILD EFFORTS

It has been over a year since Hurricane Ian wreaked havoc on Venice Theatre and, during that time, it's been a slow but steady process to rebuild. Even though the theatre had insurance, once they got inside and structural engineers assessed the damage, the numbers began to climb. Add to that, updated codes are far stricter than when the building was erected 98 years ago. What this all means is Venice Theatre, the 2nd largest and most active community theatre in the United States, still needs help to finish their rebuilding. Enter The "Showtime Benefit", an annual community fundraiser which is being held this year with 100% of the proceeds going to Venice Theatre. Performers from Venice Theatre, Players Centre and Florida Studio Theatre will be on hand to sing, dance and light up the stage! (and the MC is a VGRC resident). The Showtime Benefit will be held at the VENICE COMMUNITY CENTER on **Saturday, February 24 beginning at 2:00 pm**. This event sells out every year, so you'll want to get your tickets early. Tickets are \$30 with 100% of ticket proceeds going to Venice Theatre. For tickets, go to [www.VeniceTheatre.org](http://www.VeniceTheatre.org) or call 941-488-1115.

## SEMINARS AND EVENTS

The VGRC Community Association this year is sponsoring 17 events and seminars. We thank our members who provide the financial support to fund these events. For those who enjoy attending some of the events, but are not members, we hope you will consider joining the Community Association via the membership form at the end of Parcels.

### An A+ Speaker

The Community Association welcomed Venice psychologist Dr. Christopher Cortman to the River Club on **January 16**. In addition to his successful practice, Dr. Cortman has published 4 books and has spoken widely on the topic of mental health. He spoke extemporaneously and with humor to a highly engaged audience, while communicating practical advice on how our outlook and attitude can influence our health and ultimately, our longevity. We hope to have Dr. Cortman back to explore another aspect of mental health in a future seminar.



### How to Use Your Phone Camera

Wow. That's all we can say. What we discovered was that there are a lot of residents who want to know how to use their mobile phone to take better photos. This was quite evident at the VGRC Community Association seminar held on **January 24th** at the River Club. The flood of participants caused organizers to modify the room setup as well as call on the calvary to bring in more chairs. To say the least, this was a wonderful seminar which means the Community Association will likely consider a repeat performance next year. Finally, a standing ovation to the two resident presenters who did a magnificent job teaching the class.

### Bike-O-Rama X

On **January 27th**, Bicycles International serviced nearly 100 bikes in a 2.5-hour time period. We thank this wonderful company, located on Tamiami Trail across from Lowe's, for their participation in this year's popular event. Thanks to the many bikers who attended this lively event and walked away thanking both the Community Association and Bicycles International for their time. One of the residents said it best in her text to the Community Association when she stated, "The turnout was amazing! It gave me an opportunity to talk to a nice guy who moved here with his wife recently and he loves our community."





## And Upcoming Events

**CPR/AED Training** – The next training sessions will take place on **Thursday, February 8th at 10:00 am**. It's the most useful training you will ever take. The Venice Fire Department will again provide the training and hopefully we will have the enthusiastic Fire Chief, Frank Giddens, once again do the training. Depending on demand, a second session will be scheduled for **2:00 pm later that day**. Registration is required for this usually sold-out event giving VGRC Community Association members priority. Ask an individual who has already taken the training to hear how valuable it would be for you.



**Shredfest/Junkfest** – **Saturday, February 24th, 8:30 am -10:30 am**, River Club Parking lot, It's back again! This popular free event allows residents to have your documents shredded and junk properly discarded. In the past we have seen such items as tables and chairs, toilets, grills and mattresses in the junk pile. No hazardous materials are allowed. The Shredding truck lets you witness your papers being shredded. Although the lines of cars have been long, the event is efficiently run to get you through as quickly as possible. As a reminder, stay in your car...our volunteers will do all the work. No appointment necessary.



**Estate Planning** – **Wednesday, February 28 at 9:00 am**. This is a very valuable seminar, especially if you are new to Florida. The seminar will have an expert estate planner share with you the latest laws and regulations. Please note this seminar is not a sales pitch. Registration will be required with Community Association members receiving priority registration.

**Gators, Snakes and Other Creatures** – **March 4th, 5 pm**. A repeat of the seminar that has been, so far in the history of all of the Community Association seminars, the one with the largest audience. The title says it all.



“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](http://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: \_\_\_\_\_