

PARCELS

FROM
Paradise

December 2025



This edition has been financially supported by VGRCC Residents

Beth & Phil Occhino

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Long time congenial resident
of the VGRCC

BRAVO

My Vacation from Earth

On December 1st, the Community Association hosted American NASA astronaut and retired Navy Captain Sunita "Suni" Williams as our guest speaker. Suni's sincere personality and engaging stories about her life as an Astronaut were fascinating. Chosen by NASA in 1998, she has completed 3 space missions and spent over 608 days in space during her career. Suni also completed more than 62 hours of spacewalks, making her the leading U.S. female astronaut in this area.

On June 6th, 2024, what began as a brief eight-day trip evolved into a 286-day mission in space for Suni, who outlined both the physical effects and the emotional challenges of extended separation from loved ones as she lived on the International Space Station. She emphasized that a rigorous daily exercise program aboard the space station is vital for maintaining bone density and cardiovascular health. She mentioned an interesting piece of trivia: in a gravity-free environment, your spine elongates, which increases your height.

Suni's professional experience includes collaborating with astronauts from Russia, Japan, and various international organizations. During their missions, these astronauts remain actively engaged in both technical projects and medical research, utilizing their time in space efficiently and productively.

Suni serves as a role model for people of all ages. Her thoughtfulness, engaging conversation and patience when taking photos and signing books were truly valued. We thank Suni for her continued service and look forward to her next adventure.



Gratitude

Many attendees thanked the Community Association for producing this important event as they left the River Club. We greatly respect and appreciate your feedback. In order to sponsor programs like this, we rely on contributions in the form of our modest membership dues of only \$30 per year, as well as voluntary donations through our recent Your Donation Matters initiative. Almost 900 Venetians count themselves as members, and nearly 100 have already donated in the few months that the donation program has been active. If you are not yet among this valued group of supporters, you will find it easy to do so on the Membership and Donations page of our website.



**YOUR DONATION
MATTERS**



Thank you for reading PARCELS. If you have a story idea, click on "REPLY" and let us know!

VISIT: www.vgrcca.org

HOME FRONT

Brunch with Santa

The Big Guy in red is probably right now checking his Google map to get Rudolph off in the correct direction to Venice, FL. Rumor had it that last year, Rudolph screwed up and went to Venice, Italy, and was last seen riding in a Gondolier. With the correct direction, Santa plans to be at the VGRC on **Sunday, December 21st, 9 am** for Brunch with Santa. Santa meets with each youngster individually and takes his time to take down all of their gift requests. Adults attending will learn whether their name appears in the Nice or Naughty book. This is an annual tradition at the VGRC loved by all.



Web News

Did you know that past seminar events are no longer lost somewhere behind the safe? You can now access them on your community website at <https://vgrcca.org/past-events/>. They're currently available for the 2025-26 season. We're planning to create a new webpage that offers local community assistance and tips; such as troubleshooting Comcast service issues. Please keep an eye on these spaces. If you have any insights or suggestions, feel free to share them with our webmaster at vgrccaweb@gmail.com, and we'll be happy to include them.

Start Gathering

We're not too far from the ever-popular Shredfest/Junkfest/Goodwill scheduled on **February 21st**. For those who are new, this event is an opportunity to bring junk, paper products and items for Goodwill. We are pleased to say that this will be the second year that Goodwill is participating. Last year was very successful as residents dropped off a truckload of donations. The event is free to residents; however, there is a cost to the Community Association. Therefore, the "Bucket Boys" will return by popular demand to collect your thank you cash donation.



Meditating and Relaxing

Isn't it great to just sit on one of the donated Community Association benches relaxing while enjoying a lakeview moment as in the picture.



The Risks

It's great to have your little 12-year-old grandson, Jimmy, just begging you to let him drive grandpa's golf cart. As the caring grandpa that you are, you let little Jimmy sit behind the wheel while you sit next to him. However, if Jimmy, unfortunately, hits a car or more seriously, taps a pedestrian, the police are called and can, according to the VPD, issue a crash report. In addition, the insurance company now must deal with an unlicensed driver operating a golf cart and can obtain the police department's crash report. The best advice is to follow what the CDD has previously communicated to all residents that people under age 18 must have either a learner's permit or driver's license in order to drive a golf cart legally in the state of Florida. Anyone 18 or older must carry a government ID. We recognize it is tempting to let your under-age grandchildren drive your golf cart, but this is a matter of everyone's safety. Please ensure your guests are aware of Florida state law if they will be using your golf cart on Venetian's roads.

Record Year

We did it again. Take a bow, Venetians. The Fill the Barrels campaign was a huge success topping last year's efforts. At the end of Parcels is a letter from the President of Ajax thanking the community.



Cyber Security

The Community Association offers in-person cybersecurity mentoring sessions at the River Club on most Tuesday mornings. To register, send an email to vgrccaweb@gmail.com. You can also find the schedule on our community website: vgrcca.org

CORNUCOPIA OF NEWS

Pilates Shop

For those who want to know about the store which is being remolded at Plaza Venezia, next to Jersey Mike's Subs, Parcels learned it will be a Pilates Studio. You may have also noticed that nearby, on the same side of the shopping center, construction of a motel has begun.

The ? Everyone Continues to Ask

The number one question that Parcels gets no matter where you see him (Publix, Golf Course, Proctologist, etc.) is what are they building at the corner of Mission Valley and Laurel? The answer has not changed from the original answer given many times by Parcels. **Sarasota County records show this property has residential land use and zoning.**



The Latest.....

- Laurel Road will go first before the Shopping Center
- Laurel Rd construction will start with moving utilities, then building lanes southward, relocating traffic to the new lanes and then building the northward lanes. This may take two years.
- Publix will probably open sometime in late 2027.

BUY LOCAL

It's the buying season and we know many readers are out there getting that gift for that special individual. Today, it's easy to go shopping because you can just saunter to the gift card section at a store or, to make it really easy, sit in your stressless chair watching the Philadelphia Eagles on Sunday and go online to get your gift cards. However, if you want the real "live" shopping experience remember, **Buy Local**. The stores in Venice have a variety of items, some you will never see in the big box stores.



Holiday Music Plus

Holiday concerts are a special treat for audience members. The Venice Symphony has four concerts on **Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the weekend of December 19th**. Tickets are going fast. Venice Mainstreet puts out a wonderful publication about the area including a full list of calendar events. Click on www.visitvenicefl.org/

SMH....even more news.

There is not enough space in Parcels to place all the information gained at the well-attended Sarasota Memorial Hospital's seminar held at the Venetian on **October 28**. The key word is "Growing". In early 2026, the Milman-Kover Cancer Pavilion will be in operation on the Sarasota Campus. In 2028, you will see a new \$82.5 million 4-story Rehabilitation Pavilion on the Venice campus, including inpatient and outpatient rehab services and advanced therapy gyms. Finally, it was recently announced that SMH will be building a new hospital in North Port. Isn't it great to have such a wonderful hospital and neighbor just "down the road."



West Blalock Park...Get there

If you want to visit a park fully decorated in the holiday spirit, go to West Blalock Park on Pensacola Ave. The park is located on the island behind the Community Center. You will walk away being very impressed with the array of decorations



Lithium Batteries

We hear reports nationwide about lithium batteries often being associated with fires. In fact, the state of New York has a task force concentrating on lithium batteries. As many residents own golf carts with lithium batteries, Parcels reached out to the Venice Fire Department for their advice on lithium batteries. **See Lithium Battery Safety Sheet prepared by the Venice Fire Department at the end of Parcels.**



One final note that has been previously urged by the Fire Department Chief... no matter the type of battery you own, if you plan to leave your home for an extended time or even overnight, unplug the battery cord from the outlet.

Finally, be sure your charger is plugged into a circuit with the necessary amperage capacity for the charger's requirement and extension cord is suitable for the amperage. Consult your electrician if you have questions about your set up.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Parcels and the Board of the Community Association wishes all of our residents, Happy Holidays!



LITHIUM BATTERY SAFETY SHEET

Prepared by the Venice Fire Department

General Residential Guidance

HAZARD SUMMARY

- Lithium batteries contain flammable electrolyte and may enter thermal runaway if damaged, overcharged, exposed to heat, or improperly stored.
- Fire may produce intense heat, flammable vapors, and toxic fumes.
- Damaged batteries may leak corrosive electrolyte that can irritate skin, eyes, and respiratory tract.

ACCIDENTAL RELEASE / LEAK

- Evacuate the immediate area if smoke, popping, hissing, or unusual odor is detected.
- Do not handle a swollen, smoking, or burning battery.
- For leaking battery fluids: avoid contact; wear gloves and eye protection; ventilate area.
- Place damaged batteries in a non-combustible container and contact proper disposal services.

HANDLING

- Use only UL-certified batteries and UL-listed charging equipment to ensure compliance with recognized safety standards.
- Use only manufacturer-approved chargers and charging cables.
- Do not puncture, crush, disassemble, or expose batteries to water or extreme heat.
- Keep batteries away from children, pets, metal objects, and sources of ignition.

RESIDENTIAL INSTALL & OPERATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

- Charge batteries on a non-combustible surface in a well-ventilated area.
- Keep the charging area free of combustibles and maintain clear space around chargers.
- Install a smoke detector near the charging/storage area.
- Avoid charging unattended unless device manufacturer explicitly permits it.
- Store batteries in a cool, dry location away from direct sunlight and heat sources.
- Keep spare or loose batteries in protective cases to prevent short circuits.

EMERGENCY ACTIONS

- If battery smokes, swells, or overheats: Stop using it immediately. Move people away from the area.
- If fire occurs: Evacuate and call 911. Do not attempt to move a burning battery.

Electrolyte contact: Rinse skin or eyes with water for 15+ minutes and seek medical





Outing Benefitting Good Sam Health Services

Every year the Ladies Golf Committee at the Venetian Golf Club sponsors an outing to raise funds for a local charity. 120 ladies normally participate in the outing. Registration for non-golf members will open in early January if spots are available.

This year's event is scheduled for Tuesday February 3rd, 2026, and the charity is Good Sam Health Services—a 501(c)3 non-profit non-sectarian volunteer organization whose mission is to provide free medication and medical services to uninsured financially needy members of our community to positively affect their quality of life. Every dollar we raise in direct donations will be matched by Flanzer Trust.

There are several ways you can help support Good Sam:

1. Donate money via a check made out to Flanzer Trust and drop it off at the Golf Pro Shop no later than January 27th. Please note Good Sam on the memo line of your check.
2. Sponsor a hole for \$100 which would include a sign with your name at one of the golf tee boxes during the event.
3. Donate a gift basket or an item by January 16th that can be included in one of our opportunity baskets. These donations would be appreciated by January 16th.
4. Purchase opportunity tickets on Monday February 2nd in the Golf Pro Shop. Opportunity tickets for gift baskets are available to the entire Venetian community..

If you have any questions, please contact Natalie Balysky at 908-672-6736. Thank you for your support!



THE FUTURE IS RIDING ON AJAX

Dear Residents, Venetian Golf and Country Club,

On behalf of Ajax Paving Industries of Florida, LLC, we extend our sincere gratitude for your generous participation in this year's Fill the Barrels campaign benefiting All Faiths Food Bank. Your commitment to helping those in need is truly inspiring.

Thanks to the efforts of the VGRC Community Association, which led the initiative, your community collected an impressive total of 1.4 tons of food! This achievement shows the strength of teamwork and caring in our neighborhoods.

Your contributions will provide countless meals to families across our region, ensuring that no one goes hungry during this season of giving. Initiatives like this remind us that when we work together, we can make a meaningful impact.

Thank you again for your kindness and support. We look forward to continuing this tradition of giving in the years ahead.

Warm regards, Ajax Paving Industries of Florida, LLC

Dr. Vince Hafeli

President

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



Advocating for the Community

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 with a strong emphasis on communication to residents.
- For more information about the Community Association including a calendar of events and a list of accomplishments, go to our website: <https://vgrcca.org/about/>

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:
Membership
230 Padova Way
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 |

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTARY DONATION: \$

If you appreciate the value of Parcels, Seminars, Hurricane Response and other contributions of the Community Association, please consider making a donation in excess of required dues.

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: _____