

PARCELS



FROM
Paradise
Now in its 16th year of publication.

January 2026

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HOMETOWN STUFF

Before we move forward to 2026, we want to look back at those key events of 2025 which took place in and around the VGRC (in random order).

- NASA astronaut Sunita Williams provided fascinating details of her time in space before a packed River Club audience.
- Northeast Park construction began; Community Association appointed by the City as the park's adopted partner.
- Hampton Golf took over the management of the Venetian River Club.
- Significant upgrade of VGRCCA website including news, announcements, photos, videos, summaries of seminars, updated Accomplishments, Membership renewal process, Helpful Links and Contacts page, etc.
- Venice City Council appointed James Clinch as City Manager replacing the retiring and highly respected Venetian resident, Ed Lavalle.
- Venetian residents answered the call with record setting contribution to the "Feed the Barrel Thanksgiving Food Drive."
- New Water Booster Station began operation.
- A no hurricane season as predicted by Meteorologist Bob Harrigan during his presentation at the River Club.
- Sarasota Memorial Hospital's expansion of the Venice campus and the start of the construction process for SMH – North Port.
- HRT added a Facebook page to expand communications with residents.

VENICE IS THRIVING AND GROWING

Venice, Florida has seen steady population growth since the early 2000's. In 2000, the city had approximately 17,700 residents. By 2005, this number had increased by just 1% to 17,842. However, between 2005 and 2010, the population rose sharply by 16%, reaching 20,748 people in 2010. This was an indication that the appeal for the Venice area had grown along with the rapid building going on during this time. Between the years 2010 and 2015 the population increased only 3.1% to 21,418, but during the next 5 years, by 2020, the population soared almost 20% to reach 25,463. The population of Venice continues an upward swing almost reaching 30,000 residents in 2025, which is another 17.4% increase. Key factors in the current growth of Venice can be attributed to the following:

- People reaching retirement age (Baby Boomers)
- Climate (throw those shovels away)
- Continuous building and growth in this area attracting both residents and new businesses

Venice boasts a welcoming atmosphere, scenic views of the Gulf, a rich historical background, amazing wildlife, top-notch dining options, beautiful beaches, and the charming feel of a small town.



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

VISIT: www.vgrcca.org

“STAYING ALIVE”

(Note: This story is NOT about a local cardiologist)

The 2026 calendar listing the concerts at the Venice Community Center is now available. Rather than make a jaunt up to Sarasota, within 15 minutes you can get to the Community Center and listen to tributes to the Bee Gees, (Stayin' Alive) Everly Brothers (Cathy's Clown), the Eagles (Best of My Love) and Parcel's favorite, Frankie Valli. Go to the Venice Community Center Box Office or call 941-207-1038 for more information.

UPCOMING SUPER BOWL - NEW!!!

First Ever Community Association's SBP..... Super Bowl Prediction

Practically everyone knows the word “Super Sunday” which translates into friends coming together to watch the Super Bowl. And for those food lovers, you just can't wait until halftime. This year Super Bowl LX will be held on **Sunday, February 8, 2026, with kickoff at 6:30 pm EST**. So, who's going to win? We don't know right now but are eager to see if you, as a resident, can predict the winner and the margin of victory.

The Community Association is holding its first “Super Bowl Prediction” or “SBP”. It is open only to residents of the VGRC. As you will see, there is a relatively short window to place your prediction....we didn't say bet.

So, you think you are the VGRC resident expert and first-time winner in predicting the Super Bowl? Think about it.... as you walk into the River Club, or take a stroll down Pesaro, or even walk into Jersey Mike's Subs, you hear folks saying with awe and a great respect, “Look that's the guy/gal who predicted the winner of the “SBP!!!!” The deadline for entering is **12 midnight on Friday, January 16th**, the day before the divisional playoffs begin. Go to www.vgrcca.org to enter your prediction, where you will see an orange button on the top to enter your prediction as well as a post with the rules and deadlines.

And now for the news you've waited for: The declared winner/predictor will receive a colorful tee shirt with the winning team's logo along with a statement on the shirt indicating that he/she was the winner of the SBP. Hope to see your entry today. No cost to enter. This is a fun event!



EVENTS OF INTEREST

SAVE THE DATE: Wednesday, January 21, 9:00 – 11:00 am, River Club

The Venetian Golf and River Club Community Association (VGRCCA) takes pride in organizing exciting events and services that foster and encourage volunteerism and participation in the community. This year we plan to provide three sessions of Resident Orientation which will be open to all residents. New residents will find this presentation particularly beneficial, while long-time residents may find it a very useful refresher course.

We will present essential information and resources such as the “ABC’s” of Venetian Golf and River Club by explaining the responsibilities of each of the entities (CDD, POA, HOA, VGRCCA) that manage our community, introduce staff, the essential Hurricane Response Team, and review the events and importance of the Community Association. A Q&A session will be included and refreshments will be served.

Registration will be required as space will be limited and new residents (new to VGRC in 2024 and 2025) will be given preference. Watch for emails announcing registration details.

Mote Marine in Venice....What???

A great deal of publicity has been given to the opening of the second location of the Mote Marine Laboratory near the UTC Mall in Sarasota. Now Mote Marine is coming to Venice...sorta. On **February 19th and March 9th** at the Venice Community Center, the Mote Marine Laboratory will have a lecture sharing their latest findings, innovations and fieldwork. The reception begins at 5 pm and the lecture is at 6 pm.....at a very nominal cost. Contact Mote Marine for more details.



Valuable Toolbox

On **January 13th, 5 pm at the River Club**, an officer from the Sarasota Sheriff Department will bring an interesting seminar entitled "Self-Protection Toolbox." She will provide useful and practical safety tips for attendees.

Also in January, add the following to your calendar:

Saturday, January 24, 9-11 am - the annual ever popular Bike-O-Rama

January 26, 3:30 pm –Developer Approval Process seminar

Women's Health

An outstanding women's conference is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 18th from 10:30 am – 1 pm** at the Plantation Golf and Country Club. This conference is Venice's 21st Annual Women and Medicine Educational Luncheon. The title is "Health, Hormone and Happiness—A Candid Conversation with Women Physicians." For tickets go to <https://smhf.org/events/>

TIME WELL SPENT

Masters of the Soil

The Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Program, which provides free Master Gardener Plant Clinics meets **every Thursday at the Jacaranda Library from 1:30 - 3:30 pm**. The volunteers are very knowledgeable and can tell you about plants that may or may not do well in Venice (even if the plant is on the Florida-friendly list). You can provide photos or bring in sickly plants or leaves and they can identify the illness/pest that may be killing your plants. The Florida Master Gardener Program is an outreach program composed of UF/IFAS Extension certified volunteers who are trained to provide research-based horticultural education to Florida residents. Participants of the program must complete a 50-hour plus training course provided by the University of Florida and local county Extension office. Hours may vary by county. To become a Master Gardener, you must have an interest in gardening, a desire to help others in your community, and a dedication to complete the training and service hours.

<https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/lawn-and-garden/florida-master-gardener-program/>



U C ME DOESN'T MEAN I C U

As the length of daylight has decreased this time of year, many residents continue their daily walking routine that may now be occurring in the dark. Pedestrians can see cars because their headlights give away their presence.

While headlights brighten the path for cars, it doesn't mean the drivers see a pedestrian in their path, especially if that pedestrian is not wearing high visibility clothing. Assuming a driver sees a pedestrian in their path could lead to a tragic result. Consider wearing high visibility clothing when out exercising in areas where traffic exists to increase the safety of your walk. Remember, don't assume the driver can see you. As the title suggest, from the driver's perspective: you see me doesn't mean I see you. Please protect yourself!

A Marriage Made in Coffee

Black Gold Coffee, located at the Jacaranda Commons, has been a popular local hangout for many who like coffee made on the premises. Black Gold Coffee now has a second location on Venice Island at 409 Granada, in proximity to City Hall and located inside the Lord-Higel House. Constructed in 1896 by entrepreneur Joseph Lord, the Lord-Higel House is the second oldest house in Sarasota County. Acquired by the City of Venice in 2005, Venice Heritage volunteers raised more than \$800,000 and invested thousands of hours to restore the house to its original glory. Black Gold Coffee recently opened a spot in the house where you can grab a cup of their wonderful coffee and sit on the porch being thankful that you live in such a great city. It's another way our wonderful city blends the new and the old.



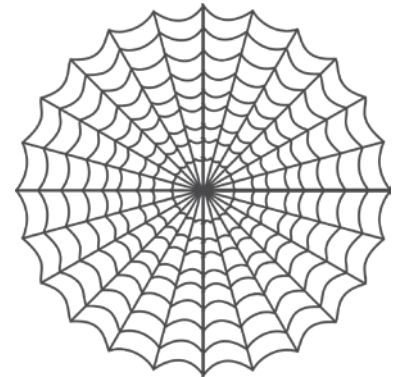
CAUGHT IN THE WEB

Simply put, the VGRC Community Association has one of the best community-based websites in the area. Each month Parcels provides updates on the website through the section called, "Caught in the Web." Naturally, once you go there, you will see so many other articles causing you to be truly caught in the web.

The Community Association website has really taken off, and more and more residents are viewing it every day. It has been enhanced recently by a YouTube channel. Practically everything you need is on it...from the latest news and update to who to call if you need, for example, an alligator removed. The good news about our Community Association website is we can add anything at any time. For example, we may get notice of a change in trash pickup...the change can be placed on the website in minutes. If you haven't been to the website, we recommend you click on.

Get a Venetian Gem by clicking <https://vgrcca.org/venetian-gems/> for a description of our local hospital — Sarasota Memorial Hospital-Venice: A Pillar of Rapidly Expanding Healthcare. Since its debut in November 2021, Sarasota Memorial Hospital-Venice (SMH-Venice) has become a vital health resource for the booming population of south Sarasota County. Situated at the corner of Laurel and Pinebrook roads near I-75, the 65-acre campus was built with future growth in mind—a strategic decision that proved necessary when the facility reached near-capacity almost immediately.

Also, if you wonder why it's important to clean mold off the roof or why using a car cover is problematic, visit the recently created "Venetian Gems" on your community website.



CLOSE TO HOME

The Gratitude Award

At its upcoming March 16th community wide meeting, The Community Association Board looks forward to recognizing Venetian residents "who have applied their time and talents to significantly help their fellow residents, thereby improving and enriching the experience of living at The Venetian." We take special pleasure in highlighting their contributions at our All-Community Meeting in March and hope you will join us for this positive event. Recipients will be announced prior to the event with the hope that their friends and neighbors join in at the event recognizing their contribution to the community. This is the third year for this special award.

New Location

For those who have been living at the VGRC for some time, you might have attended one of the “Town Hall Meetings” at Laurel Nokomis School. This year, the CA Board, after careful deliberation, has decided to move the Town Hall Meeting to our own River Club. Most likely you will see not only a name change but also some program changes. The meeting will take place on **Monday, March 16th at 4:30 pm** in the main Dining Room. The well received “Gratitude Awards” will be presented as in the past to deserving residents. This is your community and, of course, your home. . . . the Community Association wants to bring you current information that could impact both your property values and quality of life.

Clean Sweep

The first and former President of the VGRCCA has worked hard in getting proper maintenance done at the Exit 195 on I-75 interchange at Laurel Rd. for several years but with limited success. Recently, he decided to get all the chiefs in charge together at the interchange to see if we could fix the issues. Participants included Sarasota County Commissioner Neunder, Venice City Manager James Clinch and Sarasota Memorial Hospital COO Jeff Wesner. A total of 17 key officials met for 90 minutes. As a result of this important meeting, you will see the roadway and roadsides cleaned more frequently and all the palm trees better trimmed. We appreciate the effort of the former President in putting these key people together to solve an ongoing problem.

OMG....It's Huge

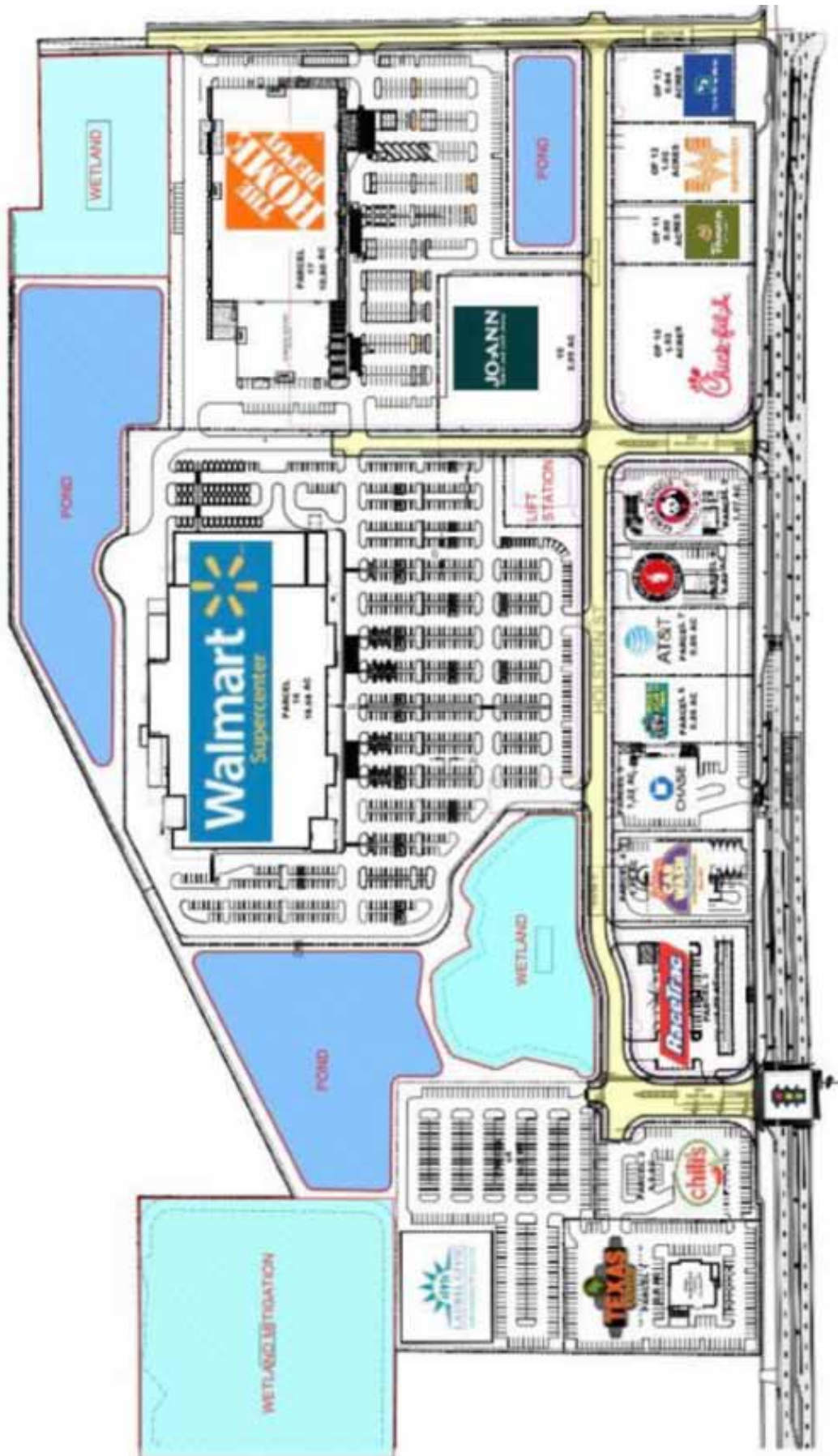
As you see the dirt is turning for the shopping plaza across the street from Plaza Venezia on Laurel, Parcels was able to secure a visual of what stores are scheduled to be built on the site. The proposal is placed at the end of Parcels. However, please note that things often change throughout the planning process.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Grassroots Efforts

“Grassroots” is usually associated with a political cause started from the ground up. Recently we had a sort of grassroots effort when a group of residents initiated the Christmas Golf Cart Parade. This was not a Community Association, River Club or POA event. . . it was just a bunch of fun-loving residents willing to organize the event, ensuring the safety of all participants plus guaranteeing a good time for all on wheels. We applaud their effort and hope that other fun-loving grassroots efforts take place in this active community.





"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: _____