

PARCELS

FROM
Paradise
Now in its 16th year of publication.

February 2026



This edition has been financially supported by VGRCC Residents

LINDA CARLSTROM, MS
Coldwell Banker Realtor
Venice
(941) 586-5191

Your Venetian River Club
Neighborhood Realtor

HOOD NEWS

Recognizing Our Supporters

At the end of this *Parcels*, we are very pleased to publicly recognize residents who have stepped up to help make living at the Venetian more inviting than ever by responding to our "Your Donation Matters" initiative. Although we've individually thanked each donor, special recognition is given here for donation levels of Gold and Platinum, although some donors chose to remain anonymous.

"Your Donation Matters" was launched in September to help address increases in costs of insurance and other necessities. Rather than reduce services or increase dues, we appealed to residents to help make up this shortfall according to their ability and level of appreciation for our programs.

In only 4 short months, well over 100 generous Venetians answered our appeal and have donated enough to eliminate our budget concerns; however, we remind our readers that this is not a one-time fix, but something we hope even more residents will do on a regular basis. If you are not yet part of the select group that strongly supports the worthwhile events the Community Association offers to all Venetians, donations can be conveniently made online through the Membership and Donations section of our website at <https://vgrcca.org/membership-and-donations>

If you have not yet joined the Community Association with its nominal \$30 annual dues, please begin there and consider a donation as a following step. The same web page referenced above lets you quickly check your membership status and pay dues, if needed. Once again, our sincere thanks to every resident whose membership and donation makes possible the events and services we offer.

A Closer Look at Recommendations on the Wall of Something

The Wall of Something is more than a place where we sell, buy, or rent items from our residents. We also have Recommendations which provide a plethora of valuable information for our residents. Let's drill down on Recommendations. **Home Service Providers** are positive recommendations for services inside or outside of your home (i.e. plumbing, electrical, HVAC, roofing, windows, gutters, lanai cages/screens, pavers, pool care, painting, pressure washing, cleaning, landscaping, interior design, renovations, etc.). **Personal & Pet Service Providers** are recommendations of someone and/or business that provided a personal service to you (i.e. haircut, manicure, massage, airport transportation), or your pet (i.e. grooming, vet care, pet sitting, dog walking). **Medical Professional Recommendations** are limited to health care. **Points of Interest** are recommendations of destinations or events you recommend to fellow residents. Last, we have **Things to Do Around Town**. This is all about things to do around Venice/Nokomis and the greater Sarasota County area and recommendations of local spots for your neighbors to check out. This does not include dining establishments, which will be found under the category What's Cookin'. Check out all the information provided on the Wall, especially Recommendations. Put your recommendations on the Wall for our residents!

THE WALL OF SOMETHING

An Electronic Bulletin Board for all Venetian Residents!



Visit us at 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

It's Extremely Popular

On **Saturday, February 21st from 8:30 - 10:30 am**, the Community Association will have its annual **Shredfest/Junkfest/Goodwill event** at the River Club parking lot. For those who are new to the community, the event takes about everything you want to get rid of...old tax forms, tables, toilets (yes), cabinets, and of course, the kitchen sink. Paint, chemicals and tires are not accepted. Last year Goodwill Industries was present and took in many items that one usually donates to this wonderful organization. The cost is free. Although open to all residents, we hope those who take advantage of the event, will bring a check for their membership (\$30) or go to www.vgrcca.org for membership information. As with last year, to defray the cost of putting on the event, the "Bucket Boys" will be in attendance to graciously accept your gratuity.

NEAR AND FAR

In this corner ...the developer ...in the other corner, the challenger

On January 26th, Roger Clark, Director of the Venice Planning and Zoning department, gave a very informative presentation to residents attending the VGRCCA sponsored seminar. He explained the developer approval process in detail, showing the multitude of steps required before the first shovel of dirt is turned. Mr. Clark commented on the state's increasing efforts to limit local control, most recently though a new state law, SB 180, which will retract impact fees and regulations for development to where they were in August of 2024. Cities and counties are pushing back on this law, saying it will allow even more unplanned growth. He stated that, per state law, Venice cannot deny a developer's plan if it complies with the Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Regulations, and the Binding Master Plan. It can only be rejected if there is competent and substantial evidence to deny it. The Bert Harris Private Property Rights Protection Act of 2011 provides relief to owners of "inordinate burdens." This act was the primary reason why local homeowners and residents were unable to prevent the development of the Milano commercial project across the road from our entrance. Mr. Clark further stated that the high median house price in Venice has made it challenging for many individuals to purchase a single-family home, which is the primary reason behind the construction of mixed-use family dwelling housing along Laurel Road and in other areas. Mixed-use developments offer economic benefits to governments, consumers, and developers, he said.

Food Lovers

The Jewish Food Festival, scheduled for **February 15th from 10 am - 3 pm**, is a tradition that food lovers flock to. If you enjoy corn beef sandwiches, stuffed cabbage, kugel, chopped liver and more, take yourself -- and possibly your "Tums." To get to the festival take Jacaranda, turn right on Edmondson and take the first left on to Auburn. About halfway down you will see the festival on the left. Parking and admission is free. Also included are vendors, free entertainment and the annual jewelry sales.

And if you didn't have enough calories.

Get to the **37th Annual Venice Italian Feast and Carnival on Feb 19-22** at the Venice Airport. Parking is free but admission varies depending on the day you attend. Live music; entertainment; rides; lots of entertainment; and of course, that wonderful Mama Mia Italian food.



Marisol Retail Center

As you will note, there is a small strip mall being built between the Dermatology Building and the in-progress hotel on Laurel Rd. named the Marisol Shopping Plaza. Already three stores have grabbed a space.

One is Heartland, a dental office, the second is Good Vets, a Veterinary office and the third one is...get this.... Dunkin' Donuts with even a drive thru.



Getting Into Shape(after you eat your 2 glazed donuts)

Club Pilates Venice, next to Jersey Mike's Subs in Plaza Venezia, is scheduled to open on April 9th, 2026, bringing a fresh take on fitness. The experienced instructors are dedicated to helping clients achieve their fitness goals while fostering a sense of well-being. With its diverse class options and commitment to making Pilates inclusive, Club Pilates Venice is poised to become a go-to fitness destination for the Venice community. Whether you're looking to strengthen your core, enhance flexibility, or simply try something new, this studio offers a gateway to the transformative power of Pilates. Call (941) 375-5200 to learn more about their opening.

A Classic Event

Historic Nokomis Day is one of the popular events in this area, hosted by the Nokomis Area Civic Association. It will be held on **February 14th at the Nokomis Community Center from 10:30 am – 2 pm**. One of the features of this event is a classic car show. Entry is free. You might want to Google Map the Nokomis Community Center if you plan to attend for the first time. See the flyer at the end of Parcels.



Honoring the Man who Started It All

As part of the City of Venice's Centennial celebration, the Venice Area Historical Society (VAHS) and Venice Area Beautification Inc. (VABI) have partnered to commission a statue honoring John Nolen, one of America's most distinguished urban planners. Nolen was commissioned in 1925 to design what was then a small Gulf Coast town - Venice, FL. His design is widely recognized for its thoughtful parks, landscaped streets, and traditional neighborhood planning that still define the character of Venice today. The unveiling of the John Nolen statue will take place on **Wednesday, Feb. 18** in Centennial Park at the corner of Nokomis Ave. N. and W. Venice Ave. The Venice High School Marching Band will perform at 9:00 am, followed by remarks and the statue unveiling at 9:30 am.

CAUGHT IN THE WEB

Super Bowl Prediction

If you have not looked yet, perhaps you would want to click on www.vgrcca.org to see who won the first Community Association SBP.....Super Bowl Prediction.

Volunteer Web Wizard Needed

Do you have a knack for keeping things running smoothly online? The Community Association is looking for a tech-savvy neighbor to help us maintain and support our community website!

We are not looking for a full-time job commitment—just a little bit of your expertise to ensure our digital home stays updated, secure, and user-friendly for everyone in the neighborhood. Send email to vgrccaweb@gmail.com

Click here for more details: <https://vgrcca.org/wanted-a-volunteer-web-wizard/>



Do I Need Flood Insurance?

Flooding is the most common and costly natural disaster according to FEMA. They also indicate that flood insurance can be the difference between recovery and financial devastation. Most homeowners' insurance policies do not cover damage arising from flooding.

Unfortunately, any home can be vulnerable to flooding even if it is not within a high-risk flood zone. FEMA estimates that almost 1/3 of flood insurance claims come from OUTSIDE high-risk flood areas.

To assess your property's risk level and to make a personal decision regarding flood insurance, please visit the FEMA Flood Map Service Center (MSC) and Search by Address and/or consult your insurance agent prior to the rainy season beginning in Florida.

SOUND ADVICE

Approaching your Four-legged Friend

There are several dogs in this community which add to the quality of life for owners. Parcels sought out the guidance of the American Kennel Club in helping you and perhaps your (grand) children regarding how to approach a dog once you get permission from the owner. To make yourself appear as friendly as possible, turn your body slightly to the side and look at the dog with your peripheral vision. In dog language, head-on approaches and direct eye contact are threatening, so avoid them if possible. You can also kneel to the dog's level, so you aren't looming overhead. However, if you are in any way uncertain about the dog, stay standing. After all, kneeling will put your face at bite level. Dogs don't shake hands like people do; they use their nose to say hello. So, hold your hand in a fist so they can approach and sniff if they choose. Don't thrust your hand at the dog. They can smell you just fine from a distance, and the sudden movement could startle them. On behalf of Lulu, Hannah, Gidget, Lilly, Zander, Zorro, Coco, Quincy, Molly, Ollie, Max, Annie and Rhubarb, thank you for reading this article.



Participating in the City Election, 2026

Before you know it we will be in November when elections take place for City Council. For all the information about the City Council election, including how to register, click on <https://www.venicegov.com/government/city-clerk/election>



Interested in a Python Hunt (are you serious??)

Over the 16 years Parcels has been in publication, the newsletter has had a variety of opportunities for our residents. Many residents have a great deal of free times on their hands and are searching for things to do. Here's one opportunity, especially for those new to Florida. In Florida there is an annual Python hunt, although you may be totally against the thought of getting rid of these historic creatures. But once you learn about the hunt, you will better understand the need. So, if you want to participate in an upcoming Python Hunt, go to <https://flpythonchallenge.org/> to seek out all the details.



Scam alert: The "Federal Jury Summons" Threat

A recent incident involving a local resident serves as a chilling reminder of how sophisticated—and aggressive—phone scams have become. What began as a quiet drive between two friends quickly escalated into a high-pressure psychological ordeal designed to extort thousands of dollars.

The Setup: Exploiting Civic Duty

The call originated from an unknown number. The caller identified himself as a **U.S. Marshal** and claimed the resident had ignored a federal jury summons in Tampa. To make the claim more believable, the "officer" provided a badge number and the name of a real federal judge. Crucially, the victim had just completed jury duty in Sarasota. The scammers exploited this recent, stressful experience to create a sense of panic.

Continued on Page 5

The Psychological Trap

The scammers used a "tag-team" approach, with a second, more aggressive "superior" joining the call. They utilized several high-pressure tactics to keep the victim off-balance:

- **Complete Personal Profiles:** They possessed the victim's full legal name (including middle and maiden names) and her exact home address, making the threat feel legitimate.
- **Isolation:** They forbade her from speaking to anyone else or muting the call, threatening that any interference - even from the friend in the car—would lead to an immediate arrest.
- **Emotional Manipulation:** They texted "official" documents, including a fake arrest warrant and a "gag order". They forced her to read the arrest documents aloud, a tactic designed to maximize her distress and perhaps record her voice for future fraud.

The Financial Demand

The "officer" claimed a judge had set a fine of \$45,000, demanding a cash payment of \$9,000 that very day to avoid incarceration. Initially, they instructed her to go to a courthouse to "verify her signature" but quickly pivoted, directing her toward a bank and a third-party payment location.

The "Tells" of a Scam

Despite the elaborate setup, there were several red flags that became clear once the victim was away from the pressure of the call:

- **Unprofessional Conduct:** One of the "officers" used profanity (an "F-bomb") when the friend tried to intervene.
- **Inaccurate Details:** The Sarasota address they provided for the "courthouse" was a building used for Teen Court.
- **Third-Party Payments:** Law enforcement will never ask for payment via third-party locations, gift cards, or wire transfers.
- **Isolation Tactics:** Real authorities will not demand that you remain on the phone or prevent you from consulting a lawyer or family member.

What to Do if You Receive This Call

If you receive a call from someone claiming to be law enforcement or a court official:

- 1. Hang Up Immediately:** Do not engage. If the call is legitimate, you can verify it through official channels.
- 2. Verify Independently:** Call the Clerk of the Court or the local Sheriff's Office using a verified number from their official website, not a number provided by the caller.
- 3. Protect Your Info:** Never confirm banking details or personal identifiers over the phone to an unsolicited caller.
- 4. Report It:** Notify the local police and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

FINAL THOUGHTS

Safe Travel

The CDD has been pushing for years and years about the importance of traffic safety in our community. Parcels couldn't agree more. In preparation for this article, Parcels spent a day paying close attention to safety concerns. In this short time, Parcels saw cars going through stop signs; a bicyclist not paying attention as she was both pedaling and talking on her phone; speeding cars and trucks by both residents and contractors; golf carts rolling through the stop signs heading off to hole 6; and walkers taking their life in their hands by walking early in the morning when drivers are dealing with the bright sun in the east. Since this community began, we have been fortunate in not having any serious accidents. But the potential is there and we must realize that safety is of great importance to every resident in our community...and primarily an individual responsibility.

- Your Donation Matters -

In order of donation date, with earliest first, through Jan. 29

PLATINUM (\$100 or more)

Sharon George
Dr. Steve and Marcia Hefler
Richard and Mary Rau-Foster
Steven and Kimberly Myers
Frank Bruno
Susan Marcus and Kristy Murray
Mary and Tim Scanlon
Diane and Michael Wendroff
Patrick and Patty Bradley
Joe and Priscilla Kemp
Jean VerPlanck
Ken and Jeanne Lill
Ann and Ron Woods
Jacqueline Patterson
Judith Carey
Richard and Barbara Bracco
Bob and Ann Ruffatto
Diana Watters
Doug and Donna Clark
Shelby and Ruth Wheatley
Salli and Tom Duncan
Jim and Nola Saltsman
James and Eileen Hardigan
Carol McGrath
Carol and Sal LaFata
Donna Fulton
Karen Wilson
Richard Goodman and Terry Feld
David and Jane Tompkins
Barry and Martha Snyder

GOLD (\$50-99)

Joe and Maria Browne
John and Kim Manoush
Mark and Olivia Faford
Terry Leary
Barbara Solomon
Daniel and Anne Raleigh
Ginger Carpenter and Paul Schnackenberg
Marlene and Bruce Hulteen
Patrick and Stephanie Riotto
Paul and Mary Ellen Quigley
Ronald and Barbara Thring
Roger and Sally Effron
Paula Dulski
Rob and Kristen Joy Bloom
Susan Donovan
Susan Magnifico and Chris Clark
Ken Deen
William and Bari Reitzel
Virginia and Louis Pavloff
Bette Boysen
Taras and Daria Kowalczyn
Allen and Cathrine Troy
Bob and Janny Slaney
Tom and Pat Jones
Donald and Coralie Anderson
Diane DiStefano
Linda and Richard Pelkey

"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: _____

CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S DAY THE NOKOMIS WAY!



HISTORIC NOKOMIS DAY

NOKOMIS COMMUNITY PARK

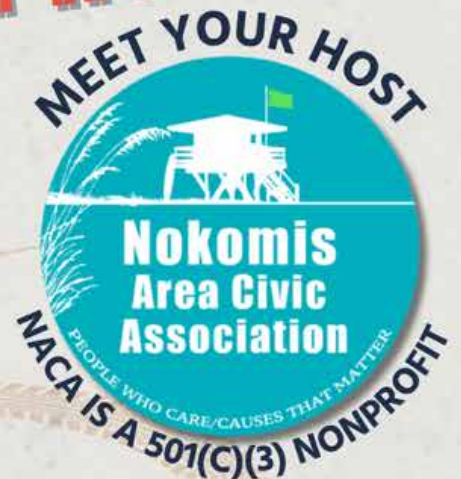
10:30AM-2PM

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- SWAT TEAM OBSTACLE COURSE FOR KIDS
- MEET THE NOKOMIS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT.
- LISTEN TO LOCAL HISTORIAN JOHN MCCARTHY
 - (VP FOR REGIONAL HISTORY, MARIE SELBY BOTANICAL GARDENS)



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HAVE QUESTIONS?
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FEB. 14TH
2026



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN 2026!

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Sunday, February 15, 2026 • 10am-3pm

CONTINUOUS ENTERTAINMENT • RAFFLE • VENDOR BOOTHS • ANNUAL JEWELRY SALE



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Venice, FL 34292

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