

# PARCELS

FROM  
*Paradise*  
Now in its 16th year of publication.



May 2026

## OF CURRENT INTEREST Water, Water, Water

*The following article of major importance was submitted to Parcels by the POA*

Water is widely thought to be our most precious resource. Florida has been experiencing the most intense drought since 2012. **Conditions in our area have been designated as EXTREME.** The Venetian relies on two sources of water: City water or potable drinking water, and reclaimed water. The reclaimed water is used for our irrigation. Usage is monitored by the Southwest Florida Water Management District and fines can be levied for exceeding our allowed amount. The Courtesy Patrol that drives our community 24 hours per day is citing significant overwatering by residents. Several hundred violations have been reported. We all would like lush green lawns, however, that is not realistic in an EXTREME drought. Despite the irrigation schedule having been sent to residents, many homeowners are watering more than the ONE DAY PER WEEK allowed. Wet checks are not meant to be supplemental watering. Fines will be issued for these violations. **Please check or have your landscaper check your timers to be sure they match your prescribed schedule.**

The Southwest Florida Water Management District has issued a Modified Phase III "Extreme" Water Shortage Restriction from April 3 to July 1 for potable water. Please see their website for all details at [www.swfwmd.state.fl.us](http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us) The City of Venice is following that same restriction. Contact the POA for more information at 941-488-9200, or the CDD at 941-485-8500.

**LET'S ALL DO OUR PART TO CONSERVE WATER WHENEVER POSSIBLE**

### Memorial Day 2026 ...Volunteers Needed

The Community Association of the Venetian Golf and River Club will continue to honor its tradition by placing flags at our community entrance and River Club roundabout. Residents who wish to participate should assemble in the old Welcome Center parking lot at the front gate at **8:15 AM on Friday, May 22nd** to help us dress up the community for the weekend. Most importantly, please take a moment over the Memorial Day weekend to thankfully remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our country. After the Civil War, many citizens honored the memory of those who perished in the conflict by placing flowers on their loved one's gravestone during the month of May. Originally known as Decoration Day, the tradition was renamed Memorial Day in a National Proclamation by Major General John Logan who was the head of a large organization of Union Army veterans known as the Grand Army of the Republic in 1868. Major General Logan designated May 30th as Memorial Day to honor those who died in the service of their country. As time moved on and our nation became involved in other conflicts, the fallen of those conflicts were also honored. In 1968 Congress passed the *Uniform Monday Holiday Act* which moved the observance to the last Monday in May.



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)

## Laurel Civic Association: Nearly Six Decades of Changing Lives, One Family at a Time

For almost six decades since 1969, Laurel Civic Association (LCA) has been a community cornerstone of neighbors helping neighbors, empowering children and families to lead successful lives. Each afternoon, **LCA's Afterschool Academic Program** welcomes over 170 students into a safe and structured program led by certified teachers, staff, and volunteers. Because a hungry child cannot focus or learn, every child begins with a hot, nutritious meal, part of the 40,000 meals served annually through Kids Café. The results speak for themselves: this past school year, 96% of students improved reading comprehension and 94% achieved above-average A–B

grades. Learning continues year-round through the Summer Reading Program and the Summer Teen Empowerment Program (STEP), offered with Teen Court of Sarasota to help teens prepare for life after high school. LCA also stands strong against hunger. Its twice-monthly Client Choice Food Pantry, hosted with All Faiths Food Bank and supported by Midwest Food Bank, lets local children, parents, families, seniors, and veterans select foods that fit their households, stretching budgets while preserving choice and dignity. In the year ahead, more than 10,000 neighbors will find academic, food, and emergency support through LCA. After nearly 60 years, that is what changing outcomes one family at a time looks like. New volunteers and supporters are warmly welcomed. Please reach out to learn more at:



### Laurel Civic Association, Inc.

509 Collins Road  
P.O. Box 511, Laurel, FL 34272  
Phone 941.483.3338  
[www.laurelcivic.org](http://www.laurelcivic.org)

### Directions:

Turn right onto Laurel Rd (4.8 mi) and continue to Forest Street  
Turn left onto Forest St  
Turn left onto Collins Rd  
The destination is on your left

## Restoring the Gateway to North Venice: Laurel Road/I-75 Interchange

About ten years ago, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Venice City Council, and the Sarasota County Commission were successfully lobbied to support and approve the Bold Landscape Project at the I-75 interchange at Exit 195. FDOT approved \$1.6 million for this project, which featured hundreds of palm trees along with a variety of other trees intended to create an attractive and welcoming gateway into North Venice. For several years, maintenance performed by FDOT's subcontractor was satisfactory. However, after Hurricane Ian struck our area, maintenance significantly declined. Tree trimming became minimal, and routine roadside cleaning was largely neglected. Laurel Road over the I-75 overpass began collecting large amounts of debris, dirt, weeds and litter. Drainage systems clogged repeatedly, and during heavy rains the road flooded, creating a serious safety hazard. Following three years of ongoing issues and after concerns were brought forward by one of our longtime residents, Sarasota County Commissioner Joe Neunder became involved to help address the problem. Commissioner Neunder coordinated with FDOT management and organized an on-site meeting last December that brought together county and city officials, Sarasota Memorial Hospital (SMH) representatives, FDOT officials, and the FDOT maintenance team. In total, 17 officials attended the meeting, which successfully elevated the urgency of the situation. Since that meeting, meaningful improvements have occurred. Tree trimming has resumed, the Laurel Road overpass has been kept nearly spotless, and the drainage systems have been cleaned and maintained. Litter along the grassy areas bordering Laurel Road has also been removed. Looking ahead, the remaining palm trees will be trimmed at appropriate times consistent with best practices for tree health. Dead trees will be replaced, and all trees will be placed on a yearly trimming schedule. Ongoing commitments have also been made to keep the Laurel Road overpass clean and properly maintained. The I-75 interchange at Laurel Road serves as a primary gateway into North Venice. With continued attention and consistent maintenance, it can once again be something our community can take pride in.

## Airport Controversy

Although it does not directly impact our community, there has been significant interest in the proposed expansion of the Venice Municipal Airport. Community meetings on this subject have been well attended, with many residents expressing strong opinions. One additional community meeting is to be scheduled. For those who live near the airport, concerns about a project that could affect quality of life are understandable. For more information and detailed planning documents, please visit the City of Venice Airport Layout Plan webpage: <https://www.venicegov.com/government/airport/airport-layout-plan>



## Trash Talk

The City of Venice has made some changes in its Garbage and Recycling routes. Starting June 1st, the following schedule will take place at the Venetian:



Garbage Collection: Tuesday and Friday

Garbage Recycling and Yard Waste Collection Day: Tuesday.

## Officers of the Community Association

The Community Association elected new officers at their recent Membership Meeting for 2026-27. They are:

Tom Jones - Co-President

Mark Faford - Co-President

Taras Kowalcyn – President-Elect

Sharon George – Membership Director

John Manoush - Secretary

Salli Duncan - Treasurer

## Who Do I Call?

If you know of the best AC service company, a great handyman, best place to have your nails done, a wonderful General Practitioner, reasonable oil change, inside house painter, home watcher, an acupuncture specialist, someone to take me to Punta Gorda airport, best hotel for my large family coming to visit.....share their names on the **Wall of Something**. Click on <https://vgrcca.org/about-the-wall-of-something/>



# COMING EVENTS

## Long Awaited

The Northeast Park on Laurel Road is tentatively expected to open on June 5th. As mentioned in a previous Parcels, the City's Adopt-A-Park initiative chose the VGRC Community Association to sponsor this new park. With fewer visitors during the off season, it will soon be a great opportunity to walk over and explore all the amenities this eagerly anticipated park has to offer.

## Red, White and Blue

Experience the excitement of **Patriotic Pops** at **CoolToday Park** in Wellen Park! Presented by The Venice Symphony, this unforgettable event features stirring patriotic music, an impressive fireworks display, color guards, a dramatic flyover and more. Tickets can be purchased through Ticketmaster. Don't miss this annual celebration—an evening you're sure to remember. **The concert begins at 7:30 PM on Saturday, May 23rd.**



# KEEPING YOU IN THE KNOW

## Growth in NE Venice ...The Numbers Tell It All

**Some recent statistics from the City of Venice Planning Department show continued growth in Venice, and particularly the northeast part of the city along Laurel Road.** As an update from what was presented at the Community Forum last month, the revised numbers show a slight drop in approved/planned units, likely due to reevaluation of market demands by builders, and a continued increase in finished dwellings:

Total of dwelling units approved . . . . .	10,142
Change from 2025 . . . . .	15%
Total built to date . . . . .	6,784
Change from 2025 . . . . .	+22%
Overall . . . . .	67% build-out of approved units

**It's generally agreed that close to 1,000 people move to Florida every day, and the numbers for our area bear this out. Why do they choose Florida?** Most would probably say "the weather" as the main driver, and that's been the case for decades. More recently, the ability to work remotely has allowed thousands to locate where they prefer to live, and the lack of a state income tax is another reason. Florida is also a pro-development state and provides a favorable business climate for home builders. It's been stated that Tallahassee wants development and the legislature has put in place a law that freezes local government planning restrictions, preventing changes that would slow the growth or direct it to different places. So, the likelihood is that the building we see going on around us will continue. The growth in housing units also brings commercial development, as Venetian residents can clearly see with a drive along Laurel Road and over I-75. The Venice Crossings shopping center will bring a Walmart, Home Depot, and a variety of smaller commercial businesses to our neighborhood. In the not-too-distant future, Knights Trail will be extended north to Lorraine Road, which connects to Clark Road and beyond. This will open new areas for homes and businesses and lead eventually to a 4-way interchange at 681 and I-75.

## Mosquito Control

Many people aren't aware that the mosquito is the world's deadliest animal. Around 700,000 people die from mosquito-borne illness or infection around the world annually. Mosquitoes live almost everywhere, and Florida is home to around 80 mosquito species. Of those, about 10 local species can transmit disease to humans.

Sarasota County Mosquito Management (pictured here) is located on Honore Avenue just north of Laurel Road and has regular programs to keep mosquitoes in check. **They protect and promote public health by managing mosquito populations through environmentally sound and fiscally responsible practices.**



Some of the methods of combatting mosquitoes include:

- Mosquitofish
- Aerial spraying from aircraft and drones
- Hand spraying

Mosquitoes thrive by breeding in standing water around your home. Eliminating mosquito breeding grounds is one of the best preventative measures to reduce mosquito populations and to protect your home. The key homeowner actions to deter mosquitoes are:

- Dump and drain water from containers such as planters and trays under them, buckets, pet dishes, bird baths and other items that collect water
- Keep your rain gutters free flowing so water doesn't collect in them and offer a breeding area
- Bromeliads are beautiful but they collect water and mosquitoes love them. One mosquito will lay hundreds of eggs on or near the water held in each bromeliad
- The biting mosquitoes in our area don't fly long distances and they like to stay near where they were hatched

## Grieving Resources for Your Pet

Those who have pets know the pain an owner suffers with the loss of that loved one. **There is a Pet Grieving Counseling at Tidewell Hospice.** The number for this service is 941-894-1794. Reach out to them if they can be of help to you during a most difficult time.

## Taste Good?

*It's a first timer. Parcels is experimenting with a Restaurant Review written anonymously by one of our fine residents. Let us know what you think by sending to [vgrcca@gmail.com](mailto:vgrcca@gmail.com)*

### **A Review ...Unique Cuisine**

Recommended by a friend, we went to a restaurant in Venice which opened last summer called "Unique Cuisine" specializing in southeast Asian food. It is located at the foot of the bridge from 41 into Venice on the left in a small strip mall containing Fred Astaire Dance Studios. My wife and I were delighted with the menu and for me, who needs to eat gluten-free, all their entrees & crepes are gluten-free as well as several of their appetizers. In an unpretentious setting, though with comfortable seating, we shared the Fresh Spring rolls with shrimp and two sauces-hoisin (which has gluten, so they added tamari sauce for me) & cilantro aioli. The sauces complemented the spring rolls excellently. My wife had the Wok Stir Fry with added pork tenderloin which was tender and delicious with lots of bok choy, onions, cauliflower, mushrooms & sweet peppers served with jasmine rice. I had (believe it or not), Southern Fried Chicken, Thai style, a half-chicken in a light rice flour batter which made the outside crispy and the inside moist with sticky rice and a diced tomato and cucumber salad. This came with a sweet (and spicy) sriracha sauce and an Asian verde (a cilantro based green sauce)-both excellent. My wife had her favorite dessert, tiramisu, which was a little heavy on the cocoa powder but delicious, so she tells me.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Think back to those moments when your mom—or maybe you with your own kids—would point a finger and firmly say, "Listen Up!" It meant you needed to pay attention. In the same way, the initial story about what residents should do during this drought is a call to action. Even though your property is monitored around the clock, it wouldn't be needed if everyone took responsibility for conserving water during this dry spell. Please take this message from our Property Owners Association to heart and do your part.



# HURRICANE SEASON 2026

*Beginning in April, continuing through the hurricane season (which begins June 1st), Parcels will devote a special section to information written by our Hurricane Response Team leader. Please note that some of the information is of great value to those not on property during the season.*



## IT IS BACK! ANOTHER HURRICANE SEASON

June 1st is the beginning of yet another hurricane season that lasts until Nov. 30th. The Community Association's VGRC Hurricane Response Team, made up of volunteers from our community, will again undergo training and be prepared when, and if, called up.

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND PREPARATION

As per our usual custom, a hurricane preparation meeting will be held at **4:00 PM on June 1st** at the River Club with speakers Venice Fire Chief Frank Giddens, City Manager James Clinch, and the Emergency Manager Chief for Sarasota County, Sandra Tapfumaneyi, who will be providing timely and pertinent information.

## JOIN THE HURRICANE RESPONSE TEAM

If you are interested in joining the Hurricane Response Team (HRT), learn more about who we are and what we do:

<https://vgrcca.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/WHAT-IS-THE-HURRICANE-RESPONSE-TEAM.pdf>.

After reviewing the materials, go to the VGRC Hurricane Corner website and complete an application. See:

<https://vgrcca.org/hurricane-response-team-application>.

You may also contact Mary Rau-Foster who leads the HRT by email [maryraufoster@gmail.com](mailto:maryraufoster@gmail.com) or cell: 615-481-9761.

## FACEBOOK AS AN INFORMATION AND EDUCATION TOOL

Our Facebook page, which is used to communicate and educate, has been re-opened and will be actively used to post information. This private Facebook site is open only to members of the VGRC community and their family and friends and will be a valuable tool in the aftermath of a storm. See <https://www.facebook.com/groups/hurricanecornervgrcca>

## THE VENICE HURRICANE EXPO

**On Friday, May 31st** the Community Association and the Hurricane Response Team will have a table in the exhibit hall at the Venice Hurricane Expo (9:00 AM-2:00 PM) at the Venice Community Center located at 326 Nokomis Ave S Venice, Florida 34285. You are invited to come to hear the speakers and to visit the exhibit booths with storm-related products and information.

There will be more information forthcoming as we prepare for another season, with hopes that we were wise enough to prepare and fortunate enough not to have to respond to the threat of a hurricane.



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



COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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](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 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: \_\_\_\_\_