



PARCELS FROM *Paradise*

KEEPING VENETIAN RESIDENTS CONNECTED...

July 2016

Published by the VGRCCA as a service to our members and residents of the Venetian Golf and River Club.

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And MORE

Thank you for reading Parcels.

If you have a story idea click on "reply" and let us know.

RIGHT IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD — ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS AT THE VENETIAN

• **Election Count Down**

Do you really have to be reminded that **Tuesday, November 8th is Election Day?** By then, all of us probably will be tired of the avalanche of political ads we had to endure.

In Venice, three council seats will be on the ballot. In addition, voters will have to decide on two Venice city bond issues. One is a **Road Bond**; the second is a **Public Safety Bond**. You can find out more about the bond issues by clicking on <http://www.venicegov.com/>

There will be other county, state and federal races that voters will see on the ballot and of course, the Presidential race.

For Venetian residents **who are registered to vote in Florida**, you will see the race for Venetian CDD seats. The candidates are:

Seat 1 – David Lusty, Herman Moore

Seat 3 - Susie Lentile, James Shea

Seat 5 - Richard Bracco, Gabe Levinson

The VGRC Community Association will feature the CDD Election as part of its annual “Candidate Night Forum.” The forum will take place at the River Club, on **Monday, October 10th at 5:00 pm**

And if you are still up north or cannot attend the event, we have some good news!!!! The Community Association will video tape the Forum and place it the web site, www.vgrcca.us, the next day. This will give those who are voting by mail plenty of time to learn about the candidates..

For more information about registering and voting, go to the Supervisor of Election, Sarasota County at <http://www.sarasotavotes.com/default.aspx?s=0>

(A special thanks to those residents who have joined the Community Association for the financial resources to employ a videographer for this important event.)



• **Charitable Events**

Always like to mention a charitable event that Venetian residents might want to attend. It is the 1st Annual Golf Tournament benefitting Venice H.S. Girls Basketball team. The tourney is being held at Lake Venice Golf Club, **July 30th** with a tee time of 8 am. Cost is only \$60.00. For more details, contact Kurt Durham at 941-223-8762.

There are other charitable events, which you should get on your calendar. One is the always fun **Big Brothers Big Sisters** fundraiser that will be held on **Saturday, November 19, 2016**, at 6pm at the Golf Club. The theme this year is “A Night in Old Havana.”

The other event at the Venetian is the **Second Annual Veterans Day Golf Outing** on **November 3rd** at the Golf Club. All residents are invited to attend this wonderful event.

More details about both exciting Venetian events will be found in future editions of *Parcels*.

• **Thank you, Volunteers**

A special shout out to those volunteers who showed up to help with the placement of flags during the July 4th weekend. Although the numbers were fewer, the dedicated volunteers got the job done and placed flags along the front driveway and on every street corner at the Venetian. Great job! Your Community Association sponsors this activity and purchased the over 100 flags used to honor those who have served.

• **A story of Peanut Butter and “Jammed.”**

Early in the morning a resident on Padova Way found a juvenile raccoon with his head entrapped in a large Skippy plastic peanut butter jar. He was bumping back and forth into a parked vehicle and was clearly in distress. The resident was able to locate a container nearby and successfully got him into the container.

It was too early to get a response from any wildlife center to free him so the resident called the Front Gate. Security Officer Rob Pacovsky immediately responded. It didn't take him but a few minutes to remove the jar and free the raccoon. This story is also a reminder that putting out a recycle bin the night before with open jars still containing food remnants is an open invitation to our nocturnal visitors. The picture below shows the little creature and our life saving Security Guard Rob. Might want to give friendly Rob a “Rocky Raccoon thank you salute” when you go by the gate!



• **Rave for Your Fave**

Often times we scout out restaurants in this area and put them in our Rave for Your Fave column. We did not have to go far for this one. Recently, the River Club put out a notice of its Sunday morning breakfast at a special rate of \$8.95. *Parcels* decided to attend and found a buffet that had every imaginable breakfast item on the line. Eggs and omelets were made to order by the two chefs at the table. The blintzes were great almost coming close to those once prepared by *Parcels'* Grandma Minnie, aka the “Blintzes Queen”. The service was wonderful and the buffet was accompanied by your choice of juices and coffee/tea.

Parcels approached Food and Beverage Manager, Tom Nurney, asking if the breakfast and cost will be a Sunday event throughout the summer. Mr. Nurney commented that not all Sunday's buffets would be at the \$8.95 price. Mr. Nurney was quick to point out that during the summer months, the River Club will have at least one dining special per week. Residents will be notified via email as to the special of the week. Remember, we “own” the River Club and the more customers, the better for all of us.

• **Is it Really that Hot and Humid in Venice?**

Parcels occasionally receives an email or two from those who have journeyed north for the summer, asking, “how’s the weather down there this summer?” Frankly, they know how warm it is here in Paradise. They just want to push the button of those Venetian heat survivalists since they are in Upper Michigan or Wisconsin where the temperature peaks at 75 degrees.

So, in response to those who want to throw cold weather in our sweaty face, let *Parcels* share with those wonderful snowbirds the following picture of a dedicated golfer, playing the VGRC Golf Course, Hole 5, just the other day.



OUTSIDE THE GATES

• **A Different Place with Food**

A Venetian resident alerted *Parcels* of a place with great food. A call was placed to the establishment’s owner who quickly clarified that they were not a restaurant, but rather a unique establishment that prepares excellent food to go for its customers. **The Brown Bistro** featuring gourmet prepared meals, is located on 772 US41 Bypass S between Venice Ave and Center Rd. and open 10 am– 6 pm, Monday – Friday. Going south it is on the left side. We counted over 35 items on their menu. The food is freshly prepared, vacuum-sealed, frozen and ready for reheating. According to the owner, for the remainder of July, there will be a 25% reduction on various items. Check out their web site at www.BrownsBistro2015.com. For more information contact the proprietors, Todd and Marie Brown, at 941-468-9730.

HURRICANE PLANNING UPDATES

• **Hurricane Prep.....Next Steps.**

The recent three Hurricane Prep Meetings were highly successful with approximately 300 residents attending. The POA previously distributed the summary of the meeting via email, but *Parcels* felt it would resend the same document in case you did not receive it. *It is attached at the end of this edition of Parcels.*

Please note that the Community Association’s Hurricane Readiness Team (HRT) is seeking volunteers. If you want to volunteer, please complete the yellow volunteer card available at the Golf Club, River Club and Castle Management Office.

Two needs. The HRT is looking for those residents with chain saws that could be used post Hurricane. Also, the HRT is looking for those homes with generators and copy machines, again, for post Hurricane needs.

If you would like to share these resources, please hit reply, and let us know your name, address, email, phone and which item(s) you have.



UPDATES ON KEY EXTERNAL ISSUES

• **Concrete Crushing Plant**

Crush-It's Phase I application have been received by the City and is presently being reviewed by the Planning Department. Phase I includes site preparation, the construction of an office and maintenance building and some buffering. Crushing operations are not a part of this application. Upon completion of the above-described work, a mobile crusher will be set up on site and acoustical tests performed.

• **Mini-Storage Facility**

An application has been received by the City for a mini-storage facility to be located south of Laurel Road on the Knights Trail extension, placing it southwest of CVS. This will require rezoning of the property which is now classified as Commercial-Highway Interchange and Commercial-Intensive. Your External Affairs Committee is in contact with the applicant. The proposed mini-storage facility would be of relatively low impact of traffic and noise, when compared to many other uses that are allowable under the present zoning.

• **Attainable/Workforce Housing**

The Mayor has formed an informal group to study attainable/workforce housing, particularly for the needs of PGT and Tervis Tumbler employees. After much "lobbying", he agreed to include a representative from the Community Association's External Affairs Committee to act as an observer during their meetings. The mission of this group is strictly fact-finding. According to Mayor Holic, if any action or recommendation were to be made, the group would need to reorganize as an Advisory Committee or Task Force, which would be governed by the Florida Sunshine laws with all meetings being open to the public. The property on Laurel Road known as "The Bridges" and owned by the Gulf Coast Community Foundation is no longer being considered as a site for attainable/workforce housing.

• **Laurel Road-Legacy Trail Overpass**

Funding has been approved for this project in the amount \$3.3 million. As of June 27, construction funding will be available as of October 1, 2016. That being said, the project may be delayed until some large water pipeline interferences can be resolved.

• **I-75 Laurel Road Bold Landscaping**

The contract has been awarded. Construction is scheduled to commence in September 2016 and completed in no more than 150 days thereafter.

• **Sarasota Memorial Hospital Appeal**

On June 24, Sarasota Memorial Hospital filed a notice with the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration to appeal its denial of their application. Hospital officials expect the appeal to take several months and remain committed to establishing a new hospital in Venice.

NEWS FROM THE POA

The POA Board of Directors met on July 6 and about 20 residents attended. Topics covered included:

- An appeal was heard from a homeowner to paint the inside/under roof portion of his lanai a non-approved color, which was denied. (Lanai colors must be one of the palettes of colors of the house exterior, excluding shutters and doors. Please have any exterior painting approved by the ACC before starting the job.)
- There was a discussion on whether or not to maintain the ground paths which lead off of the Boardwalk. The property manager will review options and costs with our landscape company.
- The insurance committee consisting of 2 board members and 2 homeowners has been established to research coverage options and limits.
- Two properties remain with fruit trees and Norfolk pines which must be removed, and the homeowners have been personally contacted by the property manager about their violation.
- Changes to the POA's website are in the works with a new, more easily remembered URL address, clearly marked Home Page tabs to quickly find details and documents related to the POA and updated permissions to allow all Venetians to view most information without a password.
- Violations of the irrigation policy are continuing, with several instances of homeowners watering on wet check days (Monday and Thursday mornings), which are only for system checks by an **attending** homeowner or landscaper. We must stay within the amount of our well water permit from SWFMUD or risk substantial fines, which the entire community will have to pay. The POA will be taking a much firmer approach and fines will be assessed for repeat violations including irrigation on wet check days.
- The August 29 board meeting will have primary emphasis on the 2017 budget planning. All homeowners are encouraged to attend.

EXTRA HELPINGS

In one of the many press conferences that were held after the Dallas shootings, the very calm and collected Chief of Police, David Brown, said something during a media briefing that resonated all the way to Venice. He said in one of his comments, "In a democracy, you can't sit on the sidelines."

How true. The same phrase applies to our community. There are ways to participate through your own neighborhood association, the CDD, the VCDD and the VGRC Community Association. Both the VCDD and POA have active committees that serve in an advisory role. It is also encouraging to see that five residents, along with an incumbent, decided not to sit on the sidelines but rather throw their hat in the ring for a seat on the CDD. Our applause to the six!

Occasionally, the VGRC Community Association has asked for the community to attend a specific meeting (i.e. Concrete Crushing) or write a letter (Sarasota Memorial Hospital application), which illustrates a position on a particular issue.

Taking it further, Venice City Council has a number of advisory boards where citizens can play a role. For example, one of our VGRC Community Association Board members participates on the Venice Advisory Traffic Board. The chair of the Planning and Zoning Committee is from the Venetian. The chair of the Environmental Advisory Board is a Venetian resident. The EAB Board also has as a member, a Venetian resident. We must not also forget this past year, resident Rich Cautero was elected and is doing a great job as one of our City Council Members.

We hope as we approach a more active season, all of us realize that our destiny and future as a community is dependent on getting involved and paying attention to those issues inside the gates and the latest events outside the gates. The words of Chief Brown hold true for those communities that want to remain strong. *Parcels* hopes we continue to be one of them.

Venetian Calendar

Upcoming meeting dates

These meetings are held at the River Club and are open to all residents:

- July 18 – VCDD workshop – 9:30 am www.venetiancdd.org
(meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 9:30am)
- July 19 – VGRCCA board meeting – 1 pm www.vgrcca.us
(meetings are held monthly on the 4th Tuesday)
- July 27 – POA Rules Committee – 9:00 am cklopotic@castlegroup.com
(meetings are held monthly on the 4th Wednesday at 9:00 am)
- Aug. 8 – VCDD board meeting – 9:30 am www.venetiancdd.org
(meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 9:30am)
- Aug. 9 – Architectural Control Committee (ACC) – 2:00 pm
Contact Christine Klopotic at cklopotic@castlegroup.com to submit ACC forms
(meetings are held monthly on the 2nd Tuesday at 2:00 pm)
- Aug. 22 – VCDD board meeting – 9:30 am www.venetiancdd.org
(meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 9:30am)
- Aug. 24 – POA Rules Committee – 9:00 am cklopotic@castlegroup.com
(meetings are held monthly on the 4th Wednesday at 9:00 am)
- Aug. 29 – POA budget workshop – 1:30pm cklopotic@castlegroup.com
- Aug. 29 – POA board meeting – 1:30pm cklopotic@castlegroup.com
(meetings are held monthly on the 1st Wednesday at 1:30pm)

KEY POINTS: HURRICANE PREPARATIONS

The Hurricane Seminars held on June 27 & 28, 2016 at the River Club were a collaborative effort of the Venetian Golf & River Club Community Association, Venetian CDD (Community Development District), the VG&RC POA (Property Owners Association) and the Venice Fire Department. The items below are the highlights of these meetings.

BEFORE THE HURRICANE:

- The primary goal is the safety of both residents and employees
- Sewer drains cleared of any debris
- Irrigation pumps turned off
- Security staff takes down gate arms and closes security house when the wind speeds reach 35 MPH (sustained)
- Property Manager's office closes as does the Golf Club and River Club and all employees leave the community
- WCI Construction prepares for the storm and then shuts down all operations and leaves the community

DURING:

- Fire and police departments remain in their quarters until the brunt of the hurricane has moved on
- 911 will still be in service and will prioritize calls to be addressed once the hurricane has passed

AFTER THE HURRICANE:

- If CDD and POA personnel and contractors cannot return due to damage in their own neighborhood and/or due to road closures, the Hurricane Response Team (The HRT), developed by the VGRC Community Association is activated by the volunteers. **Volunteer sign up cards are available at the Golf Club, River Club and the Property Management Office.**
- The River Club (outside) becomes a staging area
- Assigned HRT volunteers assess every Venetian street for storm damage
- Assigned HRT volunteers staff the gate house and question those who desire entrance to the Venetian
- Residents remaining on property tie a ribbon or some colorful item around their mailbox or tree indicating the house is occupied. Those in the 4 family condos place a colorful piece of paper/cardboard in your front window.
- Assigned HRT volunteers communicate with the residents and follow up on the well being of residents and those in need of assistance.
- When POA and CDD return, clean up process begins under their leadership

KEY POINTS:

- All plans including those of the HRT are contingent on the nature of the hurricane. For example, if there is a Category 5 hurricane, most residents, including HRT

volunteers, will most likely evacuate. Furthermore, Hurricanes are often time unpredictable and may change direction at the last moment.

- Make an early decision (at least 72 hours) before leaving as the Interstate and other main outlets become “parking lots”.
- Do not expect contracted landscapers to return to the premise immediately, even during the clean up stage.
- Have plenty of cash on hand; fill up your gas tank days before; charge your cell phone; gather necessary supplies, etc.
- Once cleanup begins, the CDD will oversee the streets but each property owner is responsible for their own property. Those who are under an HOA/Condo Association, the clean up process should be coordinated with the appropriate landscapers.
- Communication is iffy and often dependent on whether there is electricity. If no electricity, the HRT will be developing a plan to update residents after the Hurricane hits and before Property Management returns.
- Most importantly, please have your own household Hurricane Plan including supplies and talk about this with all members of your household!

Best Resource for Residents

- ✓ *Sarasota County Disaster Planning Guide* – very comprehensive and includes a list of shelters and helpful advice. Copies are available at the River Club, Golf Club, and the Property Management Office.
- ✓ Sign up for CodeRED to receive up to date weather notifications from the City of Venice: http://www.venicegov.com/disaster_links/code_red.asp
- ✓ Additional information is posted on the Venetian POA website: www.venetian-golfandriverclub.net
(Click on, Community Info then Hurricane Preparedness)
- ✓ The HRT Plan put together by the VGRCCA is located on the web site: www.vgrcca.us/hrt