



LIONS TALE



Monthly Bulletin of Venice Lions Club Inc. Venice, Florida

JANUARY 2026

President's Message

Happy New Year to all Lions and their families! As we begin 2026, Venice Lions will continue to serve our community with the same compassion, purpose, dedication and commitment we demonstrated in 2025. Thank you for everything you do! May the year ahead bring good health, meaningful service, and shared success.

And now....here we go! We are moving into the busiest season of our year. Thankfully, our seasonal Lions have returned, so we have more hands of service to accomplish great things.

First up is our January 24th Mutt Strutt. At this writing we are still looking for vendors who will bring fun and excitement to the event. Think of all the public events you have attended: what makes it fun? Food, music, maybe games, and things to look at and do. Find those vendors! Soon we will start promoting the event with newspaper articles and notices, and we will need everyone to post our flyer in community clubhouses and websites.

Our Laurel-Nokomis Club Branch has reached and surpassed the number of members needed to be chartered as their own Lions Club! We will celebrate this amazing accomplishment and the joy of having a new club in our own Zone at a party on February 7th. The party will be at the Pelican Pointe Golf and Country Club. Start checking your closet for something dressy! We will share more details on the Charter Party as they emerge.

Then we move right along to the Mane Event!! This year our legacy fundraiser will be ably chaired by Lions Judy Rocquin and Mary Billings. There will be a DJ – you can dance – as well as the 50/50, the auction baskets and more. We all have the event packets, so it is time to start inviting everyone on earth to join us. More on this later. You will not get to wear your dressy clothes, though! The theme is Woodstock, so now you will need your best 1969 peace and hippie attire.

Dig it out and be there!

Pamela



Help Wanted

Lion Barbara McGillicuddy, the Lions Vision Center Office Manager, will be retiring in April! In all the years Lion Barbara has served in the office, she has become the expert in delivering the Lions' most essential service: sight-saving vision care. Lion Barbara is in the office four days a week answering the phone, accepting and reviewing applications. She prepares the paperwork for the monthly Vision Clinic, sends letters, and makes phone calls. She trains and supervises the office volunteers. Lion Barbara has developed priceless relationships with the professional vision providers that participate in the vision program, making serving clients seamless and (mostly!) easy. Now that Lion Barbara is retiring, there is a job opportunity for a new Office Manager. It is a part time paying position. Please consider the opportunity to help provide this essential Lions service. Training will be provided. Please contact Lion Barbara if you believe the position is right for you.

We need you!

Hugs for Brady: The Wagons Arrived!

Supporting children with cancer is one of Lions International's Global Causes. In 2025 Venice Lions supported the cause with some serious fundraising including a Poker Run organized by Lion Sean Higgenbottom. The funds funded four Brady Wagons: a Lion (of course!), an elephant, a shark and a dolphin. The wagons were shipped to the Golisano Children's Hospital in Fort Myers and were already in use when Lions arrived. Pictured with the Lion Wagon (the IV hitch is on the back of the wagon) are: Lions Jeff Myles, Barbara McGillicuddy, Pamela Brown, Bonnee Hagen, and Beverly Flynn.





***Holiday Social
December 18, 2025***



December Guest Speaker



Hope Allen from Empath Health was the speaker at the December 4th meeting. Ms. Allen spoke about the role the 300 volunteers have helping to soothe the way for clients in hospice.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Ann Favreau

*A brand new year is here.
Time to live. Time to love.
Time to cherish every moment.*

*Each new day arrives unbidden.
Quickly goes. Joy is hidden
Beneath the busyness.*

*Hands of time move ever onward.
Minutes savored. Minutes lost.
Lifetime moments ne'er regained.*

*Cloudy memories seek the surface.
Bubble up with recollection,
Dissipate too soon.*

*Some are captured with the pen,
Seeking permanence for a while,
Till tossed or lost.*

*Photos seek to fill the void.
Illuminate those special moments
Conveying fond recall.*

*Embrace the year with joy and sorrow.
Each day brings a new tomorrow.
Seize the seconds.*

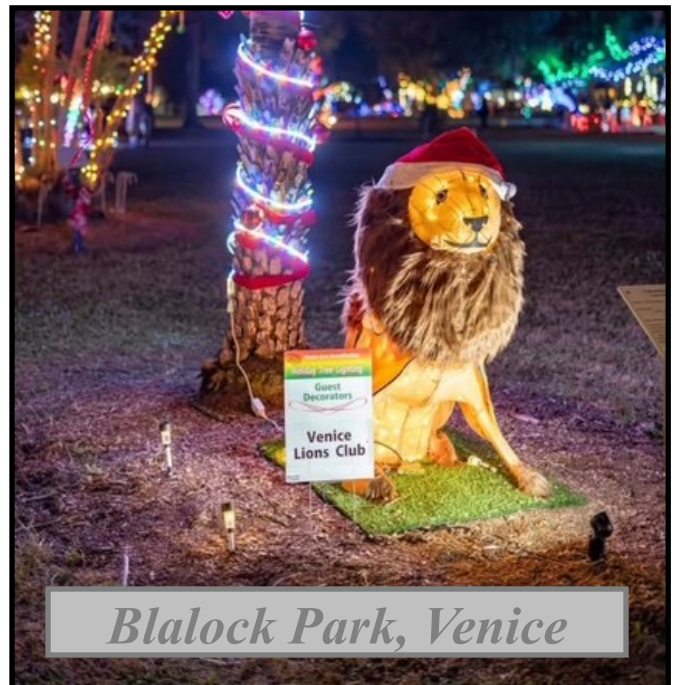
Time flies.

January Birthdays

1st	Christal Snell
2nd	Barbara McGillicuddy
3rd	Tom Cookingham
30th	Jeff Sterne

January Anniversaries

5th	Ed & Jan Stack
12th	Paul Carlson (Roseann)



Blalock Park, Venice

Reading Action Program

One of Lions International's Global Causes is "Youth." Venice Lions have embraced this cause by supporting reading and literacy. For the 4th year, Venice Lions have funded books for children in at-risk families. Lion Bonnee Hagen has been ordering books, organizing them by grade level, and delivering them to the Salvation Army as part of their Angel Tree program at Christmas. This year Lion Bonnee, with the help of Lion Paddy, delivered 609 books in time for Christmas. Good work, Lion Bonnee!



Scratch Off Cards Winner

It pays to play! Lion Mike McNally had the winning ticket and won the lottery card scratch off raffle. After scratching all those cards, he won \$69.00! The Administrative Treasury is \$285 richer as well. Look for more opportunities to be a big winner soon.

Upcoming Events

January 3-11 District 35 Hunger Week Project		
January 3	Waterway Cleanup	Bob Winstel
January 10	Food Drive	Pamela Brown
January 8	Board of Directors Meeting 6pm	BOD and open to all
January 13	Zone Meeting - Englewood	Jeff Myles and all
January 15	General Business Meeting	All
January 21	Keerl Committee Meeting by Zoom	Committee
January 24	Mutt Strutt	Jeff Sterne, Tim Werla

Venice Lions' Service to Veterans Wreaths Across America

First VP Tim Werla keeps Venice Lions aware of activities that honor US veterans. In December, the Gulf Pines Memorial Park in Englewood hosts a Wreaths Across America program with a fly-over, a 21-gun salute, and an opportunity for family to say the name of their lost loved ones. The program culminates in the crowd dispersing to place wreaths on the graves of every veteran. *Front Row L to R:* Carole Myles, Melissa Burke, Pamela Brown, Mary Billings, Tim Werla. *Back Row:* Terry Burke, Ed Billings, Beverly Flynn, Jeff Myles.

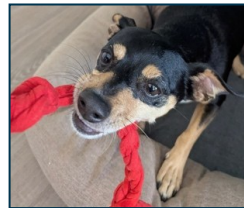


Mutt Strutt Dog Walk



Plans are underway for the 1st Annual Mutt Strutt on January 24th. Lions are searching for sponsors and vendors who will help raise enough money for a veteran to receive a service dog. Venice Lions will have an information table that includes a service project: making a toy for a dog. Lions Jennie and Bob Angell, Pamela Brown, and Bonnee Hagen spent the morning cutting donated T-shirts into 300 strips that will be braided into colorful tug-of-war toys.

Lions Mary and Ed Billings' rescue dog, "Boo" enjoyed his toy!



RED Friday

As my visits to a local physical therapy office continued, I noticed that the staff in that office all wore RED every Friday. They explained that Red Friday is a day to remember the military personnel currently deployed. Why red? RED means "Remember Every Deployed". Now that I know Red Friday carries such meaning, I will adopt the practice as well. Try it: a small gesture that helps us be mindful of all the men and women in service of their country far from home.



Let's Talk Money!



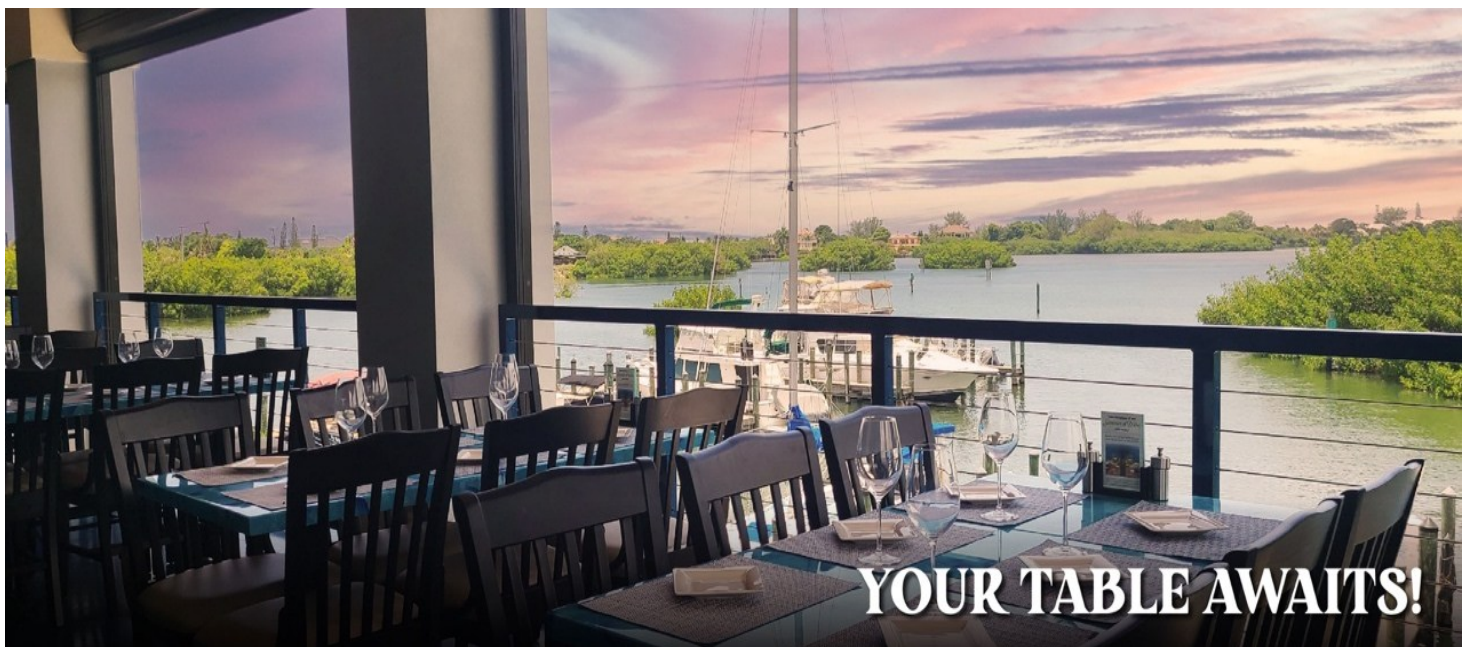
Venice Lions are brilliant when it comes to raising money for the service projects we offer. Service has been funded by the *Mane Event* for the last 17 years. Now we are adding the *Mutt Strutt*. All the funds earned by these two big community events will be returned 100% to the community; That is our obligation and our promise.

We are not so great about raising money for ourselves. Like a family we juggle expenses . We have stayed afloat with Lion Paddy's on-going 50/50 and Lucky Joker games, but this year we have some unusual expenses and need to think of new strategies for funding ourselves.

For the next few months, we will be experimenting with two new ways to build up our Administrative Treasury. Lion Pat McNally has discovered that upscale restaurants are offering a free \$10.00 gift card *if you buy a \$50.00 gift card*. Let's try a new raffle. We have \$60 in gift cards for a dinner at the *Deep Lagoon Seafood and Oyster House*, very upscale with a waterside view. We will sell \$5.00 tickets starting January 15th and announce the winner on February 19th.

The second idea is to pause the meals from the Venezia restaurant. Instead, we will return to some of the meals that members enjoyed and cost the club less than our \$15.00 meal charge. The first meal will be at our January 15th meeting. Lion Pat will order the Publix wraps and strawberry salad that was popular with members the last time.

Other ideas might be a potato bar, a taco bar, even a pot luck dinner. Perhaps the men will show off their cooking one night? If you have other ideas for adding to our administrative fund, please let Lion Pamela know.



Venice Lions to Provide Service Dog for a Veteran

Until Cameron, 18, received his service dog, McBiskitt, he spent most of his time isolated at home, even completing his schooling online for fear of experiencing a medical episode in public. Today, with McBiskitt at his side, Cameron is able to go out with friends, shop, and take part in everyday activities with other young people. Trained to detect subtle changes in Cameron's scent and heart rate, McBiskitt can sense the early signs of an oncoming episode. When he detects these changes, he alerts Cameron by placing his paws on his thigh, giving him time to sit safely, check his heart, and take preventive action. Life-changing!

Misty, a service dog working with the Venice Fire Department, has become an essential source of support for firefighters coping with stress. Venice Fire Chief Kyle Hartley of Station 52 said Misty was originally trained by *K9s for Veterans* to comfort veterans experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder. After showing signs of anxiety herself, Misty was placed in the department's "Station Dog" program at no cost to the city.



Because service dogs have the capacity to change lives so profoundly, the Venice Lions Club is raising funds to help a veteran receive one. *Dogs, Inc.* will supply the fully trained dog at no cost, but the veteran must cover significant expenses associated with travel to the training campus, several weeks of room and board, and the specialized supplies needed while learning to work with the dog. To support this effort, the Venice Lions will host their 1st Annual Dog Walk, the "Mutt Strutt," on Saturday, January 24th, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Laurel Park, 509 Collins Road, Nokomis. The event will feature vendors, food, giveaways, and family-friendly activities. Admission is \$20.00 for pre-registration or \$25.00 for on-site registration for one dog with their family. For more information, contact the Lions Office at 941-837-2789.

Venice Lions Holiday Float: A Locomotive !

The City of Venice kicked off its centennial celebration with a holiday parade that paid tribute to the city's history. Venice Lions chose to honor the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers by turning their annual float into a locomotive engine! Only Lions Rocky Rocquin and Bob Winstel could make the old float look like a train engine with a cow catcher on the front and steam coming out of the smokestack! Lion Judy Rocquin dressed the Lions in engineers' uniforms with hats and red bandannas. As the Lions locomotive rumbled down Venice Avenue, it was met with appreciative applause by the crowd that seemed to recognize and appreciate Lions' contributions to the community



Lion Rocky Rocquin created the locomotive's cow catcher



Lions Judy and Rocky Rocquin accept small thank you gifts for their leadership.



Lions Club Dues Payment Schedule

VENICE LIONS CLUB					
INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP					
DUES 2025 - 2026	LCI	MD-35	DIS-TRICT	CLUB	TOTAL
JANUARY or JULY	\$25.00	\$11.00	\$5.00	\$15.50	\$56.50
FEBRUARY or AUGUST	\$20.84	\$9.17	\$4.17	\$12.92	\$47.10
MARCH or SEPTEMBER	\$16.68	\$7.33	\$3.33	\$10.34	\$37.68
APRIL or OCTOBER	\$12.52	\$5.50	\$2.50	\$7.76	\$28.28
MAY or NOVEMBER	\$8.36	\$3.67	\$1.67	\$5.18	\$18.88
JUNE or DECEMBER	\$4.17	\$1.83	\$0.83	\$2.60	\$9.43
FAMILY MEMBERSHIP (must have same address)					
DUES 2025 - 2026	LCI	MD-35	DIS-TRICT	CLUB	TOTAL
JANUARY or JULY	\$12.50	\$11.00	\$5.00	\$15.50	\$44.00
FEBRUARY or AUGUST	\$10.42	\$9.17	\$4.17	\$12.92	\$36.68
MARCH or SEPTEMBER	\$8.34	\$7.33	\$3.33	\$10.34	\$29.34
APRIL or OCTOBER	\$6.26	\$5.50	\$2.50	\$7.76	\$22.02
MAY or NOVEMBER	\$4.18	\$3.67	\$1.67	\$5.18	\$14.70
JUNE or DECEMBER	\$2.09	\$1.83	\$0.83	\$2.60	\$7.35
ADDITIONAL ONE TIME COSTS					
LCI ENTRANCE FEE (submitted with the application)		\$35.00 (Waived for 2025 by the Venice Lions Club)			
LIONS VEST & NAME TAG (optional)		\$50.00			

Lions Dues Explained

All dues, at every level of the Lions organization, are used for administrative costs. There is a separate account for monies raised from the public which is used 100% to benefit the community in programs and projects. The Club Administrative Treasurer is responsible for billing each member of the club for all dues.

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Lions International Dues:

International dues are **billed to the clubs** by Lions Clubs International (LCI) in January and in July. Currently the dues are **\$50 per year** per Lion.

The **Family Membership Program** provides families with a dues discount when they join a Lions club together. The first family member (head of household) pays full international dues (\$50 annually), and up to four additional family members pay only half the international dues (\$25 annually).

International dues are used by the organization for administrative costs: brochures, the cost of the website, general liability insurance that is available for public events, utilities for the official International offices around the globe, phones, etc.....the usual business expenses for running an international organization.

Florida Lions and Local Lions Dues

Multiple District (MD-35 includes the State of Florida) and District 35 (includes District 35-I)

Multiple District (MD-35) dues are billed to each club by the Multiple District Treasurer in January and July. Currently the dues are **\$22 per year**. There is no discount for family members.

District dues (District 35-I) are also billed by the Multiple District Treasurer in January and July. Currently the dues are **\$11 per year**.

MD dues are used by the Multiple District to pay for the expense of a central office (currently located in Winter Haven) and also the salaries of the MD secretary and the MD treasurer. Monies are also used to pay for a MD website and to help finance the Multiple District meetings that are held twice a year.

District dues are used to finance the expenses of the District: reimbursement for the District Governor, and the First and Second Vice District Governors' travel expenses as well as other cabinet members' expenses up to a budgeted amount. The dues also pay for the cost of the directories, awards and supplies.

Club Dues

Each Lions club determines the amount that they want to assign as club's dues. Club dues pay for extra dinner expenses, supplies and equipment, awards and other club expenses.

Pro-rated Dues: New members inducted into a club during different months of the year, pay pro-rated dues.

Lion Beverly Flynn

Venice Lions Club Inc.
Venice Health Park
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Venice, FL 34292-4522

941-837-2789

www.venicelionsclub.com



Club Meetings
1st & 3rd Thursdays
Dinner at 5:30 p.m.
Meeting begins at 6:15 p.m.

Board of Directors
Meeting 2nd Thursday at
6 p.m.



Our Venice club is part of the largest international service organization in the world. We support international efforts to save the sight of millions, provide measles vaccinations and disaster relief. At the local community level, Lions provide free vision and hearing services to those in need, screen the vision of preschool children and collect used eyeglasses. Every dollar donated goes back to the community in the form of grants, scholarships, and educational and fun activities for children. Our members like serving in a club with a purpose. It makes us feel good to give back to our community.

Venice Lions Club 2025—2026	
President	Pamela Brown
1st Vice President	Timothy Werla
2nd Vice President	Judy Terrell
Secretary	Jeff Myles
Assistant Secretary	Mary Billings
Treasurer (Admin.)	Barbara McGillicuddy
Treasurer (Found.)	Ed Billings
Tail Twister	Judy Rocquin
Lion Tamer	Robert Winstel
IPP	Jeffrey Myles
One Year Director	Christal Snell
One Year Director	Bonnee Hagen
Two Year Director	Paddy Padmanabhan
Two Year Director	Sean Higginbottom
LCIF Coordinator	Pat McNally
Membership Director	Jeff Myles
Bulletin Editor	Jeff Myles
Publisher	Jeff Myles
Staff	Pamela Brown Sharon Wilkins

Lions Club International	
300 22nd Street, Oak Brook IL, 60521	
Website	www.lcif.org
President	A.P. Singh
IPP	Fabricio Oliviera
District 35-I	
Website	www.lionsMD35.com
District Governor	Linda Gregory
IPDG	Patty Jean Strong
1st Vice District Governor	Beverly Flynn
2nd Vice District Governor	Drew Ogden
Cabinet Secretary	PDG JoAnne Rodgers
Treasurer	Tom Mavor
Bulletin	Jan Kunka
MD Executive Secretary / Treasurer	PDG Gary LaSpina/ PDG Paula Beach
Zone 5 Chair	Jeffrey Myles