



LIONS TALE



Monthly Bulletin of Venice Lions Club Inc. Venice, Florida

MAY 2026

May Message

“So Blessed to be a Lion”

by
Guest writer
Lion Christal Snell

While at Siesta Key Beach practicing yoga at 7am Tuesday April 7th, it was pouring rain and I had no students show up for class. So, it was just me on my yoga mat, under the pavilion to shelter from the rain, enjoying the gift of just being.



I had my eyes closed, it was so quiet there except for the sound of the rain hitting the sand and the top of the pavilion. I was setting my daily intentions and as always, I thanked God. And on this day thanked for the protection from the elements, for the gift of breath, a body that has the ability to move and function and prayed for continued guidance to heal and serve everyone I encounter for the highest good.

I opened my eyes and was greeted by this beautiful human. With her rain poncho and leash in hand she had with her a four-legged friend in tow that had a Dogs Inc purple vest on!

We chatted and she shared that she was a puppy trainer and she worked with Dogs Inc. She was there at the beach, in the rain, purposely to train and introduce this pup to the rain, the ocean and the elements. So Kool!

I shared with her about our recent Mutt Strut and fund raising for a vet to be trained with a service dog and how we would be delivering the check sometime this month. She was so grateful for us and shared that because of people like Lions, Dogs Inc can continue its mission

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Her name was Kathy. After I told her mine she asked me, " how do you pronounce your name?" I repeated (As I often explain Christ..... like Jesus, I was named after Jesus Christ, with an AL) Christal. She said oh my..... well, this is Shepherd.....and now I see the reason we met here this morning! I said to her "God is good and wherever we are is exactly where we should be"

She said she wished she had her phone so she could have a photo to herself and this adorable golden retriever friend at the beach in the rain. I offered to take a few pics and send them to her. She was so thrilled! We exchanged names and phone numbers as we were about to part ways.

I started to cry as soon as she walked away. Feeling such an appreciation for being a Lion and to serve. There is no coincidence that we met.

This is a daily occurrence for me to receive messages. On this day significant to showing up, always, rain or shine. Even if we don't feel like it. On this day I almost left but said to myself, nope you're here; you need this time so I stayed and practiced alone.

Through these last couple years of being a Lion I have been blessed to be with all of you, to serve, to give, to receive and now to guide others to do the same with the Lions and through my yoga teachings.

Even when I was having a gloomy day, like the first day I called the office and Barbara answered, there were so many more that I never shared. All of you guys have been there for me more than you know. It is in these kinds of moments that I reflect and remind myself just as I preach to others: " just show up..... and know that wherever you are at is exactly where you should be

I am so blessed to be a Lion and to have all of you in my life!

Wouldn't it be amazing if this dog "Shepherd " becomes the service dog for the veteran that the Venice Lions Club has sponsored !!

Christal

May Birthdays
Pamela Brown—7th
Cheryl Winstel—16th
Mike McNally—22nd
Sean Higginbottom—23rd
Bev Flynn—29th

May Anniversaries
John Tagye (Rose) - 6th



New District 35 I Governor Announced !!

Congratulations, Lion Bev Flynn

Venice Lions could not have been prouder of Lion Beverly Flynn as she was announced the winner of the recent election at the District Mini-Convention on April 24. Current District Governor, Linda Gregory announced the election results and everyone stood for Governor-Elect Beverly Flynn.

The next steps: The Orlando Multi-District Conference where the Governor Elect will be announced to all of Florida, and then to Hong Kong for the Lions International Convention where Venice Lion Beverly Flynn will be announced to the Lions of the World as District 35 I GOVERNOR! Bring in the confetti, the band...and the tissues!!!

We are so proud! Congratulations!!!



Laurel -Nokomis Lions Club President Peter Casamento and Vice President Diana Hopfinger presented Lion Beverly with a bouquet of roses in recognition of her new role as Lions District 35-I Governor!



Beeping Egg Hunt



This year's Beeping Egg Hunt entertained ten children with impaired vision as they listened for the sounds of beeping eggs hidden in the grass. This year's event was co-chaired by staff at two helping organizations: The Vision Education Center of Sarasota and the Southwest Florida Lighthouse in Fort Myers. Both of those organizations promoted the event to their clients. After tiring of searching for egg after egg, and greeting the Easter Bunny, the children left with an Easter basket of sensory toys and plastic candy-filled eggs.

Sharks Tooth Festival: Even Bigger This Year!

I would like to thank the 17 Lions who volunteered their time to work at the Lions Shark Tooth Hunt booth at the Venice Shark Tooth Festival. Because of your efforts, at least 900 children enjoyed digging through the sand in search of the elusive shark teeth. We used about 3-1/2 gallons of teeth. The mobilization team, including Bob Winstel, Russ Klockenga, Hans Nichols and Bernie Deckman, quickly set up the Centennial Park gazebo to prepare for a safe and efficient hunt. The de-mobilization team, including Bob and Cheryl Winstel and Paddy, meticulously restored the gazebo to pre-event condition, and moved 500 lbs. of sand! Special thanks to Paddy and Hans who volunteered for shifts on both Saturday and Sunday. Again, thank all of you who participated for your cooperation and service.

Lion Ed Stack



Youth Recycle for Sight Project

Our project has completed its 10th year involving 9 schools and the Venice B&G Club. Our partnership has given Lions the opportunity to work with NJHS (National Jr. Honor Society), Student Councils, Kiwanis Kids, Preschool and Venice High students.

Since 2017 we have collected 4,134 pairs of eyeglasses through the Youth Recycling for Sight program. These eyeglasses are destined for world wide distribution. A slide presentation is shared with all of the participating schools or after school programs as the project is initiated each year.

Partnering with Shriner Fred Ellis has presented the opportunity to collect pop tabs to be recycled for the Shriner's Children's Hospital in Tampa. Mr. Fred delivers the 40 lbs. pop tabs buckets to a local metal recycler in return for dollars for the Hospital to help rebuild wheelchairs, purchase games, books, etc. Over the years, 349 lbs. of tabs have entered Shriner Fred's garage. (For the record, it takes 1,020 tabs to make a pound)!

Participating schools are recognized on the following pages.



The Kiwanis Kids of Taylor Ranch were visited by Jan and Ed Stack and, as usual had an amazing response to our YRP project. They have been part of the YRP since 2018, and this year collected a 44 lbs. of pop tabs and 163 pairs of glasses.

Thank you Taylor Ranch!



Sky Academy

Lions Sharon, Bill and I shared a delightful visit with the SKY students initially sharing their Youth Recycle Projects from 2020 and returned to pick up 41 pairs of sight. Their collection of 20 lbs. pop tabs, along with the other sites will be delivered to Shriner Fred for metal recycling and the monies then sent to the Shriners' Children's Hospital in Tampa.

Thank you, SKY Academy.



Epiphany Catholic School

Lion John Tagye has been working with the Epiphany School 5th grade ,and with their mentor Katie Underwood, since our Recycle project began in 2017 .

This year students collected 54 pairs of sight and 40 lbs. of pop tabs to be recycled for the Shriners Children's Hospital in Tampa.

Thank you, Epiphany!

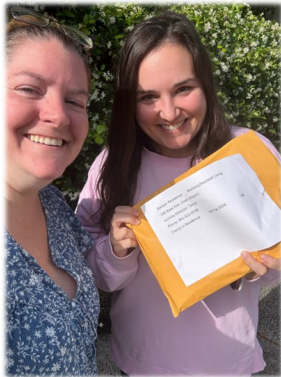
The NJHS (National Junior Honor Society) of 68 Students at Laurel Nokomis have been part of the YRP for 8 years now. This year's visit included Sharon, Bill and Jeannette and we were delighted to receive 30 pairs of glasses and 40 lbs. of pop tabs,.

Thank you Laurel Nokomis!



The Youth Recycle for Sight Team also wishes to acknowledge the participation of Grace **Methodist Preschool**, **Venice Christian**, **Venice Elementary** and the **Boys and Girls Club** for a total of 56 pairs of sight and 9 lbs. of pop tabs.

Sunshine Card Project



A heartfelt thank you to all of you who attended the Sunshine Card workshop . It was delightful to have so many of you and your family members with us for this twice a year event.

Thank you for being part of a very worthwhile endeavor that has entered its 7th year, now putting smiles on 1600 residents in 22 Venice care facilities.

From putting stickers on envelopes, to signing cards, to stuffing envelopes, to packaging and delivery. Many, many thanks!

Lions Ann Favreau and Jeannette Davis

Laurel Civic Earth Day Planting Celebration



Thank you Laurel-Nokomis Service Chair Lion Lisa Barbiero for organizing this event for the young people of Laurel-Civic.

Lions Lisa, Nicole, Diana, MJ, and Lion volunteers from Venice Lions Club (Paddy, Bonnie and others) worked with 10 kindergartener/first graders and 5 middle school volunteers to plant flowers in the newly refurbished outdoor classroom space in celebration of Earth Day April 2026



UPCOMING EVENTS

May 1-3	Multi-District Conference, Orlando	
May 7	Vision Clinic, 7:30 AM	Paddy Padmanabhan
May 7	General Meeting with Dinner	All
May 9	Waterway Cleanup	Bob Winstel
May 13	Gear Up Florida	Jeannette Davis
May 14	Board of Directors Meeting	All Welcome
May 21	General Meeting with Dinner	All



The Monthly Bulletin of the Venice Lions Club

The Lions Tale is a monthly newsletter that keeps the Club informed as to Club news, service opportunities and Club events. Please note:

I will no longer be publishing the Lions Tale after May 31st

This opportunity will begin on June 1.

I will provide any support needed to the Lion who assumes this important role.

If you are interested in this opportunity please contact :

jmyles19@gmail.com

Thank you for considering this opportunity to serve the Venice Lions Club; and always remember , ***“Where there is a need, there is a Lion”***.



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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

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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	Christine Malone
Treasurer	Tom Mavor
Bulletin	Jan Kunka
MD Executive Secretary / Treasurer	PDG Gary LaSpina/ PDG Paula Beach
Zone 5 Chair	Jeffrey Myles