



LIONS TALE



Monthly Bulletin of Venice Lions Club Inc. Venice, Florida

JUNE 2026

June President's Message "Change"

In a world filled with uncertainty, one thing we can always count on is change. While change is not always easy, each new chapter in life can also become an opportunity for growth, renewal, and fresh perspective. Like many of us "of a certain age," I have lived through countless changes over the years. I came to believe that I adapted well to almost anything. The ups and downs of career and family life, marriage and divorce, the loss of parents and siblings, multiple moves, even adjusting to life in Mexico — I managed them all with resilience and confidence.

But this time feels different.

Perhaps it is the stress of packing, selling my condo, and preparing for another move. Perhaps it is my age, the significance of what will be my final move, or the realization that I will soon relinquish the President's gavel. Most likely, it is all of these things together. You have all noticed that I have become emotional at the smallest moments — a sure sign that something not expressed is taking place.

In recent days, I have begun to feel steadier. I remind myself that I have successfully weathered change before, and I can do so again. I simply need to return to the habits and routines that help keep me grounded: creating a calm and comfortable home, organizing paperwork and appointments, maintaining routines, and leaning on the friendships that continue to sustain me. Old friends are still here, and new friends will soon become familiar faces. In time, what feels unfamiliar today will once again feel comfortable and secure. Our club, too, is about to experience an important transition.

On June 18, we will install a new President and Board of Directors. Lion Tim is well prepared to lead and will be an outstanding President. I fully support him and look forward to the energy and enthusiasm he will bring to our club. Together with our newer and younger members — and those they will continue to attract — our club will reach new levels of service and community impact.

We will navigate this change together, just as this club has done since 1947. We possess not only the personal strength to adapt, but also the enduring strength of a club built on decades of growth, service, and renewal.

Yours,

Pamela



Lions MD-35 Spring Conference



Lion Beverly Flynn and her Partner in Service, Lion Barbara McGillicuddy enter the banquet on the red carpet.

All Florida Lions Districts meet together twice a year. The tradition began in May, 1925, and the May, 2026 event was the 101st Conference. That alone made it a moving experience. Imagine, being part of a tradition of service that has continued in Florida since 1925.

The highlight of the May conferences is the introduction of the incoming Governors from each of the four Florida Districts and the recognition of Lions who have made special contributions. This year, Venice Lion Beverly Flynn took the oath of office as incoming Governor of Lions District 35I.

The new Governors are announced at a Grand Banquet, a formal event, and the dignitaries and the Lion attendees are dressed in formal attire.



Lion Beverly takes the oath of office as Governor of District 35 I



Lion Pamela received the Distinguished Leadership ribbon from A.P. Singh, International President, LCI. The award was granted for starting the Laurel Nokomis Club. Pictured are the Past International Directors from Florida and Lion Peter Casamento, President, Laurel Nokomis Lions.



Lions Beverly Flynn, Barbara McGillicuddy, Mike and Pat McNally, Pamela Brown



Governor Beverly Flynn's Official Picture



*Welcome and Congratulations new Lion
Rachel Lewis*

(Below)

Lion Rachel Lewis —accompanied by Kaleigh — was inducted into the Club by District Governor-Elect Lion Bev Flynn. Rachel is sponsored and mentored by Lion Pamela Brown.

Congratulations and welcome to the Club Lion Rachel !



Dogs Inc. Tour by Venice Lions

Jeff Sterne, Bob Winstel, and Cheryl Winstel recently toured the impressive campus of Dogs Inc in Palmetto, Florida, where they presented a \$5,000 donation specifically designated to help cover the cost of training a veteran who is receiving a service dog.

The visitors were welcomed by an enthusiastic and highly knowledgeable staff who guided them through the organization's beautifully landscaped 33-acre campus by golf cart. During the tour, they learned more about the extensive work involved in breeding, raising, and training service dogs that change the lives of veterans and individuals with disabilities.

The campus includes eight major buildings and facilities, including the administration building, nursery, kindergarten area for young dogs, veterinary building, a residence building with 12 apartments where veterans stay during training with their new service dogs, a fitness center for veterans, a fitness center designed specifically for the dogs, and a peaceful meditation garden.

One of the first stops on the tour was the nursery, where the group saw a mother Labrador caring for a litter of eight black female puppies. Staff members explained that the organization works exclusively with black and yellow Labrador Retrievers because of their temperament, intelligence, and suitability for service work.

The visitors also observed another litter making its very first trip outdoors into a courtyard area, where the puppies were introduced to new sights, sounds, textures, and experiences. Staff explained that early socialization is a critical step in preparing the dogs for future service training.

Another unique feature of the campus was the swimming pool used in training exercises. The dogs are carefully taught when they are permitted to enter the pool and how to respond to commands around the water, reinforcing discipline and obedience even during recreation.

The group learned about the detailed training process required to prepare the dogs for service work, as well as the close bond formed between veterans and their dogs during the residential training program. Staff emphasized that the service dogs themselves are provided to veterans completely free of charge.

The highlight of the visit came when Jeff Sterne, Bob Winstel, and Cheryl Winstel presented a check for \$5,000 designated solely to help cover the expenses associated with training the veteran during the program.

At the conclusion of the tour, the visitors were treated to a small demonstration by one of the service dogs, showcasing the intelligence, discipline, and specialized skills the animals develop through the organization's training program.

The visitors left deeply impressed by both the dedication of the staff and the life-changing impact the organization has on veterans and their families.



Submitted by

Lion Bob Winstel

GEAR UP FLORIDA

May 13, 2026

Our Lions Project with Gear Up Florida (GUF) completed 6 years with an amazing group of young men who represent the fraternity Pi Kappa Phi from many parts of the country. Lions John, Paddy, Keith, Jody, Judy, Rocky, Rachel, Charlie, Ann, Bill and I had the pleasure of hosting 35 cyclists a Jersey Mike's lunch at St. Mark's Episcopal Church on May 13th.

It was in my opinion one of the best GUF events that we have been involved with. Traditionally, after having lunch each of the cyclists share something that their traveling mates have not heard before; this year they asked us as Lions to share as well. Of course, Lion Ann's cookies were, again, a hit. Such fun, so many laughs.



Venice High School Senior Chorus



The Venice Lions were entertained with a medley of vocal selections by members of the Venice High School Senior Chorus.



*World Wide New Member Induction
April 11*



2026 Scholarship Winners

Above:
Three of our new Lions:
(l-r)

Cindy Toepfer

Sue Shidler

&

Susan Metevia-Frasik

Were present for the World Wide Induction of new members at the April District-35 I meeting.

An Interesting Piece of Florida Lions History I Found Especially Inspiring

Submitted by Lion Susan Metevia-Frasik

Many people don't know that Florida Lions helped launch one of the nation's oldest eye banks. In 1962, Lions clubs across Florida partnered with Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, and according to tradition, each Lion contributed just **\$6** to help start it. That modest gift grew into a lasting effort that has restored sight to thousands over the years.

Here are a few other facts I found especially interesting:

- Florida Lions also helped establish the Lions Eye Institute for Transplant & Research in Tampa, further supporting advances in vision care and research.
- Before vision became a major focus, some Florida Lions clubs even sponsored speedboat races.
- The organization's commitment to sight gained momentum after Helen Keller called on Lions to become the "Knights of the Blind."

What makes the Lions so remarkable is their steady commitment to serving their communities. They support neighbors, local causes, families, and youth programs—giving their time, raising funds, and making a meaningful difference without seeking recognition. Their impact reaches far beyond what most people ever see.

It's remarkable what people can accomplish when they come together to serve others.

June Birthdays

7th — Judy Terrell
11th Ed Billings
11th — Rick Mares
14th — Time Werla
18th — Rose Hightower
20th — Jan Liard
21st — Perri Brock
24th — Jennie Angell
30th — Paul Carlson

June Anniversaries

22nd — Bill & Jeannette Davis
30th — Paul Calson (Roseann)

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 4th — Vision Clinic , Lions Community Room, 7:30AM

June 4th — General Meeting, Lions Community Room, Dinner @ 5PM Meeting @ 6:15PM

June 11th — Board of Directors Meeting (all are invited), 6 PM, Community Room

June 18th — General Meeting, Lions Community Room, Dinner @ 5PM Meeting @ 6:15PM

July 4th — [Venice Fourth of July Parade](#) (CTRL—left click to follow link)



Cookies anyone?

In March 2026, 37 vendors who regularly participate in the Lions Recycle for Sight program helped us reach out to more people in need.

With the help of Agape Flights we were able to send 920 pairs of non-prescription eyeglasses and sunglasses to a mission in Haiti. At the same time, we were also able to respond to a plea from a local church mission group traveling to Dominican Republic for non-prescription eyewear.

We owe our eyeglass vendors a debt of gratitude for their continued participation. We hope they enjoy the cookies!

By Lion Judy Terrell

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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	
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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