



LIONS TALE



Monthly Bulletin of Venice Lions Club Inc. Venice, Florida

August 2025

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AUGUST

7th	Vision Clinic 7:30 AM Lions Community Room
7th	Club Meeting Dinner @ 5:30 PM Meeting @ 6:15 PM Lion Community Room
9th	Waterway Cleanup Meet behind Publix on the "Island" 8:30 AM
14th	VLC Board of Directors Mtg. 6 PM Lions Community Room All Members are Invited
16th	District 35-I Cabinet Mtg.
21st	Club Meeting Dinner @ 5:30 PM Meeting @ 6:15 PM Lion Community Room

President's Message: When I Became a Lion

I have been a Lion for 15+ years, but I only became a LION in July. I joined the Lions Club in Virginia Beach when Lions drove their mobile vision van to my library parking lot to offer vision screenings. I worked my way up from 3rd VP to 2nd VP and finally 1st VP. I enjoyed the meetings and the projects, but I was not moved by anything we did there. Before I became President of the Lions Club in Virginia Beach, I retired and moved to Mexico.

There was a Lions Club in San Miguel de Allende, MX, and that club offered a monthly vision clinic similar to ours. In that city, if children couldn't see sufficiently to see the blackboard, they were sent home and told not return until they had glasses. That was the end of education for many children. However, some families found their way to the Lions Clinic and the children were provided with glasses so they could return to school. Lions also provided transportation to a faraway clinic for children and their mamas to treat more serious vision conditions. In the picture above, I am holding a child with strabismus (crossed eyes) while we wait for attention from an ophthalmologist. It was an experience, but I didn't feel an emotional connection.



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I moved farther south to San Christobal de Las Casas, a Mexican city closer to Guatemala. There was a Lions Club there as well. One day the Lions took a trip to an orphanage to donate various small items. Those Lions were not so well off themselves, and the tiny donations on the table were not going to make a dent in the living conditions I saw in that orphanage. I left there horrified at the sight of children abandoned and living with next to nothing, but other than great sadness, I didn't feel very connected to Lions.

I have been a Venice Lion for three years, and the club had been the anchor of my life. I love the projects, the meals and meetings, and I have made dear friends for maybe the first time in my life. But it was only this month - in July - that I became a LION.

Like all of you, I was heartbroken over the flood in Texas that swept so many away, including children, and destroying families. But there is a Lions Club in Kerrville, where the flood happened. The Lions there immediately swung into action and raised over \$9,000 among just their own members. Their President wrote "that's what it means to be part of a civic club". Our District 35I sent a check to Kerrville and our own Venice Lions Board of Directors voted to send a check as well. We sent \$500 to the Kerrville Host Lions Club to support the recovery effort there.

Finally knowing and FEELING how Lions always swing into action during terrible times, THAT was what made me a LION.

God bless Lions everywhere, WE SERVE ! — PAMELA

August Service Project

Kids Socks and Underwear

District Governor Linda Gregory has challenged every club in District 35I to complete 12 service projects this year—one for each month. These projects reflect Lions International's 8 Global Causes, plus three additional focus areas suggested by Lions International.

August's Focus: Humanitarian Service

This month, we're stepping up to meet a quiet but important need in our local schools. Kindergarten and 1st grade children sometimes need a fresh change of socks or underwear during the school day, especially in the early weeks of the school year. When that happens, they're sent to the school nurse.

Let's help make sure our littlest learners are taken care of with dignity and comfort.

How You Can Help:

- Donate new socks and underwear in sizes suitable for kindergarten and 1st grade children.
- Bring donations to either of our August meetings, or drop them off at the Lions office.

We will deliver the collected items to school nurses at the four elementary schools in our service area.

Let's show our community that Venice Lions care—right down to the socks on their feet.

A Stranger Kissed Me Today

By Lion Pamela

Today, I attended a meeting in Venice where one of the guest speakers represented Homeless for Hope — a volunteer-driven group dedicated to ending homelessness with what they call "boots on the ground." Their members include the homeless, the partially homeless, the formerly homeless, and others committed to making a difference. They operate on a shoestring, using their own paychecks (when they have one) and occasional donations to help others in need.

After the meeting, I approached their founder to tell him about our Keerl Vision Clinic. I began, "I am a member of the Venice Lions Club," and that was all it took. His eyes lit up, and he immediately threw up his arms in joyful recognition. Then, to my complete surprise, he grabbed my hand and kissed it.

No kidding — he kissed my hand.

That man was Alex, a veteran who had once been homeless. He had tried three pairs of glasses through the VA, but none helped his vision. Then he found our Keerl Vision Clinic. He was referred to one of our partnering providers — and today, he sees clearly for the first time in years. He is now rebuilding his life with renewed clarity and gratitude.

Lions who serve at the Keerl Clinic rarely hear more than a quiet "thank you" — but moments like this remind us that the impact is real, and sometimes deeply personal. For every Alex, there are many more who may not kiss our hands, but who carry our help with them every day.

Good work, Lions. We Serve.

Buckle Up: Venice Lions at Work!

At our July 17 meeting, we hit the ground running by breaking into three working groups to plan an exciting year of service. We're continuing our monthly vision clinics, preschool vision screenings, and waterway cleanups—plus launching some fresh new initiatives!

The *18th Annual Mane Event*, March 19 Plantation Golf & Country Club.

After 17 years of remarkable leadership, Lions Beverly and Barbara are passing the torch. We are thrilled that Lion Judy Rocquin has stepped up to coordinate this year's Mane Event. She joined our planning committee via FaceTime and helped kick off discussions on new event elements and leadership roles. This legacy fundraiser is in good hands—and it's going to be fabulous!

The *1st Annual Dog Walk January 24 Woodmere Park*

After years of dreaming, it's finally happening—a *Dog Walk!*

Lions Jeff Sterne and Tim Werla are co-chairing the event with the goal of raising \$5,000 to sponsor a service dog "scholarship" for a disabled veteran. While the dog is donated by Dogs, Inc., funds are needed for transportation, training, and supplies.

Want to help?

This event needs additional committee members. Contact Lion Jeff Sterne or Lion Tim Werla to join the pack! This project will take a team effort. Your support is essential!

District 35-I Governor Linda Gregory's 12-Month Project Calendar

As the new District Governor, Lion Linda Gregory is championing service across all clubs. She has shared a month-by-month guide highlighting projects that align with the 8 LCI Global Causes plus three new causes from LCI.

July – Disaster Relief

Lion Tim Werla's excellent Hurricane Preparation Guide has been posted on the Venice Lions Facebook page.

August – Humanitarian Support:

We'll be donating socks and underwear for kindergarten and 1st-grade children who need a quick change at school. (See the article in this issue for more info.)

The coming year promises purpose, progress, and plenty of paws!

Let's roll up our sleeves and make it unforgettable.



MEMBER RECOGNITION

July 17, 2025



Lion of the Year

Lion Cheryl Winstel

*“ In Recognition of
Outstanding Service, Loyalty and
Devotion to Lionism ”*



Melvin Jones Fellow

Lion Carole Myles

*“For Dedicated Humanitarian
Services
Lions Clubs International”*

“You can’t get very far until you start doing something for somebody else”

- Melvin Jones

Who's Tale?

- Which Lion worked out with the Secret Service?
- George Jones, the famous country music singer, shared his meal in Nashville with which Lion?
- Which Lion sang on TV when he/she was 4 years old?

Answers to previous months' quizzes:

Which Lion trained as a clown and volunteered in a children's hospital? (Jeannette Davis)

Which Lion lived on a houseboat? (Judy Terrell)

Which Lions wrote the college Alma Mater? (Pamela B)

Which Lion met Henry Kissinger and gave him some advice? (Paddy P)

Which Lion lassoed a deer while at work? (Cheryl Winstel)

Which Lion helped solve a murder? (John Tagye)

Which Lion met Ronald Regan and received a picture of him? (Jody F. Fall)

Which Lion backpacked for 21 days through Europe (Bonnee Hagen)

Which Lion attended the Woodstock Festival with two friends and slept in the car? (Jeff Myles)

August Birthdays

Anne	Cummings	8/2
Doris	Donnelly	8/4
Kim	Werla	8/14
Tom	Regan	8/20



August Anniversaries

Robert	Spong (Edie)	8/11
Tom	Cookingham (Tobe)	8/18
Paddy	Padmanabhan (Latha)	8/24

In Memoriam: Lion Al Gurley

Venice Lions are saddened by the passing of Lion Al Gurley.

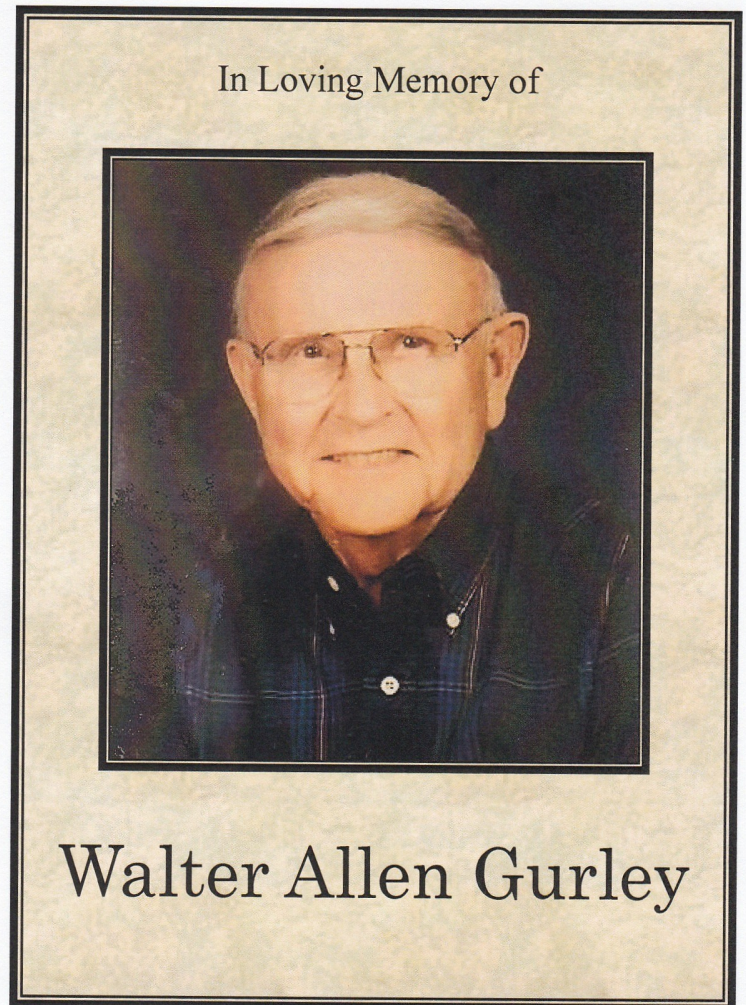
It was always a pleasure to see Lions Al and June enter our meetings—eager to be greeted by all and ready for a good meal. They were beloved by everyone, and we all admired their deep devotion to each other. Born in 1930, Lion Al was part of "The Greatest Generation." He came through the Great Depression and was soon swept up into World War II. Like so many veterans, he returned home ready to continue serving—and he did so faithfully through his church, the Red Cross, and the Venice Lions Club.

One of my favorite stories is one June shared with me. While Al was serving in the Air Force in France, he begged his commanding officer for a short leave so he could return to Nokomis. There, he surprised June at the school where she was student teaching. Dressed in his Air Force uniform, he looked, as June said, "so handsome." Al proposed to her then and there—and kissed her for all to see. They were married just a few days later, at Christmastime.

That was the beginning of 70 years of marriage—blessed with children, grandchildren, and a life of integrity and generosity.

Truly, a life well lived.

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/walter-gurley-obituary?id=58769454>



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www.venicelionsclub.com



Club Meetings
1st & 3rd Thursdays
Dinner at 5:30 PM
Meeting begins at 6:15 pm

Board of Directors
Meeting 2nd Thursday at 6 pm



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