



VENICE CITY SCENE

December 2016

A Publication for the Employees of the City of Venice, Florida

Venice City Scene is published by email. Please send news items to Public Information Officer Lorraine Anderson at landerson@venicegov.com.

Utilities technician awarded BUS Pass



Utilities Instrument and Control Technician Joe Stroer, right, displays his BUS Pass with Water Production Maintenance Supervisor Bob Clark. Stroer and Clark are pictured in front of the water plant's variable frequency drive (VFD) equipment.

Utilities Instrument and Control Technician Joe Stroer recently received a BUS (Bravo for Ultimate Service) Pass, which comes with a \$100 monetary award, for his on-the-job dedication.

Stroer, who has been with the city since October 2008, was nominated by Water Production Maintenance Supervisor Bob Clark. According to Stroer's nomination, in September, one of the water production reverse-osmosis skids failed and would not start or run. An outside expert was brought in to solve the problem. The expert said the problem was the variable frequency drive and suggested it be replaced. The cost of a new VFD is over \$6,000.

Stroer felt the problem was something other than the VFD and persistently worked to find the trouble, Clark reported. He ultimately found a problem with the safety loop circuit, which prevented the VFD from starting. He fixed the motor heater safety circuit and there was no need to purchase a new VFD.

"His determination saved the City \$6,218," Clark wrote in the nomination.

Stroer's efforts not only saved the City the cost of a VFD, but his persistence and intuition brought the water plant back to 100% production level without any outside assistance or protracted skid down time.

BUS Token recipients

Bravo for Ultimate Service is an employee incentive program based on the PRIDE (Productive, Responsible, Innovative, Dedicated, Ethical) initiative adopted by City Council. It rewards employees for going above and beyond.

Once an employee collects five BUS Tokens, he or she can turn them in to Administrative Services for \$50.

BUS Tokens were recently awarded to:

Frank CeCe, Utilities

Carolyn Hart, Cashier’s Office

Jeff Hackett, Engineering/Stormwater



VPD hosts Angel Tree for the holidays

The Venice Police Department is hosting a Salvation Army Angel Tree in the VPD lobby, 1350 Ridgewood Ave. City employees and members of the public are invited to come in to the Police Department and select a paper angel with holiday requests from needy local children, teens and seniors for clothing, shoes, toys, gift cards and other items.

Each of the 50 angels lists a child’s, teen’s or senior’s name, gender and age, and several gift wishes. Participants will also pick up the Angel Tree instructions and a clear plastic bag.

Once you select an angel, please contact VPD Administrative Assistant Babs Anderson at 941-882-7542 to confirm the recipient you are buying for. Gifts should be purchased and placed unwrapped in the clear plastic bag with the Angel Tree tag taped inside. Deliver to the Police Department by Friday, Dec. 9.

Thank you so much for your donation – you will be making some members of the community very happy this holiday season!



Venice named Silver Level Bicycle Friendly Community



City Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator Darlene Culpepper, in yellow, poses Nov. 9 with the group headed out for the city's monthly bike ride.

and planning, and the biggest measure, engineering.

Venice has come a long way toward being bicycle-friendly and has made a lot of improvements since the last application submission, including installing new bike racks around the city, restriping bike lanes and crosswalks, resurfacing roads, and hiring a part-time bicycle pedestrian coordinator, Darlene Culpepper.

Culpepper has launched a once-a-month, open-to-the-public 6-mile bicycle ride around the island of Venice, meeting in the City Hall parking lot at 10 a.m. The next ride is Dec. 14.

"I'm so happy to have been part of the renewal process," Culpepper said. "We were able to keep our Silver status, and I feel that this shows to our community that the city is really working hard on trying to make it safer for cyclists.

"We were given some great feedback from the League of American Bicyclists on areas we can improve and implement to work on achieving a Gold status. Part of that is education, which I have already been able to implement on my monthly bike rides. Before each ride we have a brief safety discussion, and

On Nov. 9, the League of American Bicyclists recognized Venice with a Silver Level Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) award. Venice was part of the largest application round in the BFC program's 13-year history. In total, 140 communities applied for recognition, a 62 percent increase from the previous largest round of applicants.

With the announcement of 26 new and 77 renewing BFCs, Venice joins a leading group of communities, in all 50 states, that are transforming our neighborhoods. There are now 404 communities currently recognized for their efforts to make biking better with a BFC award.

"The growth in our BFC program reflects great progress in our mission to create a Bicycle Friendly America for everyone," said Ken McLeod, State & Local Policy Manager at the League of American Bicyclists. "It is incredible to see the diversity of communities that applied, the communities that have been involved with the BFC program for years, and the grassroots efforts to improve conditions for bicycling throughout the United States of America."

Four years ago, dedicated city of Venice volunteers submitted a Bicycle Friendly Community application to the League of American Bicyclists, which honored Venice with its Silver designation. On July 27, a BFC application was again submitted to the League. The city's first attempt was submitted in 2008, when Venice received an Honorable Mention. The second was submitted in 2012, when the city bypassed Bronze status and went straight to the Silver designation. The Bike/Walk Venice volunteer team worked diligently along with City Engineer Kathleen Weeden and other city members to complete the 100-plus-question form. The application covered five principal sections — education, encouragement, enforcement, evaluation



At left, Culpepper sets off Nov. 9 on the 6-mile bike ride from City Hall. Above, bicyclists pose for a group photo at the South Jetty. Right, VPD Officers Kenite Webb and David Creasy prior to the ride's start.

Bicycle Friendly, from page 3

teaching these skills can build confidence. I look forward to working toward Gold status and making it safer for cyclists in the city.”

Said Bill Nesper, Vice President of Programs at the League of American Bicyclists, “We applaud these communities for making bicycling a safe and convenient option for transportation and recreation. We are encouraged by the growing number of leaders who see bicycling as a way to build more vibrant, healthy, sustainable and connected communities and be a part of the solution to many complex challenges faced at both the community and national levels. We look forward to continuing to work with these communities as we move closer to our mission of creating a Bicycle Friendly America for everyone.”

The Silver BFC award recognizes Venice’s commitment to improving conditions for bicycling through investment in bicycling promotion, education programs, infrastructure and pro-bicycling policies. The BFC program provides a benchmark for communities to evaluate these conditions and policies, while highlighting areas for improvement. The national scope of the program also promotes competition and comparison between communities — with 404 currently recognized BFCs, there is always a model for your community to be found. The BFC program provides a roadmap to building a Bicycle Friendly Community and the application itself has become a rigorous and an educational tool in itself. Since its inception, more than 800 distinct communities have applied and the five levels of the award — diamond, platinum, gold, silver and bronze — provide a clear incentive for communities to continuously improve.

Solid Waste Superintendent lauded for good deed

Bob Moroni, the city's Solid Waste and Recycling Superintendent, was recognized by Mayor John Holic during a recent City Council meeting for assisting a woman suffering a medical event.

Moroni was manning a booth at the Sun Fiesta Oct. 22 to display new garbage containers coming to the city in the near future when the incident occurred.

"It was about mid-day, and (Solid Waste worker) Chase (Banyas) had just run to the restroom," Moroni said. "These two ladies were walking along, and one said to me, 'Can I sit down? I don't feel so good.' She had water and a pill, and said she was getting hot.

"Suddenly the woman in the next booth over — I didn't get her name — called out, 'You better call 911!' The lady was flat out on the chair." As the lady's friend tended to her, Moroni waved down a Women's Sertoma Club member and asked her to get a first responder. She returned with Officer Ruth Terry, who radioed for Fire Rescue. In the meantime, city firemedics who were passing by got there first and started to work on the woman. "Right about then, Chase came back from the bathroom," Moroni said. "This literally happened within minutes."

The woman was treated at a local hospital.

Several days later, a Venice couple who had witnessed the event wrote Holic a letter commending city staff, which the mayor read at the start of the Nov. 8 Council meeting. "My wife and I watched as the booth staff assisted the woman, called for help and assisted rescue workers as the incident unfolded and was handled ... the booth staff and the responding police and fire personnel were very capable and compassionate and should be commended," Chris and Fran Stratton wrote. "The only name I was able to obtain was 'Bob,' which was on his shirt front.

"All too often, good deeds done by public servants are explained away as being 'just their job.' It's moments like this that show it's much more than that and should be appreciated as such," the Strattons wrote.

"It's such a nice thing when folks take the time to compliment City of Venice workers," Holic said.

Moroni, for his part, said everyone involved had a hand in saving the woman.

"I'm just glad the lady is OK," Moroni said.



City Solid Waste and Recycling Superintendent Bob Moroni at the Sun Fiesta, just hours before he would assist a woman experiencing a medical event.

HOLIDAY PARADE



Some 30,000 people attended the 41st Annual Holiday Parade downtown on Nov. 26, including Police Chief Tom Mattmuller, Council Member Fred Fraize and his wife Stella, above right on the VPD Marine Patrol boat; Mayor John Holic and his wife Pam riding in the Fire Rescue ladder truck, at right; and Council member Rich Caution and his wife Linda, below, also on the boat.



MEET YOUR CO-WORKER

Danny Watson: A series of choices

For Danny Watson, working for the city the past two years as a multi-disciplined building inspector has been a haven.

"It's been very peaceful for me," said Watson, 50. "I came from a very high-stress, political environment in St. Charles, Missouri."

Watson was a supervisor for that city's Building and Code Enforcement Department, a post he held for six of the 10 years he worked there. He had also lived in West Palm Beach for a year and "just wanted to get back to Florida."

At his job with Venice's Building Department, he inspects new construction and rehabs, from footings and foundations to completion.

"This city has been pleasant to work for. It's empowering," he said. "They really help new people. I've learned a tremendous amount just by interacting."

Watson is from St. Louis originally and attended Bible College in Springfield. He has a BA in Bible theology, with an emphasis in inner-city social work. An ordained chaplain, he counseled over 100 prisoners in correctional facilities when he worked in St. Charles.

"I liked working with prisoners," he said. "I felt a huge responsibility. I told them even though they're in prison, it doesn't matter how they start life, it's how they finish.

"A lot of times, it was just listening."

Watson would bring inmates study Bibles and build up a rapport, sometimes even attending their court hearings as a show of support. He would follow their cases for a while before they were transferred.

"You can make them not feel they failed," he said. "It's about respecting each other and having a good attitude."

He said his goal is to continue prisoner counseling at correctional facilities in Florida.

Watson started out working for the City of Jennings, Mo., in Park Maintenance. He went on to work eight years for the City of Ferguson, where he became a building inspector, taking tests along the way to obtain his certification.

"Florida's a lot different," he emphasized. "It's way more stringent due to hurricane (code requirements). It's the third most regulated state in the U.S."

While in Jennings, Watson and his wife Nancy fostered 13 kids over a 10-year span. Watson was in his 20s at the time.

"We got a call from a youth pastor in the city of St. Louis. It was an inner-city church. There were three sibling boys, their parents were locked up, and the state was going to take them," he said.



Danny Watson at his desk in the Building Department at City Hall.

Anniversaries

The following employees celebrate one of the 5-year milestones of employment with the city:

25 YEARS

Tom Mattmuller, Police Chief, Dec. 30

20 YEARS

Kurt Krug, Utilities/Wastewater, Dec. 18

15 YEARS

Tim Merritt, Utilities/Wastewater, Dec. 6

Welcome to the Team

The following employees recently started working for the city:

Dawn Radick, Police, Nov. 4

Joe Welch, Finance, Nov. 14

Walter Petersen, Solid Waste/Recycling, Nov. 15

Co-worker, from page 7

That was how Chad, 11, Shane, 10, and B.J., 4, came into their lives.

“They were great kids,” Watson said. “They had fun. We had taken them out of a bad environment.”

As far as the down side of fostering, “We did a lot of laundry,” Watson smiled. But “most of the problems came from dealing with the state and case-workers.”

When the children the Watsons fostered were eventually reunited with their biological parents, “It was terrible. We cried a lot,” he said. “You’re just living your life, and you get the call – ‘Have their stuff ready, we’re coming to get them.’ We wept.”

Still, it was absolutely worth it.

“Even for a moment in time, these kids were safe, they were clean, they had a place to stay,” he said. “How can you not take a kid? Even to shelter for a

night – and some only stayed a night. You have to be very patient, be firm, but with love.”

Watson and his wife fostered one girl when she was 16. Another, a 5-year-old named Zoe, went back to the care of the state, then the Watsons actually adopted her; now, at 18, she’s back with her birth mom.

“When you’re dealing with damaged people, they filter their decision-making process through that pain,” Watson said. “They don’t always make good choices.”

Watson still keeps in touch with Chad, however.

“Everything in life is a series of choices,” he said. “It takes a very unique family to do this.”

Watson and his wife have been married for 27 years. When he’s not working, he enjoys reading – biographies and autobiographies, books on history, and his Bible – fishing, going out on his boat, an 18-foot angler, and riding his motorcycle, a Honda VTX1300.

Voters approve Road, Public Safety Bonds

Venice voters said “yes” Nov. 8 to both an \$18 million city Road Bond and \$16 million Public Safety Bond.

The Road Bond, which passed with 8,615 votes (64 percent) will repave 70 percent of city-owned and maintained roads — approximately 70 lane miles. Once construction is initiated, the work must be completed within three years.

The Road Bond will be repaid over 20 years, with the initial annual cost to property owners estimated at \$37 per \$100,000 of assessed value less any home-stead or other exemptions as defined by the Sarasota County Property Appraiser. This figure will likely decrease as more homes are constructed.

Roads to be completed include the main downtown roads (Tampa, Venice and Miami), industrial roads such as Triple Diamond Blvd. and Seaboard Ave., residential corridor streets such as Capri Isles Blvd., Nokomis Ave., Bird Bay Dr., Armada, Nassau, St. Augustine and The Esplanade, Eastgate neighborhood streets such as Country Club Way, Cypress, Groveland, Eastgate and Cherry, Bay Indies Blvd. (public portion), Venetian Pkwy., Ridgewood, Auburn Lakes Dr. and many other residential streets. No private roads are included.

Extensive planning will be completed to minimize impacts of construction activities.

Voters approved the Public Safety Bond with 7,122 votes (54 percent). The bond will fund the design, engineering and construction of a 25,000-square-foot, Category 5 hurricane-hardened public safety command center on a 10-acre property on East Venice Avenue with secured grounds. Along with housing the Police Department, it will feature:

- * Multipurpose rooms to support training or emergency operations, including a media briefing area.
- * A community room open to the public for meetings of civic groups or other organizations.
- * Support for current forensic technology and room for processing and storage of evidence.

The Public Safety Improvement Bond issue will be for 30 years. The initial annual cost to property owners is estimated at \$30 per \$100,000 of assessed value.

The bond supports the construction of a modern, updated facility that will allow first responders to be in a constant state of preparedness and react efficiently and effectively to threats, whether natural or manmade, of any kind, as well as provide peace of mind for residents. In the event of a disaster, the center can house those who need to stay there for several days. The center will also better accommodate the use of civilian volunteers and public safety aides, and facilitate the Citizen Police Academy Program.

Mayor Holic wins 3rd term

Venice Mayor John Holic captured 65 percent of the vote Nov. 8 to win his third term in office. He received 8,434 votes, prevailing over opponent Frank Abbruzzino.



HOLIC

“I won’t let them down,” Holic told the Venice Gondolier about residents. “Thank you to the people of Venice for your support.”

Holic won re-election along with Council Members Jeanette Gates and Bob Daniels, who were unopposed.

Holic and his wife, Pam, moved to Venice in 1990, where he continued his 28-year career with A.G. Edwards financial services as a Certified Financial Planner and Branch Manager. Before his career with A.G. Edwards, Holic was an air traffic controller in Chicago.

He represents the city on the Council of Governments and is liaison to the Venice Housing Authority and the city's Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

Police sergeant marks 10 years with the city



Venice Police Sgt. Aleksander Gregoire received his 10-year Service Award and pin from Mayor John Holic in Council chambers Nov. 30.

Gregoire began his employment with the Venice Police Department on Oct. 2, 2006. He worked at three other police departments before coming to Venice and is entering his 20th year of law enforcement.

Upon completion of the Field Training Officer program, he began his career in the Patrol Division of the Police Department.

In March 2008, Gregoire received the "Officer of the Year" award for exemplary service and dedication to the department. In June 2008, he transferred to the Venice Police Department Detective Bureau and was involved with several major cases that included a robbery at TJ Maxx, a homicide on Laurel Avenue and an extensive investigation that involved occupied burglaries to residences on the island.

In March 2014, Gregoire was promoted to sergeant and since the promotion, serves as a night sergeant.

On Sept. 29, 2015, he responded to a call for a suicidal man who fought with his girlfriend and threatened to kill her. Upon arrival, he was met by the man's girl-

friend, who stated he had barricaded himself in a bathroom and was armed with a knife. Gregoire negotiated with the man for approximately an hour and was able to lead officers to a peaceful resolution while securing him without injury. For those actions, he received the Venice Police Department's Lifesaving Award.

Gregoire is one of the department's defensive tactics instructors and trains officers in ground fighting and edged weapon defense. He is also one of the agency's EVOC instructors.

When Gregoire is not at work, he is at home with his wife Michelle and their four daughters. He is also a car enthusiast and enjoys motorsport racing.

IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS



Venice Mayor John Holic is sworn in for a third term Nov. 30 by City Clerk Lori Stelzer as his wife Pam looks on.



Stelzer swears in Council Member Bob Daniels for a third term with his wife Nancy by his side.



Council member Jeanette Gates is sworn in by Stelzer for a third term as Gates' daughter Jackie looks on.



Council Member Rich Cautero was voted Vice Mayor for 2017 on Nov. 30 by the board.

TAKE A BOW

Gerald Ponder emailed Mayor John Holic on Nov. 4: “My wife and I have just moved to Venice from the Triangle Region (Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill) of North Carolina. We ‘discovered’ Venice during a visit last winter and decided to move here not only because of the climate and amenities, but because we found Venice to be such a welcoming place for people with disabilities (curb cuts downtown, Caspersen Beach Boardwalk, etc.)

“We have only been here for two weeks, but we have found our hopes for accessibility fulfilled. We are grateful to the city planners, staff and Council for the caring and foresight to make Venice so accessible for people with disabilities. Just wanted to register a kudo. I hope you will accept our thanks on behalf of the city.”

Airport

Airport tenant James D. O'Steen sent a grateful email to Marta Ugas-Carpenter after he reported a wasp nest in his sunshade on Nov. 22 and it was removed in under an hour by staff. “Great response!” he wrote.

Another tenant sent an email to Marta on Nov. 21: “Happy Thanksgiving. One of the things we can give thanks for is a great Airport staff.”

Cashier's Office

“**Carolyn Hart** helped me through the arduous task of navigating the new website for auto pay,” John Sullivan emailed City Manager Ed Lavallee on Nov. 3. “I needed to discontinue auto pay on a property that has been sold and set up auto pay for two existing accounts with a new credit card number, as the old one had been compromised. All during the process, Carolyn demonstrated patience and fortitude as each process was accomplished, and then checked to ensure compliance including new passwords and each of the other steps necessary to get the job done.

“Just thought you and Carolyn's manager should know that we are fortunate to have someone on board who is knowledgeable and helpful.”

Public Works/Solid Waste

Tricia Matero reported on Nov. 9 a call from a “happy, happy resident that the clock is fixed at Tampa and Nokomis Avenues. Thanks to ALL involved!”

Resident Diane Toscano called Public Works Nov. 17 to say she was very appreciative that **Chase Banyas** took the time to not only place her bins back where she could get them, but also bring her newspaper close to the house too. She was very impressed by the thoughtfulness of this simple act. She also wanted to thank everyone in the department for the great job they do.

TAKE A BOW

Public Works/Planning

Linda Wilson with the Farmer’s Market reported on Nov. 21: “Saturday morning when the Farmer's Market was setting up, one of our vendors went to use the men's room in Centennial Park. He came back and informed me that the men's room was covered in waste. This was around 6:30 a.m. I went to the front door of the public restroom and blocked the entrance, and reluctantly called **Roger Clark**. My sincere appreciation goes to Roger for giving me his personal cell phone number in case of emergencies. Roger asked me to look for a city truck with a flashing light and flag that person down. I was able to find **Scott Lott** from Public Works a little after 7 a.m. on Venice Ave. and told him what was reported. Scott immediately started the process of cleaning the bathrooms. I later went to ask a gentleman coming out of the restroom with his young son if the restrooms were clean. The answer: ‘Spotless.’

“I cannot tell you how much I appreciate the dedication that these two people have to their jobs and Venice residents.”

Engineering/Stormwater

“I want to send out a big thank you to one of your workers, **Jeff Hackett**, who was in the Venetian Golf & River Club at a new building site and saw my water reflux valve malfunction and send a geyser of water into the air,” emailed resident Roberta Cole on Nov. 21. “I was outside trying to understand what had just happened. He stopped, fixed the problem and reviewed the care of these units, all within 10 to 15 minutes. He was awesome! I so appreciated his help.”

It’s a boy!

Congratulations to Venice Police Lt. Jessica Chappa and her family following the birth of baby Tadeo Antonio Chappa on Nov. 16. All are doing well!



**Tell family and friends to
Like us on Facebook:
Venice, Florida Municipal Government**

Drainage improved at Wellfield booster station

November marked the successful completion of a joint project between Utilities and Engineering to improve drainage and reduce standing water at the Wellfield booster station.

The booster station is just north of Lucaya Avenue, south of the soccer fields to the north, and north of the baseball fields. Areas around the city's booster station have experienced flooding and periods of prolonged standing water. Engineering teamed with Utilities and designed a project in-house to improve the drainage. The project went out to bid and was awarded to low bidder DeJonge Excavating Contractors Inc. The total final project cost was \$62,179, which included redoing a driveway, multiple drainage structures and drainage pipes, and sod.

The project started in late October and concluded in November. The city monitored the construction of the project and is pleased with the outcome, expecting wonderful results after future rains.



BEFORE



AFTER



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

DAY	EMPLOYEE	DEPARTMENT
1	William Kuchar	Police
3	Aleksander Gregoire	Police
5	Richard Brown	Police
6	Chase Banyas	Public Works/Solid Waste
8	Skip Pettitt	Public Works/ Parks Maintenance
9	John Majka	Police
10	Tim Hochuli	Utilities
11	Todd Reale	Police
11	John Short	Utilities/Wastewater
11	Stacy McKenzie-Grant	Utilities
12	Mark Devine	Fire
15	Tom Mattmuller	Police
18	Michelle LaRock	Police
18	Aaron Isley	Utilities/Watewater
19	Glenn Amend	Utilities/Watewater
19	Adam Daneman	Police



DAY	EMPLOYEE	DEPARTMENT
20	Michael Wisdom	Public Works/Parks Maintenance
22	Brian Treat	Utilities
23	Babs Anderson	Police
23	Kristen Kimson	Police
24	Chris Bruns	Public Works/Parks Maintenance
27	Brett Woodworth	Police

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

DAY	EMPLOYEE	DEPARTMENT
2	Wade Heath	Solid Waste/Recycling
3	Joseph Pardee	Utilities
4	Darrin Olah	Solid Waste/Recycling
6	Todd Resch	Police
7	Christopher Ripo	Fire
7	Timothy George	Public Works
12	Marta Ugas-Carpenter	Airport
13	Lori Stelzer	City Clerk
14	Daniel Armstrong	Fire
15	Joe Stroer	Utilities
16	Susan Carpenter	Public Works
17	Stephen Soult	Public Works/Parks Maintenance
18	Chloe Crouch	Utilities/Wastewater
21	Pete Sorrentino	Police
22	Karen Butterworth	Building
24	Tracy Self	Utilities
26	Keith Quick	Police



DAY	EMPLOYEE	DEPARTMENT
26	Marty Dietz	Utilities/Dist/Collection
27	Damien Stillings	Utilities/Dist/Collection
29	Wesley Weber	Police
31	Dorothy Tary-Ferrell	Utilities

AROUND TOWN



Venice Police officers showed off city vehicles during a demonstration at Venice Elementary School on Oct. 28. Sarasota County Sheriff's personnel were also on hand.



AROUND TOWN



Above, members of the Venice Power Squadron brought in toys to the Venice Police Department Nov. 18 for needy families for the holidays.



At left, VPD Capt. Mike Rose with residents of Windsor of Venice, who graciously brought in pies for officers who had to work on Thanksgiving.

Below, City Engineer Kathleen Weeden and Police Chief Tom Mattmuller speak with ABC-7's Chris Brantley on Nov. 9 outside City Hall following the passage of both the Road Bond and Public Safety Bond.



AROUND TOWN



Thanksgiving came early out at the Airport, where "head turkey" Airport Director Mark Cervasio, left, supplied and cooked the bird, while staff brought in sides and other goodies on Nov. 16.



Director of Administrative Services Alan Bullock, left, spends a day a month in the field working alongside employees from various departments. On Nov. 23, he went on the road with VPD Officer Brett Woodworth, right.



GOOD NEWS

- The city of Venice made #1 on a TripAdvisor list of “10 Best Places to Travel in November to Stay Warm & Save Money” nationwide. The weekly rental rate in the city is listed as \$813, which reflects the average cost for a weeklong stay in a two-bedroom property during November 2016, according to TripAdvisor. “The Gulf Coast destination boasts beautiful parks, green spaces and public beaches — including Venice Beach, a family-friendly spot known for good shark tooth hunting and an offshore reef popular with scuba divers,” the listing reads. “Spend the day by the waves, then hop on a bike or lace up your running shoes and hit the trails at Venetian Waterway Park. Visit during November to watch artists transform pavement into 3-D paintings during the International Chalk Festival, which attracts talent from all over the world.” To see the full listing, visit www.tripadvisor.com.



The clock at Tampa and Nokomis Avenues, near the Venice Theatre.

• The two historic clocks in downtown, at Tampa and Nokomis Avenues, and on Miami Avenue, have both been repaired by Public Works and now display the correct time.

• Public Works installed dog waste bag dispensers in John Nolen Park for residents’ pets.

The city received the plaque at right from America in Bloom after receiving four stars in the national contest in recognition of “Your Community’s Overall Impression.” The plaque now hangs in City Hall.



AFTER HOURS



Assistant City Clerk Heather Taylor with daughter Katie, 8, at the 2016 Southeast Region Cheer/Dance Competition, where Katie competed with the North Port Mustangs Jr. Pee Wee cheerleading team on Nov. 25 at the Silver Spurs Arena in Orlando. Katie's team, which won first place, advances to nationals at ESPN Wide World of Sports at Disney on Dec. 6, where over 300 teams will compete.



Ten female staff participated in Escape Room Sarasota on Nov. 9, making it out with 3 minutes to spare! Pictured are Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator Darlene Culpepper, ASD Benefits Administrator Susie Daniels, Building Administrative Coordinator Audrey Symowicz, Recording Secretary Mercedes Barcia, PIO Lorraine Anderson, Recording Secretary Michelle Girvan, City Engineer Kathleen Weeden, Executive Assistant Judy Gamel, Assistant City Clerk Heather Taylor and City Clerk Lori Stelzer.



Stormwater Engineer John Monville caught this 25-inch brown trout in 35-degree temperatures on the Bighorn River in Montana over the Thanksgiving holiday. John was fishing from a drift boat, using a fly rod with a bucktail streamer fly. He called the catch "my largest ever fly-rod trout."

Christmas Boat Parade sets sail Dec. 3

The annual Venice Christmas Boat Parade is set for 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 3. (Rain date is the next day.)

The Boat Parade starts just north of the Albee Road Bridge. There are public areas at the start and along the parade route, including at restaurants.

The parade continues down the Intracoastal Waterway and out to the Jetty as far as land on the south side. There is viewing on both sides of the Jetties in this area. If you come by boat, there are plenty of spots along the way to drop anchor. As the parade travels down the Intracoastal, the next large area for public viewing is on both sides of the Intracoastal, known as the Venetian Waterway Trail. Spectators are urged to arrive early. Organizers advise scoping out the area a few days ahead of time and finding that special spot.

On Venice Island when the bridges go up for the parade Dec. 3, the Circus Bridge remains down for vehicular traffic only. That remains in effect until such time that the other two bridges are reopened to vehicular traffic.

For more information, including a parade route map, visit www.venicechristmasboatparade.com.



Annual Holiday Open House
and Tree Lighting Celebration

December 10, 5-7pm

Venice Museum & Archives
351 Nassau St. S

In conjunction with VABI's Tree Lighting across the street
in Blalock Park



Holiday Potluck Luncheon at City Hall!



When: Monday, December 19th, 2016

Where: Community Hall - Room #114

Time: Starting at 12:00 Noon

How: Sign up to bring a dish- S:/SIGNUP/ "Annual Holiday Luncheon"



There will also be an optional gift exchange with a \$10 limit. Please indicate on the signup sheet if you will be participating.

Remember this is a potluck event; if you are planning to attend, please bring a dish for everyone to enjoy.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Join us for

Laughter, Humor and Play to Reduce Stress and Solve Problems



Workshop Objective:

- Understand the benefits of smiling
- Use laughter to improve overall health
- Use humor and play to have FUN!

Date: Thursday, December 15th

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: Community Hall

To Register: [sdrive/Signup/After 4 Signup Sheets/ "Laughter, Humor and Play"](#) or contact Susie Daniels ext. 7372 or sdaniels@venicegov.com



Presented by the City of Venice and ComPsych Corporation