



# LIONS TALE



DECEMBER 2024

Monthly Bulletin of Venice Lions Club Inc. Venice, Florida

## A SEASON OF LIGHT

**Editors Note: Lion President Pamela invited Lion Keith Backhaus to share a holiday message.**

*It's December !*

With many traditions, many celebrations, December is one season of love and light. It is packed with holidays and observances from the Winter Solstice to New Year's Eve, to Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa. There is something for everyone. Even December 21<sup>st</sup> is "Bah Humbug" , a day for the "Scrooges" among us. December actually has 45 awareness events.

December is also called the "*Season of Light*" as there are many religious holidays during this time. Their themes span cultures that emphasize sharing with others, connecting with family, and of course delicious holiday foods and meals from around the world. These major holidays all center around a theme of light overcoming darkness; a time of peace. December 21<sup>st</sup> is the Winter Solstice — the shortest day of the year and the longest night— If we pay attention we will see ,in amazement, how quickly the light overcomes the darkness. The long sunrise of December 22<sup>nd</sup> is followed by those that come faster and faster each day.

Darkness can be overcome by the light of a single candle , or a pair of new glasses that brings sight. A Teddy Bear to hug can bring calm when fear is all around. Darkness can be overcome by a smile of welcome, kindness and respect for all. Our World today presents us with many attractions and distractions making it easy to lose sight of the true meaning of this '*Season of Light*' . But in fact the '*Season of Light*' , whether from the glow of Advent candles, the lights of a Christmas tree, the flame of a Menorah, or perhaps simply, the welcome light on our neighbor's front porch. These all let the light shine. May this season of light not only be a time of celebrations and merriment but also a time of reflection. Let us celebrate the possibility of peace. Let us be centers of peace and light to help speed the day when we all may be one, *Let us Share it !*

Lion Reverend Keith Backhaus

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## Upcoming Events

### DECEMBER

5	Membership Meeting Dinner @ 5:30 PM Meeting @ 6:15
5	NOTE: Vision Clinic this month is cancelled
12	Board of Directors Meeting 6PM Lions Community Room
19	Holiday Social Lions Community Room 5:30 PM

*1st Dr. Jill Cardinal*  
*3rd Patti McNally*  
*3rd Agnes Woros*  
*7th Rocky Rocquin*  
*8th Sharon Wilkins*  
*22nd Lynn O'Brien*  
*27th Mary Conrad*

*14th Jeff Sterne (Ginnie)*  
*21st Al and June Gurley*  
*27th Dr. Ric and Dusty Namikas*



## December Membership Report

Our Club membership is now at **64!**

We need to ask folks to become members.

We do not ask enough. We need to make it a point to ASK! Each new member brings 2 more hands to share in the work and offer services that we provide to our community. Also, they bring new ideas and their enthusiasm for service.

***Consider inviting a friend to join us in a Lions service activity.***



### JANUARY

2	<b>NOTE: THERE IS NO MEETING ON JANUARY 2ND</b>
9	Board of Directors Meeting 6PM Lions Community Room
16	Membership Meeting Dinner @ 5:30 PM Meeting @ 6:15

## Club Service Report July 1, 2024 - November 1, 2024

People served - 3879

Activities completed - 31

Club Service Hours—1442.5

# CLUB NEWS

What a privilege to take part in the Honor Flight for Lion Alfonso Kirkeeng. He definitely deserves honoring. ( By the way, wife Denise says they had to be at the Punta Gorda airport that day by 4:15 a.m. for the trip to Washington, D.C.)

Alf did his Navy officer training in Newport, Rhode Island. He then completed his flight training in Pensacola, Florida. He served in Guam as a Cryptographic Communication Officer.

When he returned state side he joined the Navy Reserve and spent 20 years serving our country during the Korean and Vietnam wars.

Not only did he serve his country, during those years, but he also served his community as a member of his local Lions Club. He joined the Lions in the 1950's in Elsworth, Wisconsin and later in Eau Claire, Wisconsin before becoming a member of our Venice Lions in 1991 He remembers serving as a President of our club and Chairman of the Keerl Vision Committee during the formation of the Venice Health Park. What an historical time for our Venice Lions Club. We certainly owe a great deal of thanks and appreciation to Lion Alf for his years of service.



## HONOR FLIGHT



Lion Alf describes his experience as a member of the Veterans' Southeastern Honor Flight to Washington D.C.



*Above:* Lion Tim Werla led a team of Lions to greet Veterans returning home from their trip to Washington D.C. on the Honor Flight. It was extra special as Lion Alf Kirkeeng was one of the veterans selected to make the journey.



# Holiday Sunshine Cards !!

## To Our Venice Lions,

A heartfelt thank you for all efforts before, during the card workshop and beyond. An enormous project to put together 1600+ cards that will be delivered to 22 care facilities, thank you!

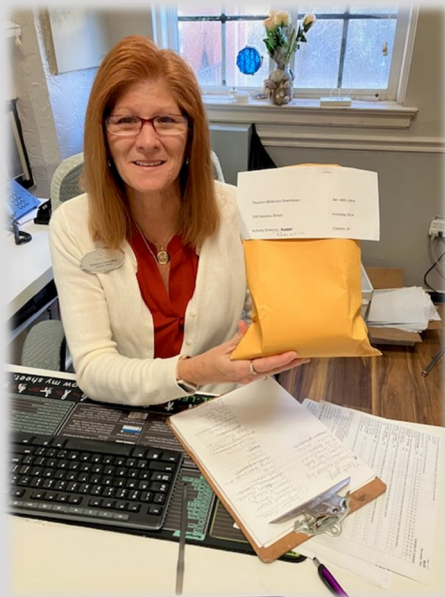
At our Workshop on the 18th, 15 Lions signed, folded, and prepared for delivery to the Venice assisted living, nursing home and memory care facilities. Previous feedback from Activity Directors and facility managers has been positive and the "gift" is most appreciated by their residents.

This project included four print "gurus", along with six more Lions who will deliver before the holidays for a total of 22 involved Venice Lions.



*THANK YOU ALL!*  
*Blessings for the holidays,*  
*Lions Jeannette and Ann*

This card is such a simple thing,  
A verse and image shared.  
We hope the message that it brings  
Shows you that we care.  
Our thoughts and blessing are with you  
As we approach the holidays.  
We hope your spirits they'll renew.



# Venice Lions Celebrate the Holidays!

Our December 19 Holiday Party is something to look forward to! Lion Judy Rocquin arranged the menu with Karen Miller, the Englewood Lions' caterer who prepared such a nice meal last year. The price is the same: \$25.00 per person.

The menu is Chicken Piccata, Beef Burgundy, mashed potatoes, corn, green beans, salad and rolls. Dessert is cheesecake with caramel topping. Decaf coffee and cold beverages.

It is always pleasure to meet for a relaxed meal and fun with the Tail Twister.

No vests, please! Dress up a little. Festivities start @ 5:30 PM

It's a party!



## Holiday Parade November 30th



As part of our tradition in the Venice Community the Club participated again in the Annual Holiday Parade. This year the float went through a "make over" with repairs and painting. The float decorators take a photo-op break. Right: Volunteers spent a morning repairing and painting the float for the event. Above: "Roary" the Venice Lion has become a fixture over the years at the holiday event. Thanks to all Venice Lions who participated this year.





# A Teddy Bear Story

Sergeant Hammett, our contact at the Venice Police Department, told this story about one of his experiences with our Teddy Bears.

At the Halloween Event, a grandmother fell as she accompanied her daughter and two little grandchildren to the costume event on Venice Avenue. The grandmother's injuries were so severe she had to be evacuated, and the two little children were hysterical.

Sergeant Hammett had the last two teddy bears in the trunk of his cruiser and he gave them to the crying children. Those teddy bear gifts calmed those children right away and left them smiling.

"See", Officer Hammett said, "*Those teddy bears are used for all kinds of situations*". Thanks to the Venice Lions for such a great project"

PS...Lion Bonnee Hagen led her team to police headquarters on November 26 to make another delivery of about 200 teddy bears and stuffed animals. We hope this delivery will help calm the stress families experience between Thanksgiving and New Years.

Thanks to everyone who helped!



Lion Bonnee Hagen organized a drive and delivered almost 200 Teddy Bears and stuffed animals to the Venice Police Department. Left to right: Police Chief Charlie Thorpe, Lt. White, Lions Pamela and Bonnee, and Sgt. Sean Hammett..

# Hunger Project

Venice Lions are concerned about families with food insecurity. The Club placed a food collection container at the Jacaranda Winn Dixie for shoppers' food donations. When the can is full, a Lion takes the donations to the South Sarasota Food Pantry on Warfield Avenue in Venice.



## ***GUEST SPEAKERS NOVEMBER 19TH***

At our November 19th Club meeting Lion Jeff Myles accepted the 'Club Excellence Award' for the 2023 — 2024 Lions year.

Congratulations Venice Lions !!



Above (left): PDG Lion David Hollern spoke about his job in District 35 I to encourage Lions to establish new Lions Clubs.

Above (right): Casey Riley, President of a Venice Rotary Club, described the Rotary's community-wide disaster relief effort after Hurricane Milton.





*6<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Fundraiser*

*Presented at Englewood Lions Club*

*4611 Placida Rd. Englewood, FL 34224*

*December 7, 2024*

*10:00 – 2:00PM*

*\*Complimentary Mimosa's and Chocolate Fountain 10:00-11:00 AM\**

*\$5.00 Entry Fee*

*(Waived Entry Fee with Pre-loved Jewelry Donation)*

*Jewelry to The Rescue*

*<https://jewelrytotherescue.org>*

*50/50 Raffle*

*Silent Auction*

*Baked Goods*

*Poinsettia's*



*Proceeds Benefit Englewood Lion's Club Charities*

*Seeking Donations for Silent Auction and Various Items*

*Please Call or Text Karen Miller (941) 445-1541*



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**Club Meetings**  
**1st & 3rd Thursdays**  
**Dinner at 5:30 PM**  
**Meetings begin 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 2024-2025	
<b>President</b>	Pamela Brown
<b>1st Vice President</b> <b>2nd Vice President</b>	Timothy Werla Judy Terrell
<b>Secretary</b> <b>Assistant Secretary</b>	Jeff Myles Pat McNally
<b>Treasurer (Admin.)</b>	Barbara McGillicuddy
<b>Treasurer (Found.)</b>	Ed Billings
<b>Tail Twister</b> <b>Lion Tamer</b> <b>IPP</b>	Judy Rocquin Robert Winstel Jeff Myles
<b>One Year Director</b> <b>One Year Director</b> <b>Two Year Director</b> <b>Two Year Director</b>	Jean Spitzer Bonnee Hagen Mary Billings Christal Snell
<b>Membership Chair</b>	Beverly Flynn
<b>Bulletin Editor</b> <b>Publisher</b>	Jeff Myles Jeff Myles

Lions Club International	
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<b>President</b>	Fabricio Oliveira
<b>IPP</b>	Dr. Patty Hill
District 35-I	
<b>Website</b>	www.lionsMD35.com
<b>District Governor</b>	Patty Jean Strong
<b>IPDG</b>	Gary LaSpina
<b>1st Vice District Governor</b>	Linda Gregory
<b>2nd Vice District Governor</b>	Beverly Flynn
<b>Cabinet Secretary</b>	Penny Gregrich
<b>Treasurer</b>	Diane Clifton
<b>Bulletin</b>	Paula Paquette
<b>MD Executive Secretary / Treasurer</b>	Neil Spencer
<b>Zone 6 Chair</b>	Jeff Myles