

# South Venice Civic Association

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# 1955-2016



***Picture a logging camp deep in a pine woods with no roads, no stores. With minimum shelter and maximum mosquitos. A place where the anemic development stalled in the 1920's after two destructive hurricanes and the Great Depression left residents homeless, living in tents and depending on hunting and fishing for survival.***

**That was South Venice from the late 19th century until the 1930's**

***Now picture a vibrant community of nearly 20,000 people with every imaginable amenity nearby - schools, stores, churches, theatres. Add their own beach on the Gulf, a boat ramp, lakes for fishing, a number of small parks, a community house, and one of the finest public parks in the county with tennis courts, miles and miles of nature trails and an education center and nature classes.***

**This is South Venice today**

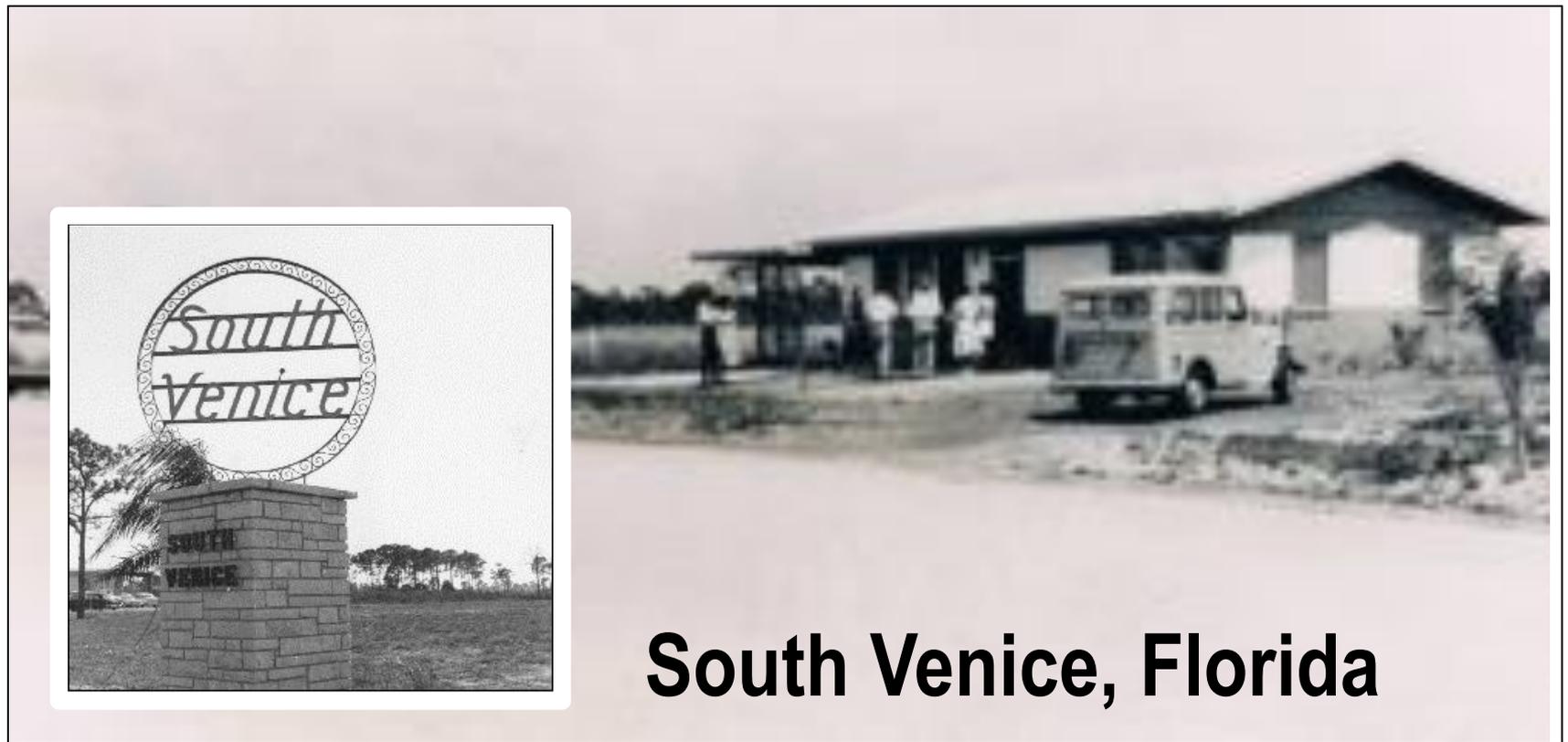
# The Woodmere Lumber Company South Venice early 1900's



# The South Venice subdivision was platted in 1952



**The first models were quickly built and the local Chamber of Commerce began promoting the new development.**



**South Venice, Florida**

TO ACQUAINT MORE PEOPLE WITH THE  
**GULF OF MEXICO SIDE OF Florida**  
 AND TO BRING MORE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS HERE

*the* **VENICE Area CHAMBER of COMMERCE**  
 IS MAKING THIS OFFER



BUILDING SITES AT  
**SOUTH VENICE**

FOR THE FULL PRICE OF

ONLY **\$200**

For Each 40' X 100' Lot

NO LESS THAN 2  
 NO MORE THAN 5  
 TO A PURCHASER

STARTS YOU ON THE ROAD TO FLORIDA HOME OWNERSHIP

**\$25** DOWN      **\$5** PER MONTH

**ALL LOTS THE SAME PRICE**

SOUTH VENICE'S WHITE SAND BEACH ON THE GULF OF MEXICO  
**IS RESERVED FOR ITS RESIDENTS**

Where else in the entire United States can you find a more delightful place to vacation and retire than in Fabulous Florida? The Venice Area has an exceptionally fine climate . . . cooled by Gulf breezes in the Summer and naturally warm in Winter. Prepare now to own your own home in this lush tropical setting. South Venice is only 4 miles from the center of Venice where you have a fine shopping center, schools, movie, bank, churches, rail and bus facilities.

MAIL COUPON TODAY

**VENICE AREA CHAMBER of COMMERCE**  
**VENICE, FLORIDA**

Please send me the descriptive folder explaining this offer. It is understood that this is only an inquiry and does not obligate me in any way.

Name .....

Address .....

City..... Zone..... State.....

Print Name and Address Clearly

LOCATION

South Venice is located between the Tamiami Trail (U. S. Route #1) and the Gulf of Mexico, 4 miles south of the center of Venice.

**Within three years, the  
community had grown to  
hundreds of households with  
many hundreds more  
projected to arrive over the  
next three years.**

**In 1955, residents decided to create a community organization of some sort and possibly build a community house where they could gather socially, and meet to discuss issues that mattered to South Venice.**

**So, on the evening of  
November 12, 1955, those  
forward-thinking early South  
Venice residents held a  
meeting at a local motel**

The minutes of this meeting from 51 years ago begin:

*Meeting of S.V. residents interested in forming a Civic Assoc. called to order on Nov. 12, 1955 at the Sunset Motel*

Meeting of S.V. residents interested in forming a Civic Assoc. called on Nov. 12 1955 at the Sunset Motel by Messrs Harry Smith, Morse Shoemaker + Raymond Drain; W. Drain acting as Chairman + Miss Irene Buereman as Secretary.

Voted that Committee be appointed to act as a temporary Board of Governors. Ray Drain, Robert Gamble, Clarence Ferguson, Max Kaplan, Morse Shoemaker, Harry R. Smith, John Koppens, Gene Vercheske, + Alfred M. Mitchell.

W. Drain was voted temp. Pres. until election of regular officers. W. Harry Smith Temp. Sec. + Treasurer.  
Dec. 6th Bylaws were adopted + Election of Officers held on Jan. 17th 1956.  
Board of Governors

	1956	1957	1958
Pres.	Harry R. Smith	Chas E. Carson	Albert Kettler
Sec.	Wm. Graham + Frank R. Change	Frank R. Change	
Treas.	Frank R. Change	Walter L. Smith	
	Morse Shoemaker	W. Jesse Miller	
	Alfred Mitchell	W. V. R. Slegenga	
	Robert Gamble	Clark Adair	
	Chas. Senn	Wm. Graham	
	Chas. Angles	Leo Suroboda	
	Ray Drain	Geo. Jackson	

1956 meetings - at Sunset Motel + Lemon Bay Womens Club at Englewood  
1957 " " " Womens Club. + later at Venice High School + Hunt  
1958 " " " "

Feb. 20. 1956 203 members.  
March 27 1957 755 " "  
April 24 " - 1044 " " Dec. 1957 1248 members.  
Road Tax District proposed on Jan 16 1957.

Yacht Club. organized May 1957.  
Deeds to S.V. Nov. 1957

# From the South Venice News May 1956

## Living costs in South Venice in 1956

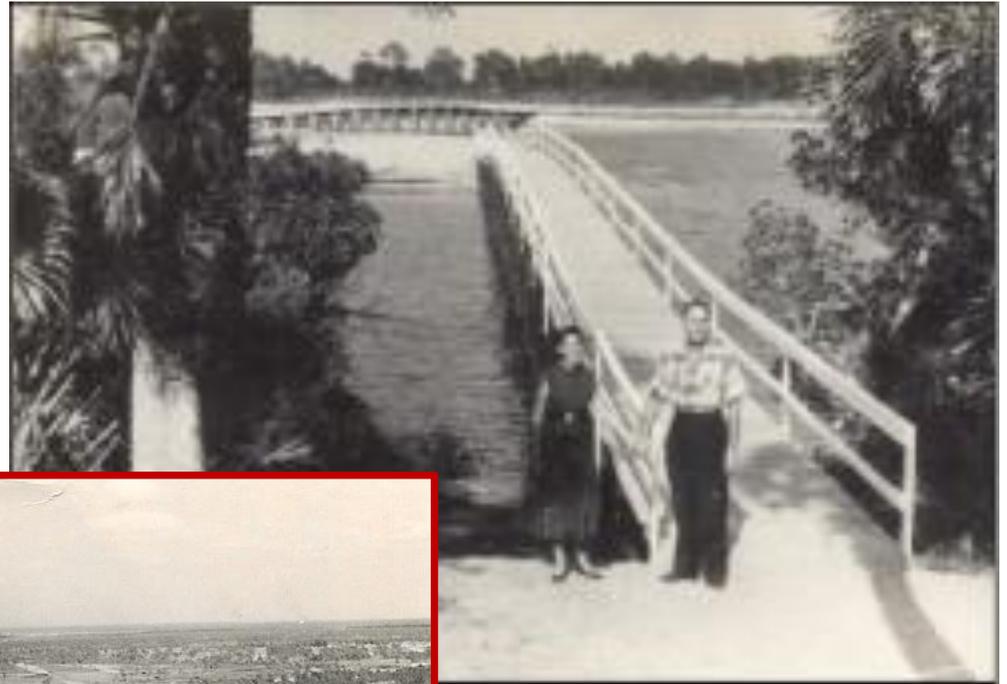
### *Projected ANNUAL Expenses*

Item	Low Estimate	High Estimate
Taxes	4.50	10.00
Home Insurance	60.00	125.00
Electricity	72.00	144.00
Heat	25.00	65.00
Food	650.00	1040.00
Telephone	30.00	30.00
Garbage removal	24.00	24.00
Car insurance	35.00	75.00
Church	52.00	104.00
Newspaper	20.80	20.80
Hospitalization	66.80	123.20
Car gas and oil	104.00	260.00
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>1144.00</b>	<b>2021.00</b>

South Venice property owners shared ownership of 1600 feet of beach on the Gulf of Mexico, a unique asset.

**In the coming years, the SVCA would play the central role in protecting that beach for South Venice.**

**Access to the beach  
was provided by two  
wooden footbridges  
that stretched across  
Lemon Bay**



**After incorporating the South Venice Civic Association in 1956, residents soon began to work toward building a community hall.**

**Financed by the residents, and built partly with their own labor, the SVCA on Alligator Drive opened in December of 1959.**



**The Civic Association building opened its doors to the community in 1959**

**South Venice's volunteer firehouse on  
Alligator Drive served us until 1999**



**1960's residents held a 'sit-in' on the north beach footbridge as the intracoastal dredgers approached Lemon Bay**





**Riding to the beach on the new ferry  
after the dredging of the Intracoastal  
Waterway in Lemon Bay**

**Before the dredging, beachgoers  
could just walk across**

# The June 2001 issue of the South Venice News announced the incorporation of the South Venice Beach Endowment Trust by the South Venice Civic Association.

Founding Trustees were Bill Hentschel, Maureen Holland, Don Gecks, Ellen Hillstrom and Rick Curwood. Future appointments to the Trust would be made by the Board of Directors of the SVCA.

## SOUTH VENICE NEWS

Monthly Publication of the SOUTH VENICE CIVIC ASSOCIATION



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### South Venice Beach Endowment Trust accomplished

May 10, 2001 is a huge day in the history of the South Venice subdivision, now known as South Venice Beach subdivision. The South Venice Civic Association Board of Directors, after over four years of discussions and research work, have established by majority vote a tax deductible, 501 (c)(3) Trust.

Richard Curwood, President of the South Venice Civic Association stated: "The Endowment Trust has been established to hold, manage, and maintain in perpetuity all Trust Holdings and to provide them for public benefit and the enjoyment of Community residents and property owners. The Trust is to be managed in accordance with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Code Section 501 (c)(3), which will allow for donations made to The Trust, and be tax deductible. This will be a very real asset to maintaining our community and its future for the benefit of its residents and property owners."

At the first meeting of the Trustees on Saturday, May 12, 2001, Ellen Hillstrom was elected Chairperson and a few bookkeeping details were established.

Questions on how to donate to the Trust may be answered by stopping by the Civic Association office at the Community Center during regular office hours.



Trustees hold newly signed Trust Agreement. Pictured from left are: Bill Hentschel, Maureen Holland, Don Gecks, Ellen Hillstrom, Chairperson, and Rick Curwood, SVCA President.

### NOTICE NEW BYLAW AMENDMENT

At its May 1, 2001 meeting, the Board of Directors approved the recommendation of the following bylaw amendment:

"In all sections of the current bylaws where the name of the official newsletter is written as the South Venice News, the name be changed to read South Venice Beach News."

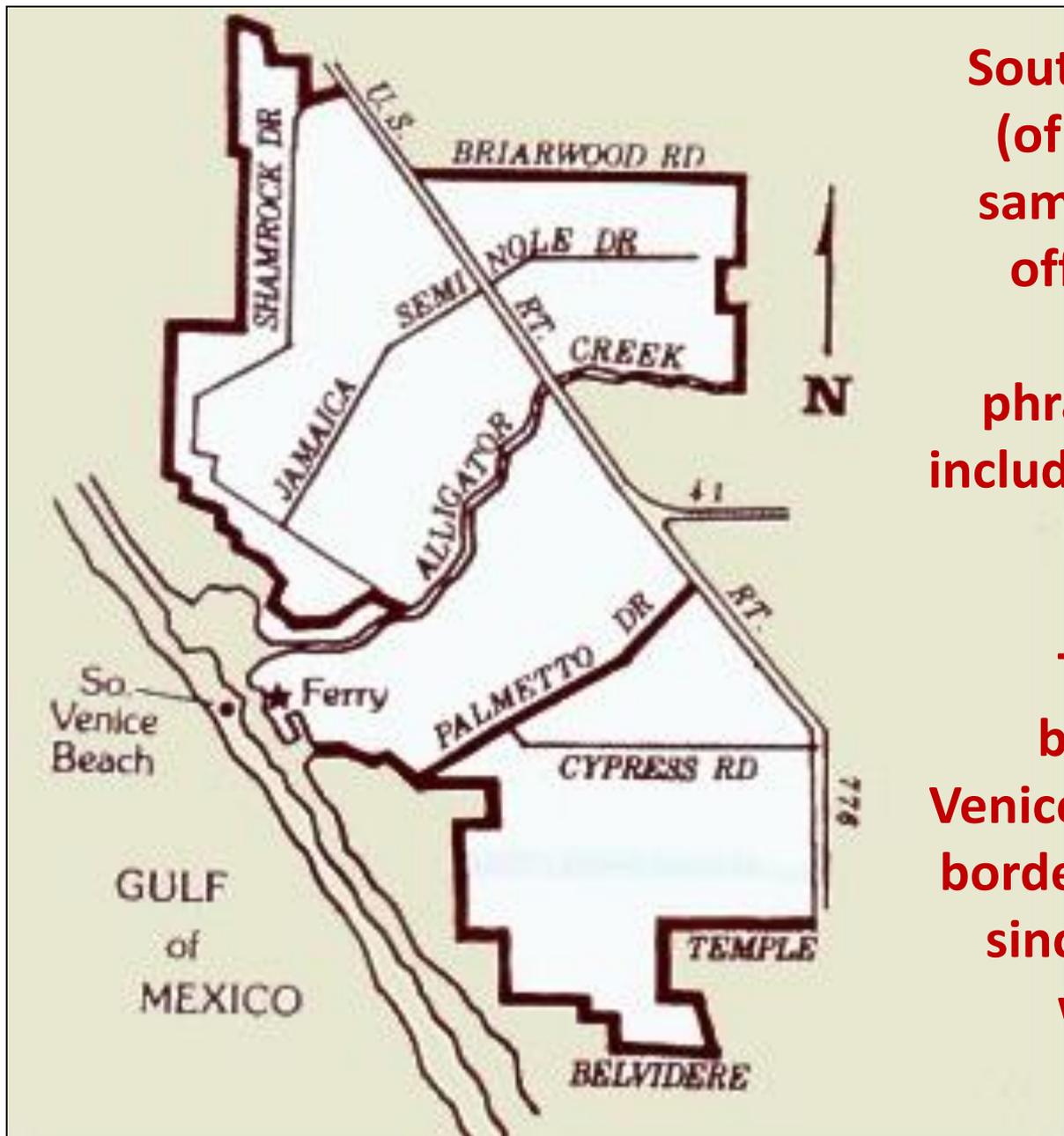
This bylaw amendment will be voted upon at the next general membership meeting at which a quorum of 25 is present. (June 18)

*You are invited:*  
**OPEN HOUSE** **ALL FREE!**  
Community Information and Membership Drive for  
**SOUTH VENICE BEACH**  
**Sat., June 9, 2001 - 9-1 pm**  
South Venice Beach Community Center  
720 Alligator Drive

**Meet Computer Club Enthusiasts**  
Lawn & Garden Tips by Garden Club  
**Get a FREE Market Analysis on your Home\***  
Great Fishing and Boating Info  
**Tennis Tips from a Pro, Shuffleboard**  
Golf Tips by Barry Knott, Golf Pro  
**Learn about your Ferry & Private Beach**

**MORE DRAWINGS GALORE AT EACH DISPLAY TABLE**  
Free Refreshments  
Special Feature: **Bloodmobile here 9-12:30**  
(Give Blood - Get a Gift)  
■ **JOIN THE SOUTH VENICE CIVIC ASSOCIATION TODAY**  
■ **JOIN AN SVCA CLUB**

**SPONSORS:**  
Venice Gondolier Sun  
**The Green Sheet**  
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Kathy Lefner, Coldwell Banker Residential Real Estate - 493-1000  
Celia M. Charnick, Michael Saunders & Co. - 493-9500

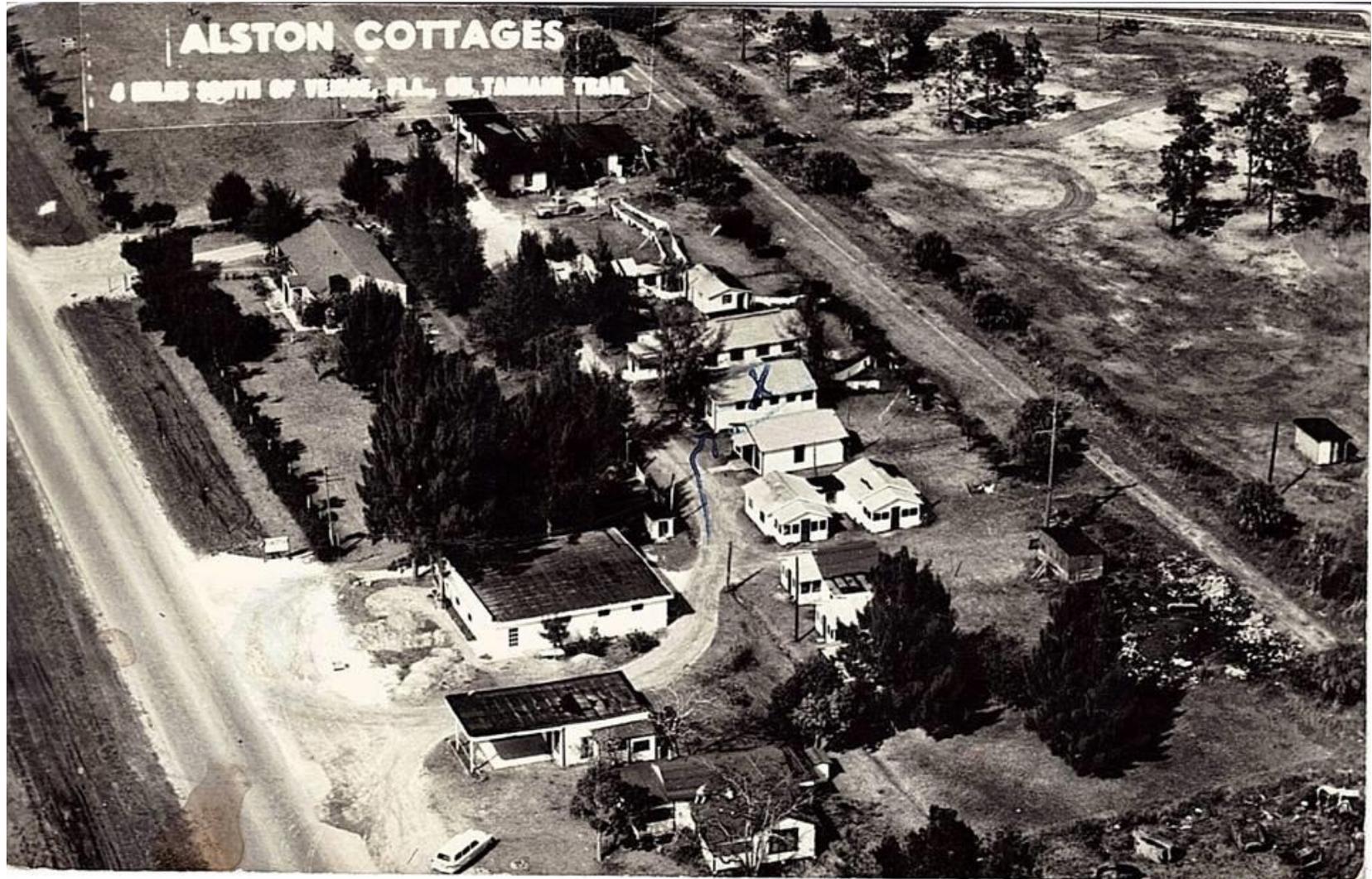


**South Venice and south (of) Venice are not the same thing. Many local officials and the press incorrectly use the phrase South Venice to include areas outside our subdivision.**

**This map shows the borders of the South Venice subdivision; these borders haven't changed since the development was subdivided and chartered in 1952.**

# SVCA over the years . . . .





**The ALSTON COTTAGES on US41 in South Venice – 1950's**

# Earl's Trailer Sales on US41



**A floral mock up of the  
South Venice Ferry in  
Venice's Sun Fiesta Parade**



**In 1953, the only Publix was  
the one on the island**



# South Venice Beach pavilion





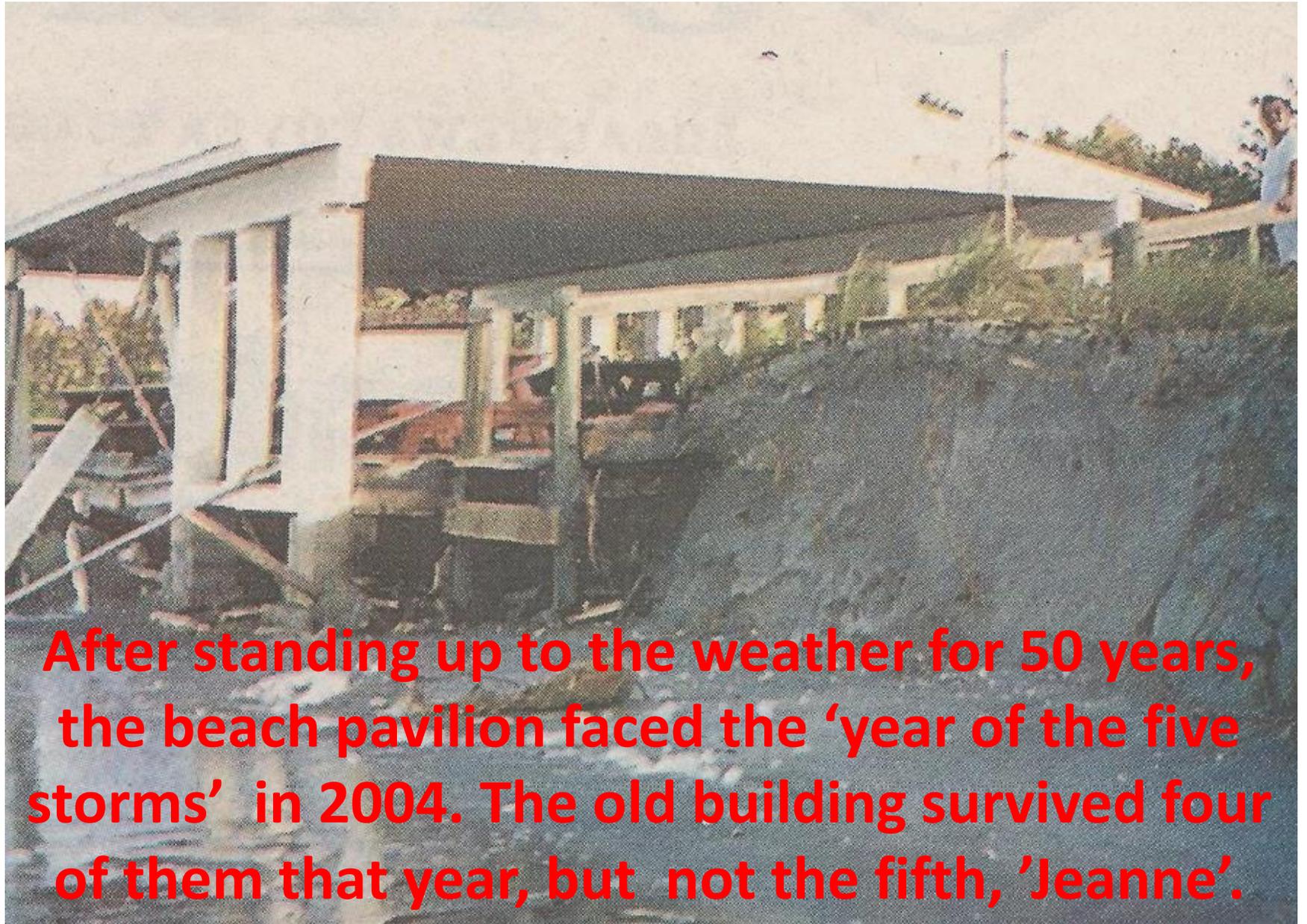
**The beach pavilion had a wooden floor, storage slats above and six long picnic tables**

**Benches ran across the front of the pavilion**



**The summer after volunteers installed a new tin roof on the pavilion, five storms hit southwest Florida. The County and State ordered the damaged pavilion demolished. The Beach Trustees fought the ruling, advocating for repairing the structure. But in the end the verdict stood and the pavilion came down.**





**After standing up to the weather for 50 years, the beach pavilion faced the 'year of the five storms' in 2004. The old building survived four of them that year, but not the fifth, 'Jeanne'.**



**In the 1990s at the Beach Committee yard sale**  
Held in the ferry field every year, the sale raised funds  
to support ferry and boat ramp and beach operations.



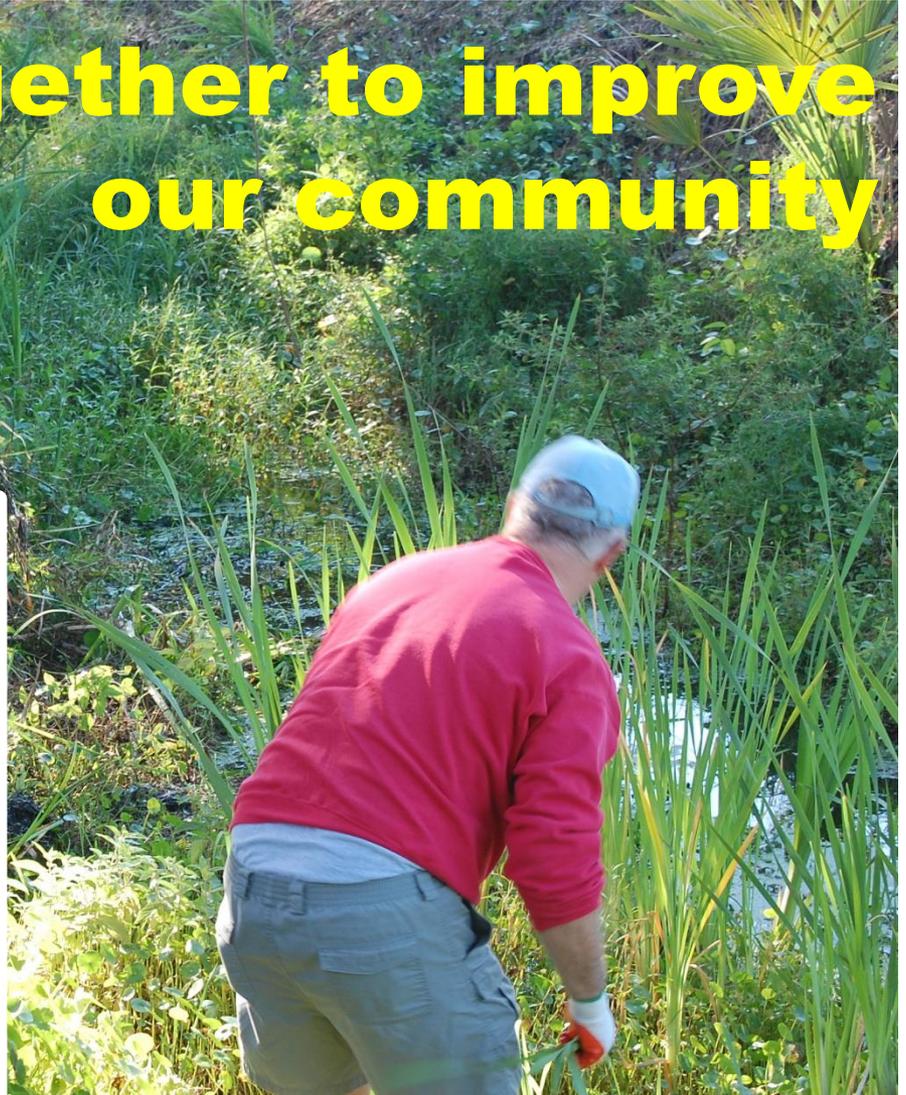
# South Venice Civic Association South Venice Beach Trust



# Working together to improve our community



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# Signing up for a neighborhood workday



**Fun on the water**



**and at the  
community  
building**

# South Venice Civic Association

Your membership is important!

Sign up



# SVCA's biggest annual fundraiser



**South Venice Beach  
Civic Association**  
15th ANNUAL  
**EXPO**  
SATURDAY, January 16, 2016

**EXPO Media Sponsors or BOOTH 14**  
**The Gondolier Sun**  
200 East Venice Ave, Venice, FL 34285  
941 207-1010

**Our 2016 Business Sponsors**

**BOOTH 9**  
**I Gone Pest &  
dent Control**  
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**BOOTH 2**  
**King Realty**  
Tamiami Trail  
FL 34283  
8080



# South Venice Civic Association

*Our community's voice  
in Sarasota County for  
over 60 years*