

Millions of Visitors a Year... And Nowhere to Go

VNC to hold Town Hall Dec. 2nd to discuss our readiness for the millions of people who visit each year

Photo by VenicePaparazzi.com



Our town of Venice has everything - the Beach, the Pier, Ocean Front Walk, Abbot Kinney Blvd, Washington Blvd, Rose Avenue, nearby malls and movie theaters. Everything. Just out our front doors, we can swim in the ocean, roller blade or bike on the bike path. We can shop at trendy places, funky places or every-day places; we can take advantage of the numerous art galleries; we can choose from hundreds of restaurants; or we can just hang out and people-watch.

We also have crowds. Crowds of visitors that make us the number one public visitor destination in Southern California. Visitors that come from Rosemead and Ventura, from Canada and New York, the UK and Ethiopia - from all over the world. Mostly they come here to have fun. A few come here to live. Some buy houses, some rent apartments

and some, unfortunately, live on the streets.

For the most part, visitors are great for Venice and the City of Los Angeles. After all, they are the engine that drives our economy. But we pay a price for their visits. We must share our limited space and provide clean, attractive sites to experience and enjoy. And all those people need sanitation facilities and streets that are safe.

Even if we didn't supply these services for our visitors, we would need them for ourselves - because if we didn't, imagine what we'd have to deal with when the visitors left. We'd have trash on our streets, overflowing garbage cans, gardens and alleys that smell of urine, and feces to clean up.

Venice has everything, except the respect and support that Los Angeles' #1 attraction deserves.

The Venice Neighborhood Council invites you a Town Hall Meeting on Thursday, December 2nd, in the Westminster Elementary School Auditorium (1010 Abbot Kinney - enter from Westminster). We'll start promptly at 6:30pm to discuss whether the city does enough to manage the millions of visitors a year that come to Venice. Help us identify the challenges the City faces to provide the necessary services for those visitors. And most importantly, we want your opinions and suggestions about potential answers to those challenges. Please attend - it's YOUR Venice - get involved!

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**Venice Neighborhood
Council President
Linda Lucks**

Letter From the President

and would never leave Venice.

Because Venice is a destination location and we share our community with the world, we need to be ever watchful, as well as welcoming and respectful. Millions of visitors a year flock to Venice causing us to endure more than a residential community should have to bear. This needs to be squarely addressed. For too long we have not received our fair share of City or County services and facilities based on the number of visitors to our community. I hope in my term, with your help, we will lobby to make some necessary and long overdue changes.

As your VNC President, my top priority is to expand our Public Safety activities- Neighborhood Watch and Emergency Preparedness. I am also concerned about the inadequate public sanitation facilities available to accommodate the millions of visitors.

Together we can work on solutions to local and regional issues, including the noise and pollution visited on us by the Santa Monica Airport. The regional problem of homelessness has profoundly impacted Venice. We all must work together to find solutions to relieve the strain on us as residents, and offer alternatives to the less fortunate among us. I value the importance of working with my neighbors and affirm our right to a safe and secure community.

The VNC's role is to listen to you and to represent your needs to government offices and agencies. My job description as President includes being the Board's chief representative to these. I want to be sure that they are aware of our organization and respond to our community's needs and concerns.

For the VNC to be effective,

we need to hear from you. Please join our email list. Come to our monthly Board meetings, which are listed at VeniceNC.org, and posted around the community. Say 'Hello' at the VNC table at the Venice Farmer's Market, Friday mornings from 7-11. Or send an email to info@Venicenc.org stating your concerns.

You can also participate directly by joining one of our active and motivated committees. I am particularly pleased that the VNC Board has created a new Public Safety Committee to organize Neighborhood Watch efforts and keep us informed about Emergency Preparedness. Please organize a Neighborhood Watch on your block. We can show you how.

Warm regards,

Linda Lucks

President@Venicenc.org

First, I would like to thank all the stakeholders (over 1200) who took the time to vote last April. We had the third highest number of voters out of 91 Neighborhood Councils city-wide. So 'Greetings' from your twenty-one newly-elected Venice Neighborhood Council representatives. We all love Venice. Personally, I have lived here since 1970, raised my family here, have grandchildren here,

Alliance to Clean Streets

VNC and Chamber of Commerce start quarterly cleanups with Windward Avenue

The Neighborhood Committee and the Venice Chamber of Commerce have agreed to collaborate to brighten and beautify this Venice that we love so well. **January 15th, 2010 will be the very first of our quarterly cleanup projects.**

We have selected to clean up Windward Avenue between Speedway and Riviera for our kick-off project. We'll get together from 9am until 1pm on Saturday, January 15th. Volunteers will be greeted with coffee, muffins, brooms and latex gloves. After picking up and sweeping (really – sweeping!), several steam pressure cleaners will attack those nasty stains and black spots. We'll be able to see the street again!

CD 11 (Bill Rosendahl's office) is donating twelve spanking new trash cans to the project. They will be distributed to

businesses that commit to maintaining and emptying them regularly. Young skateboarders and surfers will spray paint the trash cans in bright colors to make them more noticeable and USED by tourists and locals alike. And help plant flowers at the Postal Annex. At 1pm, we will adjourn to a secret spot for refreshments and relaxation, and, hopefully, some music as well.

The point is to see ALL of Windward Avenue sparkling, spic-and-span, and have fun in the process of making it that way. When we see how beautiful it can be, we will enjoy it so much that we will work to KEEP IT CLEAN !!!

Your gift to the community will be your presence and participation in this event. *It's YOUR Venice – get involved!*

VNC Official Posting Locations

Where to find out what's coming up

VNC Meeting Agendas must be posted at least 72 hours prior to the meeting's start (*if the posting time is missed, the meeting gets cancelled!*). The current posting locations are listed below:

- Internet: www.VeniceNC.org - check the calendar, agendas are attached
- Venice Public Library:
501 South Venice Boulevard
- Abbot's Habit: 1401 Abbot Kinney Blvd.
- Oakwood Park Rec Center:
767 California St.
- Groundwork's Coffee: 671 Rose Ave.

Note: *The VNC Board is evaluating the effectiveness of these locations and may make changes in the near future. See our website for a current list of sites.*

Our Airspace - Our Problem

Santa Monica Airport isn't ours - but its impacts are

The VNC's Santa Monica Airport Ad Hoc Committee has been working since February, 2010, on issues raised by the airport's proximity to Venice. Our mission is to keep the VNC Board informed of airport operations as they affect Venice, and to work with the board to find effective solutions to problems created by these operations.

Major problems are created by the fact that all aircraft departing from the airport fly over Venice neighborhoods. These problems include noise and air pollution, and the potential danger to residents in the event of a crash, which is especially acute because of the large number of practice and training flights by student pilots.

Because the airport is under control of the FAA, members of the committee recently met with U.S. Rep. Henry Waxman, (whose 30th District includes all but the eastern end of the airport,) to inform him of the problems the airport poses for Venice and other areas. The committee has also composed letters that the VNC Board has unanimously approved and sent to local, state, and federal officials.

We have created an on-line survey form that residents can use to register their observations and complaints about the impacts of the airport. To access it, go to the VNC website at www.VeniceNC.org and click on the survey link on the home

*By Laura Silagi,
SM Airport Ad Hoc Committee*



Santa Monica Airport is at the southeast corner of Santa Monica, but take-offs and landings are over Venice and other LA neighborhoods.

page. To help distribute surveys to your friends and neighbors in Venice, send an e-mail to Alice Burston at Alburston@hotmail.com and ask for hard copies to distribute. Our goal is to gather as many responses as possible and the use them to further publicize the problems the airport poses for Venice residents.

Committee meetings are held monthly, and all members of the public are welcome. Please check the VNC website link for the Santa Monica Airport Committee for meeting times and locations, agendas, and minutes of past meetings. For any questions, please contact committee co-chairperson Laura Silagi at Irsilagi@gmail.com



Photo by Laura Silagi

On July 1st, the pilot of this Cessna died after stalling on take-off. He crashed near the eighth green at Penmar Golf Course.

New Public Safety Committee Formed

Adding emergency preparedness to crime prevention

*By Nicolas Hippisley-Coxe,
Public Safety Ad Hoc Committee*

The VNC Board voted unanimously to form the Public Safety Ad Hoc Committee. The committee, chaired by Nicolas Hippisley-Coxe, will cover all aspects of all matters concerning the "safety" of residents and visitors to Venice. This will include the re-introduction of Neighborhood Watch and the implementation of "Lights, Camera, Action," a plan to bring more se-

curity lights and cameras to the houses, condos and businesses in our area.

This will be coupled with the ongoing process of keeping the stakeholders of Venice informed and prepared for the earthquake that is long overdue according to the experts.

To that end, the Committee held a Saturday seminar on October 8th courtesy of The Electric Lodge, where adults and children of all ages learned (or were reminded) of the simple steps that are needed to keep

prepared. The day included speakers from the Red Cross and other interested organizations, targeting all ages including a special puppet show for the younger visitors.

The Public Safety Committee intends to keep Venice up-to-date with plenty of information about where to get the necessary recommended items, to ensure as full a preparation as possible.

To contact The Public Safety Committee with suggestions or comments please email us at publicsafety@venicenc.org

Annual BBQ Better Than Ever!

Summertime community event continues to grow

By Carolyn Rios, VNC Vice President



Photo by Kelley Willis

The LAFD's "Mother Of All Barbeques" kept the food coming.

On July 31st all of Venice was eating, dancing, and tugging. Tugging? That's right – tugging.

One of the highlights of the 4th Annual Venice BBQ & Picnic was the tug-o-war between our fabulous, oh so gorgeous, Los Angeles Fire Department #63, and, well, everyone else. With about 20 people on each side, the Venetians' side won in an upset. I had chosen to pull for LAFD #63. We pulled and we tugged, and ultimately, we lost to the Venetians. In the process, Oakwood Recreation Center Director Liska Mendoza's daughter was yanked into the mud puddle in the middle.

According to the pro tug-o-war athletes I consulted the trick is that the last

person must wrap the rope around their body and walk backwards!

I'll fight for the LAFD #63 again next year. I don't want to hear anyone say that they "let" the Venetians win. We tried... honestly!



Photo by Kelley Willis

Singers from The 2nd Community Baptist Church.

There were lots of other winners at the BBQ. Barklie Griggs did an amazing job barbecuing 100 chickens, and 40 pounds of pulled pork, with lots of help from Todd von Hoffman, Ivan Spiegel and, of course Station #63 and the MOAB, "Mother of All Barbeques", courtesy of Retired Capt. Johnson.

Mindy' Meyer's famous macaroni & cheese won first place for the sides. And someone won the Watermelon Eating Contest – I don't know who, but it wasn't me!



Photo by Kelley Willis

Robert Haskin receives award for his community service from Councilmember Bill Rosendahl.

Many of us were finally able to put faces to the sound of the gospel choir that we hear belting it out on Sunday mornings from the 2nd Community Baptist Church on Abbot Kinney Blvd.

And then there was the dancing, to Salsa from Lucky Seven, and Chicago-style harmonica blues from our own JT Ross. We were rocking!

The BBQ is put on by the VNC for and by the people of Venice, all of Venice. The performers, the cooks, the dancers and the eaters are our friends and neighbors, members of our community. If you missed it, the next is on the first Saturday in August, 2011.



Celebrity Photographer
Gisele/Partyby5.com

LAFD Station 63 added their muscle to the tug-of-war.



Photo by Brennan Lindner

Watermelon-eating contestants make a mess of it.

Your Venice, Your Food Trucks

VNC Task Force addresses parking on Abbot Kinney

By Jed Pauker, Community Officer

On Monday, Oct. 25, the VNC Board considered its Parking Task Force's report and recommendations on Abbot Kinney's ongoing valet parking and food truck issues. The Board recommended enforcement of all current City and County parking, safety and health ordinances. Other recommendations, to manage pedestrian and parking congestion and to alleviate environmental impacts such as noise, smoke and odors, were also approved.

The Parking Task Force worked closely with Abbot Kinney vendors, the SoCal Mobile Food Vendors Association, the public and various City agencies in crafting the recommendations. The Board's approval sent the recommendations to the City Council's Transportation Committee, which considered them in the discussion of new regulations to address the explosion of gourmet food trucks onto the Abbot Kinney street scene.

While the County recently validated this emerging industry by including it in the restaurant letter-grading system, its integration into Venice culture is not without challenges. The Abbot Kinney area already suffers from a critical scarcity of parking. The scarcity stems in large part from continued business



Photo by Kelley Willis

Additional trucks fill The Brig's parking lot, as crowds spill from the sidewalk into the street.

development and long-time restaurant uses that have created few new parking spaces despite hundreds of new patrons.

The parking situation reaches critical mass on "1st Fridays," our monthly cel-

ebration of Abbot Kinney merchants. Begun in 2007 as a joint initiative of VNC and the Venice Chamber of Commerce to celebrate the unique products and shops on Abbot Kinney, "1st Fridays" has attracted a veritable convoy of over three dozen food trucks. Many people are concerned that the crowds drawn to the Food Trucks create a safety hazard. Surveys conducted by both the VNC and the Abbot Kinney merchants reveal that store owners are frustrated and residents are more alienated than ever.

Though official promotion of 1st Fridays has been discontinued, and Yelp.com's reviews frequently comment on the overcrowding, neither has stopped street-friendly foodies from swarming to Abbot Kinney's monthly event.

Limited space and limited parking are the prices we pay for living in Venice. The VNC is addressing these realities by listening to all parties and making positive recommendations to improve the situation for all stakeholders. Please let us know how we're doing – review our recommendations at <http://venicenc.org/parking-abbotkinney> and comment to gojednet-parkingAbK@yahoo.com



Photo by Kelley Willis

Over a dozen food trucks park along both sides of Abbot Kinney for First Friday.

Council District 11 Works to Address RV Issues

City uses several tools to address problems associated with RV dwellers on area streets **By Mike Bonin, Chief of Staff to City Councilmember Bill Rosendahl**



RV living on LA streets is illegal, but for some it's the only option. For others, it's a life-style. For still others, with no RV Park in Venice, it's an alternative to Dockweiler.

Doing the right thing sometimes means doing more than one thing.

That's surely the case with the local response to the growing number of people living in vehicles in Venice. Despite the understandable passion on behalf of particular proposed solutions, we're not facing a single problem, and we won't solve anything with a single solution.

We have a range of problems manifesting as one phenomenon. Many people live in their cars because of the recession or economic misfortune. Whether seniors, veterans, or families, they are one small and fragile step from sleeping on the streets. Others are free spirits from around the country, attracted to cheap beach living and the prospect of living "off the grid." Yet others are part of a disturbing criminal element, hiding in plain sight in front of our homes.

The City's goal is to move **everyone** off the streets – but each situation requires a different solution. It will take a combination of law enforcement, targeted social services, and neighborhood-specific parking restrictions. Together, those tools comprise a fair, tough, smart, balanced strategy.

Let's Be Clear: City government,

which generally handles law enforcement, land use, and street and traffic regulations, has few tools to solve social problems. A lasting and comprehensive solution will also require the active involvement of our county, state and federal representatives.

Even with those limitations, Councilmember Rosendahl, City of Los Angeles agencies, and community partners have identified and are using a range of tools:

Law Enforcement: At the councilmember's request, Police Chief Charlie Beck assigned 21 additional officers to the area. LAPD formed a Venice Homelessness Task Force, marshalling and directing resources to focus on quality-of-life crime and direct the homeless to social services. City prosecutors are training cops to build evidence against people violating laws that prohibit living in vehicles. The City has also formed a task force to crack down on human-waste dumping.

Parking Restrictions: The California Coastal Commission twice rebuffed recent City efforts to create Overnight Parking Districts, which would have banned overnight parking, except by permit. Instead, the City is allowing Venetians to create districts that prohibit the parking of over-

sized vehicles (more than 22 feet long or 7 feet high) between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. This is being done through a block-by-block petition process, maximizing neighborhood choice. Some neighborhoods have already gathered signatures, and DOT should be installing signs within weeks.

Vehicles to Homes Program: At the councilmember's urging – and with funding he secured – the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) and People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) are creating a program that will allow certain vehicle dwellers to park legally and safely in discrete, supervised areas distributed throughout Council District 11. Vehicle dwellers who want and need assistance – and are willing to follow a set of rules and engage in social services case management – will get an assigned overnight parking space, with access to toilet facilities, and get help finding a permanent place to live. The program is based on successful similar efforts in Santa Barbara, CA, and Eugene, OR. If people qualify for help, and are willing to accept it, we have an obligation to provide it.



'People Assisting The Homeless' and LA Homeless Services Authority are creating the Vehicles to Homes Program.

To solve these problems, we must recognize the solution is multi-faceted. No single law, social program, enforcement effort, or government official can or will solve them. It will demand a collective effort, a smart strategy, and a commitment to work together – calmly, rationally and with mutual respect.

Mike Bonin is Chief of Staff to 11th District Councilmember Bill Rosendahl, who represents Venice. For more information on the Vehicles to Homes program, or the oversized vehicle parking restrictions, please contact Rosendahl's district office at 310-568-8772.

Prepare for Emergencies Now *Planning & practice saves lives*

Information compiled by Renee Glass and Nicolas Hippisley-Coxe, Public Safety Ad Hoc Committee

Check out these tips to plan and rehearse what to do during and after an emergency. Planning can make all the difference in minimizing anxiety and helping you reunite with your family safely.

Safety During an Earthquake:

- Practice “Practice “Drop, Cover and Hold On.” Learn how at www.dropcoverholdon.org - and play the game “Beat the Quake,” to find out how to secure your furniture and household against shaking. Identify safe spots in your home such as under desks and tables.
- Check out www.earthquakecountry.info and learn how to protect yourself no matter where you are.



Plan to Respond:

- Keep shoes and flashlight next to each bed in your home.
- Have fire extinguishers and learn to use them.
- Teach everyone in your household to use whistles or knock three times to signal your location if trapped.
- Learn how, where and when to shut off utilities.
- Have replacements for medications and corrective glasses

- Become an LAFD-CERT member or volunteer for the American Red Cross and learn how to respond and lead your community in the case of a major disaster. Call 818-756-9674.

Plan to Communicate and Recover:

- Designate an out-of-state contact for the household.
- Know about the emergency plan developed by your children’s school.
- Keep copies of essential documents in a secure, waterproof container or on a USB flash drive.
- Decide on at least two safe places outside of your home to meet in case your home is unsafe.
- Go to http://bit.ly/EP_WalletCard and print the wallet card prepared by the VNC’s Public Safety Committee.

Get a Kit:

Each member of the household should have emergency supplies, food and water and equipment for 3-5 days in a backpack. Additionally, each household should have food and water for 7-10 days for every person and animal in the household along with medications. Other necessary articles can be researched at web sites like that at the Red Cross: <http://www.redcrossstore.org/shopper/prodlist.aspx?locationid=1>.

The Red Cross and many other emergency supply vendors and kits can be researched on-line, or you can make up your own kit by going to army surplus or outdoor camping equipment stores.

Timeline of VNC’s Involvement in Vehicular Dwelling and Overnight Parking Districts

February 15, 2006: Councilmember Rosendahl’s staff and LA City agencies meet with the Venice community to discuss illegal parking and solutions centered on implementing Overnight Parking Districts.

March 21 to Aug 15, 2006: VNC creates the Ad Hoc OPD Committee. Board ratifies Committee’s proposals for establishing OPDs. Stakeholders’ OPD petitions, and letter requesting OPD implementation sent to Rosendahl.

July 17, 2007: VNC Pres. DeDe Audet reports on Santa Barbara program that moves RV dwellers into permanent housing. VNC Board recommendation to “research this program as a possible solution to resolve

a growing... social and health problem” forwarded to City Council on Sept. 18, 2007.

February 21, 2009: VNC special election passes resolution: *Venice Stakeholders reaffirm that Venice residents have the same democratic right as other L.A. residents to establish, by 2/3rds petition signatures, OPDs for their blocks to preserve parking for residents and for night-time security, and call upon the VNC to communicate affirmation of this right to pertinent governmental bodies.*

May 19, 2009: VNC Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness and Vehicular Occupancy recommends creation of a “Vehicle-to-Housing Transition Program.”

June 11, 2009: Venice OPD applications are denied by the CA Coastal Commission.

September 15, 2009: VNC recommends that LA establish a program operated by a non-profit social service provider to provide sites and services to assist vehicle dwellers find affordable housing.

October 20, 2009: VNC Board recommends change in definition of Oversize Vehicle to enable Oversize Vehicle restrictions as a substitute for OPD restrictions (LA City Council adopts this change June 29th, 2010). The VNC supports Councilman Rosendahl’s initiative to provide safe areas for homeless people to sleep in their vehicles and receive social services. Initiative becomes the “Vehicles To Homes Program.”



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The Venice Neighborhood Council is on Facebook! To find us, just sign on to Facebook and search for "**Venice Neighborhood Council**" or type the following link on the address bar of your browser: http://bit.ly/VNC_Facebook. If you join the group you'll be able to post photos and videos, add links or participate in discussions. Join in!



Back Row, L to R: **Mike Newhouse, Kelley S. Willis, Joe Murphy, Scot Kramarich, Christopher Valentine, Stasia Patwell, Clark McCutchen, Amanda Seward.** Middle Row, L to R: **Peter Thottam, Daffodil Tyminski, Ivonne Guzman, Carolyn Rios, Mariana Aguilar.** Front Row, L to R: **Jed Pauker, Cynthia Rogers, Marc Saltzberg, Linda Lucks, Hugh Harrison, Cindy Chambers, Ira Koslow** Not Pictured: **Brennan Lindner, Jake Kaufman**

The Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) is YOUR branch of LA City Government. Its mission is to preserve the quality of life in Venice. We listen to YOU, our stakeholders, about YOUR needs. We represent YOUR interests before the LA City Council and City Departments. We ensure YOUR voice, the voice of our community, is heard.

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