



Venice Gondolier

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ShorePoint Venice to close Sept. 22

Competition, labor costs partly to blame

By **BOB MUDGE**
SENIOR WRITER

VENICE — ShorePoint Health Venice, the city's only hospital for 70 years, will be closing Sept. 22, according to an email CEO Kelly Enriquez circulated to employees, medical staff and volunteers Monday morning.

Emergency services will terminate even earlier — at 7 a.m. Aug. 29, a hospital news release states.

And Sarasota Memorial Hospital has been informed that elective surgeries at

Share your thoughts

Have some memories of the Venice hospital over the years as an employee, patient or volunteer? Email them to bmudge@venicegondolier.com.

ShorePoint will cease on Aug. 26, according to a memo to staff from President & CEO David Verinder.

Marketing Manager Danielle Gagliano said that elective surgeries will be scheduled at the hospital's HealthPark from then on, though in-patient surgeries will continue to be performed in the hospital until it closes.

Many departments will remain open through noon

Sept. 22, she said in response to an email inquiry.

WHY IT'S CLOSING

The opening of SMH's Venice facility in November was a major factor in ShorePoint's closure, Enriquez wrote.

"This decision was made, in large measure, due to recent healthcare services changes in our area, especially with the opening of a new, very large hospital five miles away — a move we opposed because state health planning data showed there was not a need for more inpatient beds in our area," it states.

"While demand for outpatient and specialty care remains strong, we've seen a significant decline in the number of patients seeking inpatient care



GONDOLIER FILE PHOTO

ShorePoint Health Venice announced Monday that the hospital will close Sept. 22, after 70 years of service to the community.

at the hospital.

"Additionally, rising labor costs and staffing challenges for all healthcare organizations following the COVID pandemic, inflationary pressure, and other dynamics make it difficult to

operate successfully in today's environment."

ShorePoint will focus on "on outpatient services, where patient demand continues

SEE CLOSE, 4A

A night of fundraising fun



GONDOLIER PHOTOS BY MEREDITH W. NICHOLSON

The Occasions, with Bobby Pinkerton on drums, was the headlining band during the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce's talent show.



Tara Gess, with Rising Vibes, won the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce's talent show on Friday night.

Chamber members show off their talent for a good cause

By **MORGAN SIMPSON**
STAFF WRITER

VENICE — Attendees danced the night away while listening to area talent during the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation's first-ever "Chamber Has Talent" event Friday.

The event was presented by Plantation Golf & Country Club and was held to raise money

for the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation's leadership programs.

"It's really for a great cause," said Bacon Brands owner Michael Bacon, who emceed the event along with Kelly Olliver, owner of British Open Pub.

The fundraising event aimed to support Venice Chamber's Leadership Venice and Teen Leadership programs.

Both programs expose the participants to the community with hopes they will continue to make the area better.

SEE TALENT, 6A

City to hire attorney in rule repeal

Discussions encouraged

By **MORGAN SIMPSON**
STAFF WRITER

VENICE — On the advice of the city attorney, the City Council will seek hire outside legal counsel regarding the effort to repeal the recently adopted land-development regulations.

"We are in a very sticky situation," said Vice Mayor Nick Pachota.

Venice Unites is the group looking to undo the recent adoption of the LDR. A city charter provision allows it to gather signatures to force a revote by the Council or, if the Council doesn't vote to repeal, a referendum.

The group held its first signature-gathering event on Saturday.

City Attorney Kelly Fernandez laid out some of the options Council could take during Tuesday's meeting.

"The more you think about it, the more complicated it gets," Fernandez said about the process.

One consequence is that the LDR would be suspended if Venice Unites gathers enough signatures — 10% of the city's roughly 22,000 registered voters — to move the repeal effort forward.

A majority of the Council members were concerned about the entire 600-page LDR being at risk over the issues Venice Unites has with just some of the provisions.

Mayor Ron Feinsod, who opposed the adoption of the LDR, there are only a few issues but they're critical.

Council accepted the document

SEE REPEAL, 8A

'A real reset is coming'

Ziegler wins, helps in DeSantis-endorsed allies Enos, Marinelli

STAFF REPORT

SARASOTA — Bridget Ziegler retained her seat on the Sarasota County School Board for the third time while helping to sweep in two allied candidates along with her.

The nonpartisan race for the three Sarasota County School Board seats drew large numbers of voters for a primary election — by mail, by early voting and in person Tuesday — with 124,918 ballots counted, according to unofficial results from the Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections.

Ziegler won handily with 67,787 votes (56.35%), topping political

INSIDE

See the results in the District 4 and District 5 School Board elections.

See page 8A

newcomer Dawnyelle Singleton who had 52,509 or 43.65%.

"I couldn't be more excited," Ziegler said Tuesday night. "I believe the parents and citizens have spoken. We are pushing for transparency in the school system. A real reset is coming to our system."

While the mail-in vote count showed Singleton with an early evening advantage, people who voted early and who voted on Tuesday swung the numbers to Ziegler in a big way.

Also winning their races were Tim Enos, a former Sarasota County deputy and former chief of



SINGLETON

The win likely signals a different direction for Sarasota County Schools policies ahead.

Ziegler was often at odds with the outgoing board members Shirley Brown and Jane Goodwin, and current board vice chair Tom Edwards. Ziegler was often on the losing end of 3-2 votes with board member Karen Rose often voting with her over the past two years.

The Board often clashed on issues like mask policies, the amount of

SEE WINS, 3A

the Sarasota County School District's police force, and Robyn A. Marinelli, a former Sarasota County teacher and administrator. Both are newcomers to the political arena.



SUN PHOTO BY TOM O'NEILL

Robyn Marinelli, left, and Bridget Ziegler celebrate their victories for Sarasota County School Board during a Primary Election victory party Tuesday at Gecko's in Sarasota. Marinelli, Ziegler and Tim Enos ran on an allied ticket that was endorsed by Gov. Ron DeSantis.



GONDOLIER PHOTOS BY MEREDITH W. NICHOLSON

Emcees of the night Michael Bacon and Kelly Olliver came out in a Blues Brothers style.

TALENT

FROM PAGE 1A

The Teen Leadership program finished its first year in May and was set up as a “grassroots type of growth to our kids,” said Venice Chamber President and CEO Kathy Lehner.

She said the students learned things about Venice they never knew despite growing up here.

To aid with the leadership programs, “Chamber Has Talent” functioned as a fun night along with a fundraising event.

The Occasions, with Bobby Pinkerton on drums, was the headlining band, playing between the talent show performances. When the band performed, they had nearly everyone dancing out of their seats.

While the audience enjoyed all of the talent show performers, the room went crazy for 92-year-old Larry Cappeto and his band, which won runner-up, performing Frank Sinatra.

Someone in the crowd shouted “so cute” as many others from the Senior Friendship Center held up signs that said



Kelly Olliver, owner of British Open Pub, and Michael Bacon, owner of Bacon Brands including Brewburgers, were the emcees for the fundraising event.

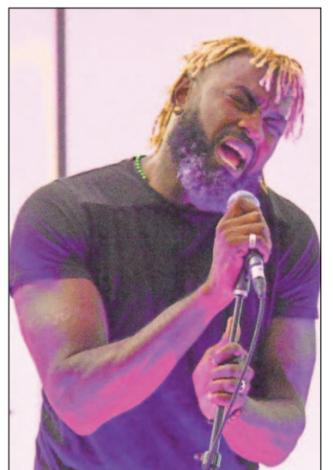
“Go Larry.” After performing, Cappeto was seen dancing all night long.

Performer Tara Gess, with Rising Vibes, was the winner of the evening with her rendition of “Strawberry Wine.”

While she performed solo during the talent show, she and her wife recently started Rising Vibes band as part of a larger business venture into the holistic healing industry. Originally from Nashville,

Gess is an attorney. However, before going to law school in 2011, she was a performer.

“It was really fun to play in front of everyone again,” Gess said. “Reminded me about how much I love singing.”



Phil Adams was one of the many performers during the first “Chamber Has Talent” event on Friday night.

Throughout the night, attendees were enjoying the music.

While most of the other talent show performers played guitar or sang, David Joyner shocked the crowd with his classical training on the piano.

“It’s great to see so many people come together for a charity event and also have a great time,” said Emma McCormack, an attendee.



Larry Cappeto, 92, performed Frank Sinatra during the “Chamber Has Talent” event on Friday night.



Tara Gess was named as the “Chamber Has Talent” winner on Friday night.



Michael Bacon had fun with his role of emcee during the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce’s “Chamber Has Talent” on Friday night.



Headlining band The Occasions played a slow song for attendees to get up and dance during “Chamber Has Talent” event on Friday.



People danced the night away during the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce’s “Chamber Has Talent” even on Friday night.



Andrew Chalaire played a major guitar riff during the “Chamber Has Talent” event on Friday night.



Supporters of Larry Cappeto held up “Go Larry” signs during his performance in the Venice Chamber’s talent show.