

AROUND THE SQUARE

Following the latest news and views from Serenoa

AUTUMN, 2026

VOLUME 5.3

AUTUMN TRADITIONS THRIVE IN SERENOA!



SERENOANS SATISFY THEIR SWEET TOOTH URGES AT THE ANNUAL ICE CREAM SOCIAL!

On September 6, as the final days of summer persisted with its relentless heat and humidity, the Serenoa faithful gathered at the Clubhouse on this hot afternoon to enjoy one of the community's most popular events—the **Serenoa Ice Cream Social**. Kudos to the social committee for transforming the venue with a bright and bubbly “sweet shoppe” vibe... from the colorful decor to the welcoming table settings (Shout out to Patty-Hays Graves for her over-the-top, themed sculptures).

Dietary restrictions were checked at the door, as party goers filled up, and chilled down, on a pot pourri of flavors including traditional favorites and several surprise ice cream concoctions. When mouths weren't savoring the sweet, creamy deliciousness, the conversations were upbeat and friendly, with laughter and smiles all around. Free, unlimited ice cream on a steamy, summer afternoon will do that. It was a wonderful turnout, and, all in all, a great time was had by everyone who attended.



OKTOBERFEST ROLLS INTO SERENOA!



The sun-drenched, coastal vibe of Vero Beach is a far cry from the black forests of the Bavarian countryside. But on

Thursday, October 24, our laid back Floridian Clubhouse will be transformed into a rousing German biergarten, as Serenoa celebrates Oktoberfest—one of Autumn's time-honored traditions. The beer will be flowing, and the aroma of bratwurst and kraut will spur the appetite, as friends and neighbors gather to catch up on summer travels, and plans for the upcoming season. The festivities begin at 4:00 pm, so pick out your favorite liederhosen and dirndl, and make plans to attend. Remember to check in with Leslie (954-540-2026) by October 17, to reserve your place on the buffet line. A mere 17 DeutschMarks (\$10 U.S.) gets you an afternoon of great fun, food, and friendship. Check the website for details & updates.



Serenoa is a BINGO BONANZA!

Serenoans love playing BINGO. In fact, BINGO Nights have become a regular feature on our game night schedule. On November 20th, we're adding an added twist to the BINGO Night repertoire with the introduction of **Music BINGO!** How is it played? Simple...instead of numbers, each grid square on your card lists a song title, an artist, or both. A host plays short 20-to-45-second clips of popular songs instead of calling out numbers. Listen to the music, sing along, and mark the song off your card if you spot it. Complete the target pattern and shout “Bingo!” to win! Good luck music lovers!

HOW THE JACK-O-LANTERN CARVED OUT ITS PLACE IN HALLOWEEN LORE

The tradition of carving Jack-o'-Lanterns originated in Ireland using turnips instead of pumpkins, according to the Library of Congress. It's allegedly based on a legend about a man named “Stingy Jack” who repeatedly trapped the devil and only let him go on the condition Jack would never go to hell. But when Jack died, he learned heaven didn't want his soul either, so he was forced to wander the earth as a ghost for eternity. The devil gave Jack a burning lump of coal in a carved-out turnip to light his way. Locals eventually began carving scary faces into their own turnips to frighten away evil spirits.

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THE HISTORY AND MYSTERY OF HALLOWEEN

50 BC

The origins of present day Halloween are believed to date back over 2000 years ago to a Celtic festival known as Samhain (Sa-men). Fearing evil intent from the returned dead, festival-goers wore costumes and masks to appease them.



43 AD

After four centuries of Roman rule, additional celebrations were added to the festival of Samhain. One was a day to honor Pomona, Roman goddess of fruit and trees. It is commonly believed that this is where the tradition of bobbing for apples came from.



1000 AD

The Roman church dedicated November 2 as "All Souls Day" in honor of the dead. This day was celebrated with the dressing up in devil, angel and saint costumes, and with bonfires and parades.



1550 AD

The tradition we now call trick-or-treating has its beginning in a three-day event called Allhallowtide. This also begins the practice of "souling" in which peasants go door-to-door begging for food and treats given out in memory of the dead.



1770 AD

Many of the traditions still associated with Halloween today begin to develop. Celebrants begin to dress up and go door-to-door singing for treats, turnips are turned into lanterns, and tricks are frequently played on others to initiate the hijinks of evil spirits.

1900 AD

Halloween becomes a more secular holiday, with the focus taken away from witchcraft and ghosts, and instead placed on family and friend get-togethers, parties and parades.



Costumes began to appear in shops, thus making Halloween a truly mainstream, money-making holiday.

1930 AD

2020 AD

American consumers spent 8.4 billion on Halloween candy, costumes, decorations and other products. For a holiday that doesn't feature a big dinner, or have a focus on gifts, that's a whole lotta pumpkin!



The First Thanksgiving...
Ocean breezes...
swaying palm trees
sandy beaches...
and alligator tail?

Most believe the very first Thanksgiving was held in New England by English colonists, aka the pilgrims, in 1621, when legend has it that they shared a peaceful meal with the native Wampanoag people. It wasn't until 1863 however that Thanksgiving became an official holiday in America, celebrated every year on the fourth Thursday in November. But some believe there was a Thanksgiving feast before 1621—at least that's what some scholars believe—and it may have been in St. Augustine! On September 8, 1565, Pedro Menéndez de Avilés and 800 Spanish settlers landed on the shores of Northeast Florida, known as Seloy to the native peoples. Menéndez knelt down on the sandy soil and kissed a cross to bestow St. Augustine with

and name, San Agustín. To celebrate and give thanks for their safe arrival, Father Francisco Lopez, Menéndez's fleet's captain, held the first Catholic mass in St. Augustine. After the religious ceremony, the indigenous Timucua people of Seloy were invited to share a meal with the Spaniards—a meal of thanks. The meal was a blend of both Spanish and Seloy food

staples, with the Spaniards contributing cocido, a stew of pork and garbanzo beans, along with biscuits and red wine, and the Seloy contributing venison, alligator, maize, beans and squash. This special mass and meal took place 56 years before the pilgrims arrived in Plymouth, Massachusetts, and so some historians claim it as the true first Thanksgiving but not all agree.

Whatever you choose to believe, and whomever you choose to celebrate with, your Serenoa friends and neighbors wish you and yours a safe, and enjoyable, Thanksgiving holiday this year.



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TAKE A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE!

In October McKee will present a collection of sculptures by internationally renowned artists Gillie & Marc, widely recognized as the world's most prolific creators of public art. Devoted to raising awareness for the planet's most endangered animals, "Return of the Wild" brings a hopeful message into the landscape. Baby giraffe, cheetah, elephant, hippo, bear, zebra, arctic fox, and giant tortoise sculptures will find a home along the Garden's winding paths, set among century-old state champion trees, rare waterlilies, and award-winning living collections. **October 2026 - December 2027**



A TROT TO BE THANKFUL FOR.

The wildly popular **Trot Against Poverty 5K** is back for its 19th year. This is a professionally-timed race for runners, joggers and walkers of all ages and abilities. Trot is more than a healthy start to your holiday...it's also an unforgettable way to give back while you give thanks! The goal of this community-based event is to raise funds and awareness for the nonprofit United Against Poverty, whose mission is to inspire and empower people living in poverty to lift themselves and their families to economic self-sufficiency. **Thursday, November 26, 2026 - Riverside Park**



A feast for the eyes... as well as the stomach!

Mark your calendars, and catch a celebration of all things seafood and coastal culture. Whether you're a seafood lover, an art enthusiast, or just looking for a fun weekend, this event has something for everyone! **The Treasure Coast Seafood Fest** is your ultimate destination for a weekend filled with:

- Almost every kind of seafood imaginable – From fresh catches to gourmet dishes.
- Unique marine-inspired arts and crafts – Discover one-of-a-kind creations from talented artists and crafters.
- Hospitality and family fun – music, activities, and live entertainment for all ages.

Oct 10-11, 2026 / Indian River Fairgrounds

Cooler temps bring lots of fun Fall festivities.

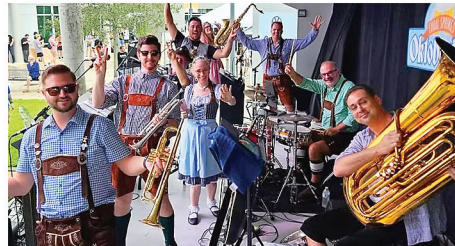
Ring in the Holidays with Vero's hottest band!

Sunset Saturday Night presents the **Riptide Christmas Show**. Grab your lawn chairs, bring your friends, and get ready to dance the night away at this free concert series. It's the perfect way to enjoy a beautiful evening with great music and a vibrant community atmosphere. **Dec 12 / Humiston Park / 5:00-8:00 pm**



Show Stopper minutes from Serenoa!

The Fall Fine Arts Festival at the IRC IG Center's Wiggins Field brings together the finest creators across 12 distinct categories for a weekend dedicated to original artistry. Best of all, you'll have the unique opportunity to meet the artists in person right at their booths, hear the stories behind their incredible work, and take home a piece of original artistry. **Nov 14-15, 2026 / Sat & Sun 10:00 am - 5:00 pm / IRC Intergenerational Center / Wiggins Field / Free admission**



Taste the German hospitality. Vunderbar!

The BIG beer garden tent will have incredibly talented **Oktoberfest** party bands all day and night! Outside of the beer garden you'll find other live music positioned throughout the grounds! Tons of delicious food, German and domestic beer, full liquor bars, 125 booths in the Vendor Village and free parking! **Oct 16, 17 & 18 / Indian River County Fairgrounds / Friday 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm / Saturday 11:00 am to 10:00 pm / Sunday 11:00 am to 7:00 pm / \$8.00 / Under 13 Free!**



HOLIDAY SHOPPING... OUTDOORS AT THE OUTLETS!

The Vero Beach Outlets Holiday Bazaar is a unique, and fun, holiday shopping experience just in time before Christmas! Live music, adult beverages, and yummy food make it a fun filled day of holiday shopping—120 booths of holiday, festive arts & craft booths featuring one of a kind handmade products... plus all the outlet shops, all in one spot! Don't miss it! **Dec 12 & 13 / Sat 10 am to 5 pm / Sun 10 am to 4 pm / On the grounds of the Vero Beach Outlets (Vero Beach Outlet Mall by I-95) / Free Admission!**

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YOU CAN ALREADY FEEL THAT HOLIDAY SPIRIT!

KICK OFF THE CHRISTMAS SEASON AT VERO'S SIGNATURE HOLIDAY EVENT!

This isn't just a parade, it's Vero Beach's own Macy's-style holiday broadcast, and you're getting a front-row seat to the magic. Over 100 floats. A packed lineup. And a full live production filmed right at Sexton Plaza. Bring your hot cocoa and holiday cheer and set up your chairs on Ocean Drive to cheer on your favorite float! Who will take home the winning titles this year?!

Meet your red carpet hosts, Tamara Lea Darrers and Geoff Moore, bringing the energy, the fun, and the holiday chaos you do not want to miss. It's the highlight of Vero's Holiday season!

Vero Beach Christmas Parade Live Show:
6:00 pm / December 5, 2026



Merry Christmas and Happy Hannukah Serenoa!

Every year, the highlight of Serenoa's social scene is the annual Holiday party, when friends and neighbors eagerly begin their seasonal celebration with their Serenoa family. The Clubhouse will be "jingle-bell rockin'" with holiday cheer, festive celebration, holiday music, and trays of scrumptious hors d'oeuvres and seasonal treats. More details will be forthcoming, so check the website in the coming weeks, and mark your social calendar.

Add these great events to your Holiday wish list—

Vero Beach Arts & Crafts Expo (Nov 21–22): IRC Fairgrounds
McKee Jungle Lights (Nov 29–Jan 2): McKee Botanical Gardens
Vero Beach OUTLETS Holiday Bazaar (Dec 12): Vero Beach Outlets
Holidays at the Museum (Dec 12): Vero Beach Museum of Art
The Nutcracker (Dec 12): The Riverside Theater

Making Merry at the Museum

Bring the whole family to the Vero Beach Museum of Art on Saturday, **December 12, 2026, from 10 am to 3 pm, for Holidays at the Museum!** Celebrate the season with art-making activities led by VBMA instructors and local art teachers, music and dance performances, food trucks, art hunts, docent-led tours, and free admission to the museum's current exhibitions.



BOARD BIZ

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

• **REMINDER:** Due to the resignations of Gail Miller and Mark Steinberg, there are still open seats available on the Serenoa Board of Directors. If you are interested in being appointed for the remainder of the term (February 2027), contact Janice Shepard at 631.848.3357, and submit a Letter of Interest, which includes your background, experience, etc. to Janice Shepard at secretary@serenoa.org

• The Board is looking for a resident to substitute for Go-To-Meeting operator John Marincas, in the event he is not available. John will provide training and support as needed. If interested, please contact Janice Shepard at 631.848.3357.

• **Budget Meeting and Annual Meeting/Elections Dates:** Budget Workshop – Tuesday, October 13, 2026 at 7:00 pm in the Clubhouse.

• **Budget Adoption** – Tuesday, November 10, 2026 at 7:00 PM in the Clubhouse.

• **2027 Annual Meeting** – Thursday, February 18, 2027 at 7:00 PM in the Clubhouse.

LANDSCAPING COMPANY

• Palm Island replaced the plants at the front entrance and on 5th Street SW which didn't survive the frost.

• If you have any questions / issues with Palm Island please contact Elliott Merrill at hannahm@elliottmerrill.com

• Palm Island will perform landscape work for individual homeowners. We've received positive comments from residents that have used them. Contact: 772.713.1490 / Brandon.PalmIsland@gmail.com

• Quarterly meetings have been tentatively scheduled with Palm Island for discussions / issues as follows (location is Clubhouse):

• Wednesday, December 2, 2026 at 10:00 am

PRESERVES

• Allstate continues to service the perimeter areas.

PONDS

• The grass on the banks to the water line was cut to 12" high. Invasive trees have been removed.

CLUBHOUSE / POOL / ENTRANCE

• The entrance gate received annual maintenance service in August by Star Technology.

• Estimates are being obtained for a fence extension with a walking gate at the sidewalk entrance (which may include a job activator and keypad for entry). This will be discussed at the October 8th meeting.

• The Board has been made aware the exit gate doesn't always open for motorcycles, golf carts, etc. so it is researching a resolution to this.

• Estimates are being obtained for installing cameras on the front gate (both entrance and exit). The gate has been damaged, due to it being hit several times by vehicles given to the Board without notification of the Board.

• The sidewalks around the Clubhouse and entrance/exit pavers will be power washed.

• The grout in the clubhouse restrooms has been cleaned by Complete Cleaning at a cost of \$300.00.

• The pool gate latch has been repaired at a cost of \$150.00. The latch has been disabled and will remain in the open position but is controlled by your job.

COMMITTEES

• **Social Committee:**

• The Social Committee is looking for volunteers. Contact secretary@serenoa.org if interested.

Upcoming Social Events:

• Bingo – Monday, Sept 21 at 6:30 am at Clubhouse

• Bingo – Monday, Oct 19 at 6:30 am at Clubhouse

• Octoberfest – Sat, October 24 (details to follow)

• Music Bingo – Friday, Nov 20 (details to follow)

On-going activities at the Clubhouse / Pool

• Mahjong – every Tuesday at 1:00 am. Like to learn? Contact Janice Shepard at 631.848.3357, otherwise prior notice is not required.

• Samba Card Game – Wednesdays and Thursdays at 1:00 PM. If interested, contact Janice Shepard at 631.848.3357. Prior notice is not required.

• Poker – Wednesdays at 5:30 PM. Contact Ken Fensin at 508.963.3780 if you'd like to sign up.

• Billiards – Monday and Fridays, 1:00-5:00.

Contact Terry Johnson at 305.653.0059.

• Water Aerobics – Mondays-Fridays at 9:00 am. Prior notice is not required.

• Mexican Train – first Tuesday of month at 6:30 pm. Contact Ken Fensin at 508.963.3780 if interested.

• Book Club – the second Tuesday of month at 7 pm. Contact Kathi Inzano at 732.710.2655 to sign up.

• Exercise Class – Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:00 am-10:00 am. Prior notice not required.

ELLIOTT MERRILL INFORMATION

Community Association Manager (CAM) is Summer DeSouza – summerd@elliottmerrill.com

• Hannah Morrison is Administrative Assistant – hannahm@elliottmerrill.com

• NEXT BOARD MEETING - Thursday, October 8, 2026 at 7:00 pm

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