This enthusiastic dive group yet again made our bays cleaner and safer for us and also for our fine friends with fins. Almost 1000 pounds of waste was pulled from the Venice Mooring Field on Saturday morning September 17, 2016.

Over 300 pounds of anchors and 170 pounds of rope were found along with interesting things like a battery charger, chains, tires, concrete blocks, a culvert, two inflatable dinghies and much more. Dozens more items were just too heavy to lift so latitude and longitude readings were taken so it could be picked up later. The too-heavy stuff included engine blocks, a light pole and even a cast iron kitchen sink.
It was a big effort with divers working from Police, Sheriff and Fire Department boats. The divers were supported by snorkelers, kayakers and people on boats and on the docks who helped every step of the way. The sunken dinghies had to be pulled to shore and hauled up the boat ramp.

Forty people were involved in this event from 9 different organizations, including the Suncoast Reef Rovers of Venice, the Venice Yacht Club, Sarasota Bay Watch, New College of Florida Dive Club, Venice Police, Venice Fire Department, City of Venice, Keep Sarasota County Beautiful, and the Sarasota County Sheriff.
The Venice Yacht Club graciously hosted the event at their beautiful facility. After the cleanup, the VYC provided a scrumptious lunch of pulled pork BBQ with all the trimmings. Rumor has it that the BBQ was cooked by none other than Mayor John Holic.

Mayor Holic: "Let's Eat!"

New College Dive Club enjoying lunch at the Venice Yacht Club

It was a challenging dive because of low visibility (1-2 feet) in brown, tannic water. Sediments were easily stirred up too, but the group toughed it out and found a mountain of trash. Expert piloting by the boat captains was key to working safely around multiple divers, while simultaneously hoisting heavy trash up on board. The lovely town of Venice is a better place today thanks to these hardy volunteers.

Greg giving the thumbs up

Ladies who make things happen