

The POA BULLETIN

The Property Owners' Association of The Villages

Issue 33.03

Champion of Residents' Rights Since 1975

March, 2007

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VCCDD Scraps Straw Vote; Ignores Residents

If you read the two articles entitled, "VCCDD Favors Advisory Board" and "Freedom Pointe Granted Access To Village Amenities" in the February 8, 2007, edition of The Villages Daily Sun, you might think it was an amicable meeting with the VCCDD Supervisors reaching out to do the right thing. THIS WAS FAR FROM THE CASE.

This Bulletin article summarizes what really transpired at that VCCDD meeting.

First, the Board decided to ignore the wishes of a majority of residents who wanted decision-making authority for recreation amenity decisions.

Then, although many residents were concerned about aggravating the already overcrowded situation with our golf courses and swimming pools, the VCCDD decided to allow Freedom Pointe residents to access Village amenities.

Let's look closely at the Straw Vote issue:

Mr. Moyer, a member of the VCCDD Board and a Vice President in the developer's corporation, said that although the VCCDD was not going to be able to proceed with the Resident Authority Board (RAB), he felt we should proceed with a Resident Advisory Council since the original intent of the VCCDD in proposing the authority was to allow resident decision-making on the amenity programs offered by the VCCDD.

Bill Garner, a resident, recommended to the Board that we continue as originally outlined by Mr. Moyer and let CDD1 and CDD2 join in later. He asked the Board to select someone from CDD1 that was not on the CDD1 Board.

Don Deakin, a resident, asked how would Mr. Moyer's proposed Resident Advisory Council be any different from what is going on now. Specifically, he wanted to know what authority or recourse would we and the Resident Advisory Council have if the VCCDD does not agree with the recommendations of the Resident Advisory Council. None of the VCCDD Board members tried to answer this question.

Brian Evans, a resident, spoke in favor of continuing with the discussions even if a residential CDD did not want to participate.

Irving Yedwab, a resident and attorney, said that he has never seen a situation in a democracy where one small part of that democracy can overrule the wishes of the majority, such as is being done here.

Numerous suggestions were made to proceed without the CDD1 and/or CDD2 Boards and select a resident from each district to proceed with the development of the proposed Interlocal Agreement. Elaine Dreidame, Jim

Murphy and Joe Gorman, all residents, each suggested alternate ways that the VCCDD might be able to proceed to develop a governing body to fulfill the wishes of the majority of Village residents in the Straw Vote.

However, 45 minutes later, when audience comments were cut off, Mr. Moyer expressed his appreciation of all the suggestions, and said they would consider them. Then he moved to have staff proceed with developing the framework for the Resident Advisory Council.

It was obvious that the supervisors' minds were already made up and that the pleas of the residents were going to be ignored.

After questions from a resident about the status of the proposed Interlocal Agreement, Mr. Moyer stated that his intent was perfectly clear, that he was not moving on through an Authority Board, but was moving on in a similar direction (The Advisory Council).

At this point there were more comments from the audience accusing The Village government (VCCDD) of not being a democracy -- that the numerous requests for further attempts to modify as needed and move forward with the pursuit of making the straw ballot issue a reality fell on deaf ears.

The Board unanimously passed Mr. Moyer's motion to pursue the development of a Resident Advisory Council, thus leaving the Interlocal Agreement concept dead in the water EVEN THOUGH a majority of residents said let's do it -- let's make the change.

As disenfranchised as residents were over the straw ballot issue, it got worse when the Freedom Pointe proposal was addressed.

It was obvious from the start that approval from the VCCDD was a DONE DEAL.

Mr. Todd Castner from the American Retirement Corporation (ARC) said that they purchased the Freedom Pointe site in July of 2005 and that during that year they worked with the developer to confirm the availability of The Villages amenities to Freedom Pointe. He stressed that they had conversations and understandings and thought that the issue regarding the amenities was settled.

And the truth of the matter is that it was settled - through talks with the developer of The Villages. But not with the VCCDD.

We all know that the developer controls the VCCDD board and that the Supervisors will rubber stamp anything the developer wants. Thus, it was a DONE DEAL.

The Freedom Pointe brochure which has been distributed for almost three months specifically states that residents will be entitled to the Villages amenities and that the cost for that will be included in their monthly maintenance fee. (That had all been worked out with the developer prior to ARC coming before the Board.)

Additionally, and there are two more major issues here with the Freedom Pointe proposal:

First, the impact on the services that were promised to the residents was not a factor in the developer's original deal with ARC. Residents expressed their concerns about giving 700 more Freedom Pointe residents -- and their guests

-- use of our executive golf courses, swimming pools, card rooms, etc., all of which are already overcrowded. It is difficult to get tee times now and many of the pools near residents are already at capacity.

Second, the proposal came before the VCCDD without any study or research, and the supervisors were ready to act on it. Residents urged the Board to table the decision and do some research on the impact this would have on the residents. Research may indicate that in order to accommodate another 700 residents and their guests that the developer needs to provide us with another executive golf course and swimming pool.

Other issues addressed were the concern about the size of the facility -- seven stories, the fact that only one board member is a resident (and he works full time so they really are not able to look at the situation from the position of the residents), and the fact that the developer owns other property and what is to keep him from building another facility and giving away more of our amenity services and use of our recreational assets.

The only reaction to residents by the VCCDD Board was from Mr. Wise who responded that this project was going to provide a minimum of \$388,000 annually of amenity fee income to the VCCDD without any additional costs. He stated that this is a large amount of money the District can use, saying that just from a financial perspective this is a super deal for the VCCDD.

Bill Garner pointed out that, when he came here he was promised that the amenities fees he paid every month would be used to pay for certain services, that he would like to get the services for which he is currently paying, and that he did not believe that bringing in needed money to the VCCDD warranted the negative impact this would have on the services that were promised.

After 40 minutes of pleadings by the residents to study the issue before they voted, it was obvious that the concerns of residents were being ignored.

Dick Belles, Chairman of the CDD3 Board of Supervisors, said: "I would hope that everybody that sits on this board is predisposed to make their own decision, and, Mr. Wise you are not. It is obvious by your facial expressions, it is obvious by your reactions that you have already decided how you are going to vote and that's too bad. The other four gentlemen may be predisposed as well, but they don't show the facial expression and the body language that you do which is unfortunate."

As they were ready to call for the vote, Mr. Moyer made his point on this issue as well by stating: "I have been involved in government for 35 years in one form or another and I can tell you that delaying action of a government by tabling something is not productive and I, as one supervisor, am comfortable with the discussion that we had today and the information that was brought forth^{1/4}and Mr. Chairman, I am happy to make the motion that we proceed and enter into the agreement as outlined."

It was seconded by Mr. Wise and passed unanimously.

If you have never attended a VCCDD meeting you should, but be prepared, because you will be appalled. There was a resident there for his first VCCDD meeting who made this statement at the conclusion of the meeting: "I've lived in The Villages eight years and this is the very first VCCDD meeting that I have ever attended. I am totally impressed by the very many articulate well spoken residents who must be representative of The Villages who have come before you today to express their concerns. But I can't help but notice as I look across

to you folks at the table, you resemble to me an iceberg. You haven't melted one little bit, not even a drop, from the impassioned concerns presented by these folks ¼ Cold, insensitive, uncaring, that's how you come across to me and I just think it is a shame that you have made up your minds on these sensitive issues and regardless of what all these people have said, you are proceeding down the tracks full speed and I think that's a shame."

NOW YOU KNOW THE REST OF THE STORY ABOUT THAT MEETING. NO WONDER THEY WILL NOT TELEVISION THE VCCDD MEETINGS ON OUR TELEVISION CHANNEL. AND GUESS WHO LOSES OUT BECAUSE OF THESE AUTOCRATIC ACTIONS OF THE VCCDD AND THE DEVELOPER...

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Vinyl Siding is Still a Problem

Further to last month's commentary on the installation of vinyl siding, there has been some positive response in addressing the problem, mainly thanks to Dean Carter, one of the developer's main contractors. Mr. Carter is making an effort to improve the quality of the installation done by the subcontractors on his jobs, and to have problems that are brought to his attention repaired properly. It is good to see that there is at least one contractor who has enough respect for the people who bought his homes to address the problems when correct installation procedures have been proven to him, instead of avoiding the issue.

It is still important to look at your home and call Home Warranty with any problems you find - and you must insist that the repair be done properly, not just a nail or two to mask a problem. Many times the visible flaws are merely signs of a more serious underlying problem. For example, sometimes even the chipboard sheathing has to be replaced because it has gotten wet and that may be what has caused the buckled siding.

As for the undersill issue, "We don't use it here" is not an acceptable response. Undersill, or finish trim as it is also called, is a necessary part of proper vinyl siding installation. It grips the horizontal edge of a siding panel tightly any time the locks have been cut off, such as over and under windows, over doors and the last panel at the top under the soffit.

Why are subcontractors who are supposedly certified siding installers not following Alcoa's approved method for installing their product?

There is only one alternative to using undersill or finish trim that is approved by Alcoa (and we have confirmed this with a phone call to Alcoa) and this method is very time-consuming and uses extra material unnecessarily.

Some of these subcontractors are not using either the standard or the alternate method, and they apparently just want to get the job done fast and easy, not necessarily correctly! We have seen the alternate method diagramed in theory,

but not used in practice.

For the repair, pushing back loose pieces into regular J-channel, or nailing them is not a correct fix, nor is telling you it's normal for pieces to fall down.

Some subcontractors will fix things right, but others are having a hard time changing their old, bad habits. It's up to the homeowner to demand a proper fix and not be misled by shortcuts or excuses.

Some other highlights of Alcoa's vinyl siding installation manual that may still need clarification:

--For soffit, a receiving channel must be installed along the chalk line (straight line) which is under the soffit. If it is not straight, it is wrong.

--All overlaps of siding panels should face away from traffic. If you are exiting your door, the overlaps should be away from you, unless the configuration of the house makes this contrary to the previous statement.

--Overlaps should be avoided directly over doors, or over and below windows or other openings.

--Stagger overlaps a minimum of 3 feet unless separated by 3 courses of siding. (Don't accept the response, "People like the stair step pattern." It is hard to find anyone who likes it that way.)

--Starter strips should be nailed every 8 inches in the center of the nail slot without driving the nail tightly, and leaving a 1/2 inch gap from all corners.

--Nail panels 16 inches on center, in the center of the slot, allowing 1/4 inch to 3/8 inch from where siding needs to stop. (Some panels have been installed with the nails or staples 3 feet or more apart!).

--Do not drive nails or staples tight in the slot. Allow 1/32 inch clearance between nail head and siding panels to allow for expansion. (There have been instances of staples driven so tightly that they cut right through the vinyl, resulting in no fasteners at all!)

--Do not face nail. (Only place nails in the center of the slot to allow for contraction and expansion.)

--When installing around windows, use finish trim or undersill in the J-Channel.

--When cutting panels to size for over doors and over and under windows, use a snap lock tool to cut a tab in the cut edge every 16 inches. When cutting panels for the last course under the soffit, the snap lock tab should be 12 inches apart. (There have been instances of the tabs being placed 24 inches apart and more.)

--At every gable, the last triangular piece should be face nailed at the gable peak using a painted trim nail. This is the only time a face nail is to be used.

--Do not force siding panels up or down when fastening. The panels should not be under vertical tension or compression when they are fastened. Tight nailing or stapling will cause the vinyl siding to buckle with temperature changes.

--Drive fasteners straight and level to prevent distortion and buckling of the panel.

You can examine your siding yourself and look for these potential problem area. Get close to the corner of your house and look down the outside wall to see if there are any bellies or waves or warps that may be signs of underlying problems. Pull gently under the bottom edge of seams to see if the nails or staples are too loose, too tight, or missing. See if joints and corners where pieces meet have snug cuts without gobs of caulking. Look at ends where panels insert into the J-Channel to see if they're cut too short. Look at the gables to see if the bottom course of siding is snug to the flashing and the roofline. Look for a nail at the peak of each gable. Look under windows to see if the J-Channel bows out - it may need to be furred out to straighten it.

Look for variations in the shade or finish of the panel - more than one dye lot may have been used on the job. Look for seams on walls that are less than 12'6" wide (this is the full length of most siding panels) - especially on the front of the house. Why put seams where they're not necessary - it would look so much better without the seams. Sure, this and the stair-step pattern are aesthetic issues, but why wouldn't anyone want siding to look as good as it possibly can? Are they telling us they don't care how bad these houses look?

When you call Home Warranty to have your siding repaired, don't feel sorry for the siders! If they had done it right the first time they wouldn't have to come back to do it over.

A question to consider: Are these siders certified? -- By whom? And if they are, why wasn't the job done right in the first place.

Consider what will happen in a few years if you decide to sell your home and the buyer wants a home inspection. Siding is only one of the flaws that will show up and affect your resale value.

Few of us, if any, had a home inspection when we bought from the developer. We bought on trust that there would be quality for the money we paid. How disappointing!

Homeowners need to be aware and protect their interests. If you don't find the problems and do something about it, the developer will assume there's nothing wrong! Siding is only part of it.

Not everyone has the background to know about construction issues, but we need to educate ourselves and help each other. After all this is our hometown.

If you have trouble resolving your siding issues, why not let the developer know when you respond to the Villages Resident Survey. A recent mailing about the Survey from The Villages provides each resident with an access code to use in giving their feedback to the developer. Give your concerns a voice.

If Mark Morse, the Executive Vice President and COO doesn't know there is a problem, then it doesn't exist.

Give the developer an opportunity to become aware that the residents will not accept substandard workmanship. Give the developer an opportunity to respect the people who make The Villages a great place in which to live.

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**March Meeting of the POA is At The Laurel
Manor Rec Center**

The POA will have its March 21 meeting at the Laurel Manor Recreation Center at 7:00 pm in the Madison and Monroe rooms.

The key speaker for the evening will be announced shortly. Please watch the Reporter Newspaper on the Thursday before the meeting for an announcement of the speaker.

We also plan a town hall question and answer session in which any resident can ask any question about anything with no prior restrictions.

If you haven't been to one of our meetings in the past, please join us March 21.

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Environmental Club

There is a new Environmental club in The Villages. It is called The Village Greens.

The purpose of the club is to:

- Identify and address ways to change the downward spiraling direction our environment is headed.
- Be a part of the solution, not a part of the cause.
- See The Villages become an example of a community recognized throughout the country as a leader in "LIVING GREEN."

Through educational programs and citizen initiatives, members want to heighten peoples' awareness and implement practices in our community that will support these goals.

Areas that will be addressed are:

- Energy conservation and the use of alternative energy in our homes and transportation.
- Recycling of trash.
- Conservation of water resources in our gardens and daily lives.
- Improving air and water quality.
- Responsible development.
- Promoting simple, inexpensive practices that reduce pollution, greenhouse gases and waste.

All of these issues impact our lives and will surely affect generations to come.

Clearly, this is a nonpartisan issue and the club anticipates a great deal of interest.

The first meeting of The Village Greens will be on Wednesday evening, March 28th at 6:30 p.m., at Laurel Manor, in the Madison and Monroe Rooms.

A wonderful film, "Kilowatt Ours, A Plan to Re-Energize America," by Jeff Barrie, will be shown. From the coalmines of West Virginia to the solar panel fields of Florida the movie follows him as he identifies solutions to America's energy-related problems.

The program will also include a discussion about the future plans of the club and what part you can play in turning The Villages Green into a viable, energetic, and effective organization for residents in The Villages.

The tide is turning. The media is now acknowledging that Global Warming is real and here and that our environment is suffering.

Mike O'Neil and Sue Michalson are the founders of the group.

They believe that human perspective has shifted from personal denial to personal responsibility.

Any questions regarding the upcoming meeting, please contact:

Sue Michalson 259-1426

Mike O'Neil 430-8354

By: Sue Michalson

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CDD4 Ponds Costs Shared The Hard Way

At its February 7th meeting, the VCCDD acknowledged that the Maintenance Agreement obligating CDD4 to maintain Lake Woodbury and Lake Wisteria was not a valid document.

The agreement, created by The Villages of Lake-Sumter, Inc. (VLS) attorney, had been signed by John Parker, a vice president of VLS and Rick Murray, head of construction for VLS and a CDD4 supervisor at the time (September 29, 2000).

A thorough review of District 4 meeting minutes showed that while the document had been notarized and filed with the Marion County Clerk's Office, it had never been brought before any meeting of the District 4 Board for public review and board ratification of the supervisor's prior signing.

The researching of the validity of the agreement was triggered by an attempt back in September, 2006, by the then VCCDD District manager (Pete Wahl)

to convince the VCCDD Board to renege on their previous agreement to share the expenses of the Lake Woodbury repairs that the VCCDD staff authorized in 2005.

The VCCDD staff had repairs in excess of \$275,000 made to Lake Woodbury without any prior authorization from the CDD4 Board.

Subsequently, the staff told the CDD4 Board that the VCCDD and The Little Sumter Service Area utility (LSSA) had agreed to each pay one-third of the repair cost since they both benefited from the existence of the pond for which CDD4 had maintenance responsibility. The CDD4 board was asked by the staff to pay the remaining third of the cost, which the board agreed to do.

The result of this latest acknowledgment is that rather than consider renegeing on their commitment made almost two years ago, the VCCDD will assume the maintenance responsibility for Lake Woodbury and Lake Wisteria that they always should have had. Further, the VCCDD will reimburse CDD4 for maintenance costs incurred in the past that staff should have directed to the VCCDD and not CDD4.

CDD4 has been asking VLS and the VCCDD for over a year to consider a sharing of pond repair expenses based on the benefit each receives.

CDD4 paid the developer's engineering company to do an extensive analysis of each of the 24 lined ponds in The Villages of Marion County to assure an accurate statement of inflow and outflow volumes by entity.

VLS and the entities it controls harshly refused to even meet with CDD4 to discuss the concept.

Of the 24 lined ponds in The Villages of Marion County, two and a half are located in CDD4. The remainder are located on property outside the district.

The ponds receive storm water runoff from CDD4 resident structures and roadways, VCCDD facilities and parking lots, VLS facilities and parking lots, Mulberry Grove Professional Plaza structures and parking lots and the Mulberry Grove East (Publix) shopping center structures and parking lot.

The ponds were lined to provide retention of the storm water, primarily for irrigation of the 63 holes of VLS and VCCDD golf as well as some limited irrigation of the Buena Vista and Belle Meade rights-of-way.

CDD4 residents paid the entire cost of construction of the 24 lined ponds which have the capacity to handle all 1723 acres of The Villages of Marion County even though the District encompasses only 1186.6 acres. None of the other entities contributed to the initial construction cost and were perfectly content to let CDD4 residents bear all the ongoing repair costs as well.

The invalidity of the September 29, 2000, agreement, as well as the admission that the January 16, 2001, agreement did not include a maintenance provision means that maintenance of the 24 lined water retention ponds in The Villages of Marion County will be split between CDD4 (3 ponds), VLS(12 ponds) and VCCDD(9 ponds).

It has taken more than a year but a large, unfair financial liability has been lifted from the residents of CDD4.

Cheers and Jeers

Cheers - To the Daily Sun for the great extra edition detailing the tornado's wrath in our community on the day after as well as succeeding days. The coverage, stories, and especially the pictures were great, both in this extra issue and well as the regular issues.

Cheers - To the radio station and the TV channel of The Villages for great coverage of the unfolding aftermath of the tornado and its effects on our community. Both did a super job and should be commended. Thanks.

Cheers - To the VHA for its efforts to help out on tornado relief and raise money through various fund-raising activities.

Cheers - To all the volunteers offering to help tornado victims with the clean-up and a place to live during the recovery.

Cheers - To the developer of The Villages for offering its construction capability to help in the re-building effort.

Cheers - To the Central Districts and staff for their round-the-clock relief work.

Cheers - To Pete Wahl for his offer to have his beard and head completely shaved if the Chill Cookoff event reaches a certain level of donations and support. Mr. Wahl is a good sport for making this offer and deserves a hearty "Thank You" from all of us. And, the event's donations are to worthwhile causes. PS to Janet Tutt: How about your turn next year?

Jeers - To the various crafts vendors who came to the art and crafts shows in the Villages squares recently and complained that Villagers don't spend enough money to make it worthwhile for these vendors to come here. Well, with prices ranging from \$250 to \$7,000, maybe Villagers know a worthwhile value when they see it and don't choose to throw away money on frivolous items. If these vendors think Boca Raton, Delray Beach and Fort Lauderdale have a lot more money for spending than The Villages, then we say good-bye and good riddance.

Jeers - To the Deed Compliance Office of The Villages for its inconsistent and sometimes irritating enforcement of covenants and restrictions which are often vague, inconsistent, and confusing. The idea of the covenants and restrictions is a good way to maintain our community and property values according to given standards. The problem is the way in which those rules are promulgated to residents and enforced, or not enforced in an even-handed way.

Jeers - To people who leave a phone message for a callback, then afterwards tie up their phone line for hours with their dial-up internet service provider.

Cheers - To the Rialto Movie Theater for their new and comfortable seats that

are starting to replace those uncomfortable and squeaky seats in many of the theater rooms. Thanks for making the investment in the comfort of your customers.

Jeers - We said it once before - we'll say it again: Please don't allow fertilizer granules to sit on the street after you fertilize your lawn. These eventually get washed into our ponds causing undesirable algae growth. Please, either blow or sweep the granules back onto your lawn.

Cheers - To the golf division for the generally great conditions of the golf courses. Now, if we could just get golfers to repair their ball marks on the greens, we would be in even better shape.

Cheers - To the vendor on the squares selling floating golf balls that are guaranteed to float. If they don't float, he says bring them back for a no-charge replacement. What a deal !!

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Renew POA Membership

Our new membership year for 2007 has started. It runs annually from January 1 to December 31. So, this is a good time to renew your 2007 annual POA membership. Our dues are still \$6.00 per household per year.

If you want to renew now, it would be a big help to us. Just use the membership form on the top right edge of page 15 in this Bulletin. If you mail in the form with your check and a self-addressed, stamped envelope, we will mail your membership card back to you. If you don't enclose a stamped envelope, we will hold your card for pickup at a meeting.

If you are not yet a member of the POA, this is a good time to join. Just use that same form on the top right corner of page 15 in every Bulletin. "

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Comments From the POA Forum: Freedom Pointe Amenity Payments to the VCCDD

Recently the VCCDD voted to allow the residents (when completed of Freedom Pointe) to pay an amenity fee similar to the one we residents pay and use The Village recreational services, golf, pools, etc. The profit to the Villages would be \$388,000 -- found money according to Mr. Wahl. Why not take this money and hire neighborhood pool monitors which are sorely in need around the Villages. According to John Rohan it would cost \$277,000 annually to accomplish this (really). \$110,000 would still be available to do something else with.

Pat Walsh

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New POA Directors

The POA is pleased to announce that two new members joined our Board of Directors in early February.

Mike Donato moved to The Villages in 2004 from Long Island, NY, and Vermont. He lives in the Village of Sunset Pointe with his wife Mary Ann. Mike has served on various boards and committees with his church and community. He is interested in the workings of our local governments in The Villages.

Marty Rothbard moved to The Villages on 2001 from New York and lives in Santiago Village with his wife Elly. Marty has a financial background and also ran several businesses on his own. He is interested in the high common property valuations paid by the central districts in acquiring common property from the developer.

Please join us in welcoming Mike and Marty to the POA Board.

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The POA Disclosure Reform Bill

The Disclosure Reform bill that the POA has been sponsoring (see the August, 2006, issue of the POA Bulletin in the archives section of the POA website) has been picked up for sponsorship in this session of the Florida Legislature.

We don't have more information as of press time. But, we are hopeful that this bill can proceed on its merits. The bill is a significant reform of the disclosure requirements mentioned in a cursory fashion in the Chapter 190 law that regulates the operations of CDDs, including those in The Villages. This reform legislation is dearly needed to address some of the disclosure problems we have seen in the past, often here in The Villages.

We were not able to secure primary sponsorship from our local legislators, Representative Hugh Gibson and Senator Carey Baker. We were greatly disappointed when both of them declined to sponsor the legislation as our local legislators. We plan to contact each to see if they are interested in co-sponsoring the legislation now.

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The Sexual Offender Database Binder

The POA now has the updated Sexual Offender Database 3-ring binder available for review at the monthly meetings. If you have not been able to review this recently, it may be worthwhile for you to do so now.

The updated binder shows sections for The Villages (20 individuals), Lady Lake (21), Oxford (5), and Summerfield (40).

Twenty people are listed for addresses in The Villages. This compared to twelve individuals listed about a year ago when the POA first compiled this binder. Some of these twenty may no longer be active in our area, but you never know.

This material was taken from the state of Florida website at:
http://www3.fdle.state.fl.us/sexual_predators/ on the internet.

Another website shows a map of any area in the U.S. and pictures of these sexual offenders by location. This website is at: <http://www.familywatchdog.us/> and is a good interactive view of sexual offenders in our community.

If you have friends or family visiting you who may not be familiar with our area, it is important for you to review this material so that you can take any appropriate actions to protect your family members. "

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Letter to the Editor: Straw Vote Seriously Flawed

You know if your little organization called the POA did not almost always take the negative side of things, you might get more respect!!! As it is your generally negative tone damages your credibility in the community.

The judgment that I reached on the vote was that it was no overwhelming mandate (51% versus 49%) for change in managing The Villages. This was a nonbinding vote in the first place!!

Granted the nay-sayers had a slight plurality but many non-residents got no vote and they pay taxes and have property interests as well as we residents.

If this were a senatorial vote in a regular election, then a one vote plurality would of course be binding. Two-thirds of the voting entities voted yes after all.

I firmly believe that if a change in the way we are governed takes place it should be for all The Villages at the same time!! Not this rinky-dinky change for only a portion of our community!!

When the community is completed some change will inevitably be required. That would be the time to determine how the community would be governed.

Bill Mahoney

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CDD1 and CDD2 Straw Vote Nay-Sayers

May I suggest that in light of the supervisors of CDD1 and CDD2 taking it upon themselves to trash the democratic practice of majority rule, that you post the names, businesses and phone numbers of those who voted to deny us the right to have input on how our money is spent so that we may thank them for saving us from ourselves. I'm sure that we can think of many ways to show our appreciation.

Eugene Hildreth

Editor's Note: Here they are. Note that all of these supervisors are residents elected by the residents of their local CDDs.

CDD1

Charlie Dunlap Chairman	750- 5068
Seymour Rosenblatt V. Chair	753- 4458
Allie DeBenedittis	750- 0810
Nicholas Martucci	753- 7516
Charlie (Chuck) Decker	750- 3794

CDD2

Chico Mir Chairman	750- 9471
Art Terrill Vice Chairman	259- 1691
Nick Jones	751- 1313
Robert P. Gilmartin	750- 6764
Ed Nowe	259- 1488

In CDD1, Charlie Dunlap appeared to favor the change to a Resident Authority Board, but found no support from his fellow supervisors.

In CDD2, none of the board supervisors appeared to favor the change.

Please think about giving a call to these supervisors if you would like to share any of your thoughts about the Straw Vote.

Please note that you can get to this information by going to the VCCDD website at <http://www.districtgov.org/vccdd/home.asp> and clicking though to your CDD. "

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**Comments From The POA Forum: Is the Devil
in The Straw Vote Details?**

I read all the comments on the straw vote and wondered if any of us have all the facts or have considered all the ramifications of both sides of the issue.

For instance, I read people who say they "would rather deal with the devil they know," or there are those of us who have come from other areas and seen the difficulties when developers leave and we want to avoid that.

But... Doesn't it seem negative to assume that what I don't know contains a devilish aspect. Struggling to build a community is difficult, but maybe it would be to our financial advantage. Does it not seem that the developer is essentially pulling out already? Doesn't the fact that the developer is selling off so much of the amenities that we all came here for proof that they are divesting themselves of the responsibilities that are in the sold out areas? Do we have any reason to believe that will not continue?

So isn't the real question this. When the developer completes his mission (to build and develop) and divests himself of restaurants, weight rooms, recreation centers, pools, and golf courses: Isn't the question then who will control the amenities fees that we all are required to pay and what will we be receiving for that fee?

What is the responsibility of the different business to the local residents. Is it to the homeowners or to the growth of the business? Will these businesses make decisions that are best for their bottom line at the residents expense? Is there anything in our covenants to keep a business from buying up a lot of homes or villas and then renting them out on a short term basis -- say by the week or even a night giving renters access to all of our recreational facilities that we pay amenities fees for and allowing that business to make money off of? Just who is the "group" that receives our \$1's (which we are contracted to pay or receive a lien on our property). How do we know what they will do with the money. Are these homes not personal investment for each of us. Should we not at least have a say in the surroundings?

I don't know if the straw vote was right or wrong, but I don't think anyone else does either. Because it seems to me the "devil" is in the details. "

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Comments from the POA Forum: Street Ownership?

Who owns the streets in the vicinity of Town Square? If they are not owned by Gary Morse, what authority allows the Villages Entertainment Division to block out the parking spaces every Monday and Wednesday for vendor night and all day Saturday when they have the antique car shows?

This subject is much the same as "should renters get free golf etc." Full time residents can't financially support all the benefits of living here in The Villages. We need renters and vacationers to help support the businesses in both downtowns and their related functions. Giving up the streets and parking is a small price to pay for the year-round pleasures of this community.

I believe the streets are "owned" by either the city of Lady Lake or Lake County. It is not unusual for public streets to be cordoned off for the purpose of activities such as vendors nights, parades, entertainment, etc. In such cases a permit is usually required. You might check with the city of Lady Lake as I am not absolutely certain of my facts. They may, in fact, be owned by the developer or any other private entity. " Phone Help Button At the March 21, 2007, POA membership meeting, a Pal Medical Assistance company representative will speak. The representative will explain his company's "Button" device that can bring assistance for someone hurt or stricken at home. The device sets up on your phone with a speaker attachment that can be activated from your wrist or neck chain button such that your voice can be heard from anywhere in or outside your home and then the device calls for help. There is a charge for this service and special pricing for Villagers. Details will be provided at the meeting.

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Emergency Info

You can now go online and enter two emergency contacts on your Florida Drivers License which can only be retrieved by a police officer. This came about as a result of a recent situation in which it took five hours to notify the next-of-kin about a fatal accident. This way, if you are in an accident, the police can run the drivers license and have the emergency info ASAP!!! This is through the DHSMV Website on the internet at the address:

<https://www6.hsmv.state.fl.us/dlcheck/findcustomer>.

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VHA Corner

A previous issue of the Bulletin commented on the Spaghetti Dinner of the VHA. Some took this as a criticism of the charitable objectives of the dinner. The POA's comments were not intended as a criticism of the VHA's effort which serves a worthwhile charitable purpose. Actually, the VHA should be commended for its charitable work.

The story was intended to point out that the VHA seems to favor distractions like the Spaghetti Dinner when it should be focusing its energies and attention on Residents' Rights issues like those pursued by the POA.

Let's consider what the VHA didn't do recently that it should have done in its position as a homeowners' organization.

The VHA did not support the POA on its call for the developer to pay for the sinkhole repair on the Nancy Lopez golf course rather than trying to stick residents with the \$165,000 repair bill.

The VHA did not support the POA on its call for the Central Districts to rescind the oppressive Activity Policy which tried to restrict the Free Speech and Free Assembly Constitutional Rights of residents.

The VHA did not take a Resident's Rights position on the Straw Vote and support residents in their efforts to take over VCCDD voting authority north of highway 466.

These are three very important Residents' Rights issues - about which the VHA said nothing in support of residents.

It is nice and commendable that the VHA engages in its charitable work - we just wish it made it a priority to support the Rights of Residents here in our hometown. It can do both - it is not an either/or situation.

We just don't understand why the VHA doesn't speak out in favor of Residents' Rights issues. Guess they are just too busy cooking spaghetti....

On another topic, the VHA Board is planning to meet after its March general membership meeting in a closed-door session to pick the VHA officers for the next year.

Members will not be able to question the candidates selected by the Board. Members will not be told beforehand of the views and future plans of the candidates. Members will not be able to vote for the candidates. Members will have to wait and be told afterwards who the Board has selected to run the organization for the next year.

It's too bad the Board doesn't trust the membership to select the next officers of the VHA.

It's too bad the membership doesn't have a say in the selection of the next officers of the VHA.

It's too bad that a reformer with views about Residents' Rights closer to those of the POA won't have a chance to get elected president.

It's too bad that residents don't have the benefit of VHA leadership on Residents' Rights issues.

It's just too bad....

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Construction Issues in Our Community

This is our neighborhood, not the contractors' or the developer's. We want respect for our community and its residents from the developer, the contractors and the workers. These are issues about community respect.

We don't want full construction dumpsters sitting around, especially without a tarp, because of the trash blown around by the wind, and because they are such an unnecessary eyesore. When they're full, move 'em out.

We residents are getting tired of picking up the lunch plates, cups, sandwich wrappers, cans and bottles, as well as house wrap, roof shingle wrap, sheetrock pieces and other construction debris that blows into our yards and into the retention ponds from the work sites.

Just because there is ongoing construction does not mean that the whole area should be a giant dump site.

Contractors need to make sure that all dumpsters are tarped and removed as soon as they're full.

Any time there is a construction site next to a residential area there should always be a plastic wind screen put up to prevent the dirt, sand and trash from blowing around and cluttering our neighborhoods.

We residents abide by many deed restrictions that are intended to help neighbors respect each other. The contractors also need to respect us. We are their bread and butter and their customers.

The workers need to act responsibly to clean up after themselves, both at meal time and when handling materials & supplies.

Contractors need to make sure the work sites are cleaned up every day before the workers leave the sites. It wouldn't take much: just one man assigned to do 15 minutes of clean up at the end of each work day to make the site look better.

There need to be consequences if the rules are not followed. It's not that difficult!

Road crews also need to respect the community by cleaning up after themselves. It is a sign of sloppy, shoddy workmanship to leave asphalt debris dropping off the tailgate as they drive down the street. These piles and drips of asphalt leave bumpy, unsightly roadways for years to come.

The solution is simply to clean off the back of the truck after dumping the load. Now these bumps will have to be scraped off of the pavement. The contractor should have the drivers come back and clean up their mess. We want neat, clean streets. We pay top dollar to live here in a neat and clean community

Not only the developer and contractors need to have respect; we also need to respect ourselves and each other. This includes dog walkers picking up after their dogs.

In The Villages there are many dog owners. Dogs are important family members. Just have the courtesy to keep our neighborhood clean and respect the next person who may walk along after you. Pick up after your dog! It's really not that difficult.

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Comments from The POA Forum: Rental Property

A comment from the POA Website Forum was printed last month in the Bulletin under the title: "Rental Property Should Not Get Full Resident Privileges."

The basic thought of the article was that some non-residents and renters use The Villages as a vacation club and thus clog up the amenities for residents. Two of the follow-up comments from the POA Website Forum are:

I fail to understand this logic. Since the owners give up their ID, the same amount of people have the privileges. Most renters only arrive in January and leave in March. This opens up more tee times for the year-round owners. If the owners did not rent they will stay or sell to people who will stay, giving permanent residence persons the problem all year. In fact the reduced population also gives you the benefit of reduced rates on Championship courses during the off season. (You should thank the renters.)

Also:

Golf privileges on executive courses should only be for the original owner and nontransferable to renters. This is a retirement community and not a vacation resort. The main problem is the golf courses primarily can not accommodate the residents not alone handle the additional "golf vacation resort traffic." I am going to take a guess and say you (the original Forum writer) might not golf or are one of the rental customers or a renter.

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April Fools Coffee

Several of the gourmet coffee shops on both Villages' squares are now serving a special coffee treat.

A twenty dollar bill is ground up into little bitty pieces and sprinkled on top of the coffee like cinnamon. A small size version of this coffee delight is priced at \$5.95. Mmmm, yummy!!

For \$7.95, a sprinkling of a ground-up Villages Daily Sun front page is also available. Unfortunately, this has no nutritional value and leaves one with that "empty" feeling. Furthermore, several residents drinking this concoction have had hallucinatory episodes, so residents should be cautious about sampling this delicacy.

For \$8.95, a sprinkling of a ground-up VHA newspaper is also available. Drinkers expect a savory delight, but, sad to say, nothing happens.

A version with a ground-up POA Bulletin sprinkle was about to debut at a more reasonable \$3.95. However, it was banned by the developer even before introduction. No clear reason was given - something about not being good for Villagers. Censorship and all that stuff - you know the story....

Oh, well, it's a beautiful day in The Villages.

Bon Appétit!!

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Short Notes

If you need help on any elder healthcare issue or problem, please call the Shine Elder Help line at 1-800-963-5337. You can also call Harold Barnes, a Villages resident, at 753-8810. Or you can talk to Harold personally at the POA monthly meetings.

If you see Bulletins lying in the street or the gutter after delivery, or if you know a house is unoccupied, please pick up the Bulletins and either hold them for the residents' return, or discard them. This is especially important during windy or rainy weather. Thank you for your help on this.

If your group or organization is looking for a speaker at one of your meetings, consider having a POA speaker in for a presentation on the POA, its mission and goals, and the Residents' Bill of Rights. This is a good opportunity for your organization to learn more about the POA and how it represents the best interests of all residents. Call Joe Gorman at 259-0999 to check the speaking

and meeting schedule. There is no charge for this -- other than our normal speaker's fee of one donut and a cup of coffee.

We still have positions open for volunteers for the POA Board of Directors. You might find the time commitment less than you think and the opportunity to serve on the board of your POA is truly rewarding. For details call Joe Gorman at 259-0999 or talk to any POA officer or director.

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