

The POA Bulletin

Free Copy

The Property Owners' Association of The Villages



Issue 35.05

Champions of Residents' Rights Since 1975

May, 2009

VCCDD Replies To IRS/Bond Investigation

The VCCDD has responded to the IRS's initial form 5701 comments on the Bond investigation. The response was coordinated by Ms. Janet Tutt, District Manager. The VCCDD's local attorney, Mr. Archie Lowry, and the California legal firm representing the district provided major parts of the response.

It now looks like we don't have much new to say. The VCCDD response did refute some of the misconceptions in the IRS form 5701 which may or may not be significant. And, the response covered legal issues that, arguably, could make a convincing case for our interests, if accepted by the IRS.

Are these persuasive for the IRS? We just don't know at this time. We will have to wait weeks or months for the IRS to review the VCCDD response and then submit its own rejoinder. At that time we will have a better idea of what the core issues are and what might be the possible solutions.

On one hand, this whole controversy could just go away. Probably not likely. On the other hand, there could be financial liability for the district or the developer. We do know

that the developer was the only entity to financially benefit from the issuance of the bonds. Thus, if there is some financial liability directed at the district, we will expect the developer to do what is right for the residents in an effort to settle the financial issues with the IRS.

The best thing to say now is that we are still in a holding pattern until the IRS comments on the VCCDD's response. Then we will have a better idea of where the lines are drawn and what issues are the essence of the IRS case.

Until then, we don't think it would be productive to comment on what isn't well defined. We don't want to fan the flames of speculation and get everybody worked up.

When the IRS finally comments we will have ample time to consider a more thoughtful response, and whether we need to be more forceful in commenting about the developer and his culpability or responsibilities. Finally, if there is a role for the POA to play to protect the interests of residents, the POA is prepared to take the necessary steps. □

Villagers Added to Hospital Board

Three Villagers were recently appointed to the board of the Central Florida Health Alliance (CFHA), the parent organization of The Villages Regional Hospital (TVRH) and Leesburg Regional Medical Center (LRMC).

This is a significant development for Villagers as well as for the quality of health care that we all expect in our community. Congratulations to all.

But, and this is a big qualification, we have to hope that the three new board members will represent the best interests of all Villagers. We hope they do not turn out to be rubber stamps for the policies of TVRH and LRMC management which allowed significant deterioration in the quality of medical care offered by the Emergency Department in TVRH.

Without hashing through all the details again, we received about 150 letters from Villagers about the ER detailing apparent patterns of poor service, mis-diagnosis, rude staff, lost records, long waits, etc., that were most troubling. Investigations by the certification agencies showed deficiencies in heart attack care, congestive heart failure care, use of antibiotics in pneumonia, etc., that put our residents at substantial risk. Several malpractice lawsuits by residents are proceeding; several others are pending.

But, TVRH finally did make reforms in the operations of the Emergency Room as well as the ward floors in the main hospital. All of these changes were positive. We were encouraged by the responsiveness. We wish hospital management had been more open in discussing the problems and solutions.

One of the most significant developments was the decision to add Villagers to the board of CFHA. The administrator of TVRH did acknowledge to us last year that this commu-

(Continued on page 2)

May 19, 2009

**THE NEXT POA
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**Third Tuesday of the Month – 7:00 p.m.
Laurel Manor Recreation Center**

**Sheriff Farmer from Sumter County will talk
about driving on traffic circles and the Sheriff's
efforts to safeguard our homes and neighborhoods**

**Coffee and Donuts
FOR ALL AFTER THE MEETING
ALL RESIDENTS WELCOME – COME AND JOIN US**

**It's Time to Renew your POA
Membership for 2009.**

**Use the Form at the Top
Right-Hand Corner
of Page 15.**

**If You are Not Yet a Member
of the POA, this is
a Good Time to Join.**

TVRH Board

(Continued from page 1)

nity involvement was needed. We now are pleased to see this idea come to fruition.

So, now, what should be the priority focus of these new board members on our behalf?

We would suggest the following:

- **Operations Audit** - We still think that an audit of operations in the TVRH Emergency Room would be worthwhile. We note that some of the problems we originally identified apparently continue to fester. Why not bring in a hospital consulting firm to run an audit that would be impartial, objective, and thorough? This would settle the issue about what, if anything, is wrong with the ER. And, it would offer improvement plans as needed. The three new board members should insist on this and eventually disclose this to our community. This would rise above the debate between TVRH management and the POA and settle the issue.

- **Independence** - The three new board members should represent Villagers and not play cozy politics with management or other board members. Be independent – speak out for what is best for residents. Please, don't be apologists for CFHA or TVRH or rubber stamps for the cover-up of problems.

- **Make TVRH a Center of Excellence** - Our community will soon be over 100,000 strong. We should have all the latest medical facilities for us here – not in Leesburg. It is good to see comprehensive open heart surgery capabilities coming to TVRH. The Stroke Center, recently opened at LRMC in

Leesburg, should have been opened here – so, let's move it here where the customers are located. Same for all the medical procedures needed in our aging community. It makes no sense to often hear that the patient needs to be transferred to LRMC. TVRH should be a Center for Excellence for Geriatric Medicine and offer our residents a full-service capability for our most typical healthcare problems.

- **Urgent Care Facilities** - Part of the problem with the TVRH ER is that many people use it for minor problems which should be treated in an Urgent Care facility. But, our community doesn't have an overnight Urgent Care facility open between the hours of 10 pm and 6 am. TVRH should spearhead the opening of one, perhaps in the facility on the east side of Hwy. 441/27 which was originally built by LRMC as a hospital facility. ERs were never intended to handle minor emergencies, and Urgent Care patients in ERs tend to interfere with what should be high-quality emergency care.

- **Electronic Medical Records** - Our residents need quick access to their records, even at odd hours when doctor's offices may be closed. TVRH can take the lead to set up this network throughout our community. Excellent medical care is also based on comprehensive information that is quickly available.

- **Summary** - We hope that the new board members will focus on these issues.

Speaking directly now to the new board members: please, keep an open mind; please, keep an independent attitude; please, ask why; and please, remember that this is not a honorary or ceremonial position and that you represent all of us. The well-being of all Villagers is literally in your hands.

Congratulations again to the three new board members. And, thanks to the CFHA and TVRH for allowing this to happen. This bodes well for our community. Now, let's make TVRH the really great hospital that we always knew it could be. □

POA Mission Statement

The Property Owners' Association of The Villages is an independent organization devoted to our home ownership experience.

The Vision/Objective of the POA is to make The Villages an even better place in which to live, where Residents' Rights are respected, and local governments are responsive to the needs and interests of residents.

The POA serves Villagers through programs of education, research, analysis, representation, advocacy, and legislative action.

The POA also functions as a "watchdog" organization overseeing the actions of our developer and our local governments.

Specific POA attention is focused on housing, community, neighborhood, and local government issues. Special emphasis is focused on the Amenity Authority Committee (AAC), our Community Development Districts (CDDs), the Florida Chapter 190 law that regulates CDD operations, and our developer.

The POA has no ties or obligations to the developer of The Villages which might compromise the POA position or its advocacy of Residents' Rights.

The POA, founded in 1975, is the original homeowners' organization in The Villages. Membership is open to all Villages residents. □

The Villages Residents' Bill of Rights

RESIDENTS have RIGHTS to:

1. Be treated in a respectful, fair, and responsive manner by the developer and our local government officials.
2. Have decision-making authority for important issues in our community.
3. Elect our top government officials and approve appointments of the top administrative officials in our community.
4. Approve major purchases of common property and the related debt obligations assumed by residents.
5. Have local governments that are free of any conflict-of-interest issues.
6. Be charged honest monthly amenity fees that are used only for the stated purposes.
7. Receive full disclosure when purchasing a home here in The Villages.
8. Receive an objective market appraisal for major purchases of common property.
9. Receive objective, unbiased, un-slanted news reporting from local news sources.
10. Be informed beforehand by the developer on any major change in our community. □

The Next POA Meeting Is on Tues, May 19

The next POA General Membership Meeting will be on Tuesday, May 19, in the Laurel Manor Rec Center at 7:00 p.m.

Sheriff Farmer from Sumter County will talk about driving on traffic circles and efforts of the Sheriff's department to safeguard our homes and neighborhoods.

Please join us for this important meeting and coffee and donuts afterward. The discussion and opportunity to meet fellow Villagers add up to a thought-provoking and interesting evening regarding your community. Non-members of the POA are always welcome. □

The POA Forum

The Forum is on the POA Website for your use. You can comment on anything going on in The Villages, respond to comments of others, and make your thoughts known. This is your Hometown now -- speak up!

Website at www.poa4us.org

WHY SHOULD YOU JOIN AND SUPPORT THE POA?

When problems arise because Villagers are not getting a fair shake, or not getting the full range of amenities that they were promised, or when attempts are made to improperly off-load costs on the residents that should properly be borne by the Developer, who is going to effectively act on behalf of the residents? Even if an individual resident is interested enough to dig through the Byzantine system of CDDs to get the facts and is then able to understand what the facts mean, an individual resident has no power.

The Villages Home Owners' Association (VHA), which is supported by the Developer, consistently has refused to act on behalf of homeowners if it means going contrary to the will or interests of the Developer. Thus, you cannot count on the VHA on serious issues of Residents' Rights.

All that you have, in the final analysis, is the Property Owners' Association (POA), which is not only vigilant, but is willing and able to act on your behalf.

Remember that the possibility of such problems is not theoretical. They have, in fact, arisen. Consider two recent examples:

1. The Deterioration of Amenities - A few years ago, it became obvious that the quality and level of amenities were deteriorating, contrary to the contractual obligations of the Developer and the Developer's Central District, to which the Developer had sold the amenity property and the amenity contracts. Those of you who lived here at the time will recall, for example, the rats and crumbling plaster in the Paradise Center. Individuals' complaints to the Developer and to the District were of no avail. The VHA was silent on

the issue. It ultimately required a class-action lawsuit, supported by the POA, to finally resolve the matter. The result was a settlement last year, under which the Developer agreed to pay \$43 million, which is intended to ensure, among other things, the continued deliverance and maintenance of the amenities north of Hwy. 466 at the promised level.

2. The Vinyl-Siding Issue - The POA recently publicized some fairly widespread problems with vinyl-siding installation. Individual complaints were ineffective. The VHA denied that there was any problem and suggested that residents pay for their own repairs. However, the efforts of the POA to publicize the issue produced changes and improvements in construction techniques and secured repairs for hundreds of Villages homes through the warranty department.

Life and human nature being what they are, similar problems will probably arise in the future. For example, consider the present IRS investigation of the Developer's dealing with the Villages Center Community Development District (the VCCDD) and the validity of the District's issuance of tax-free bonds. The issues are significant. The investigation might evolve in a way which could have important negative implications for residents.

As the POA has pointed out, and despite the fears engendered by alarmist articles in The Orlando Sentinel, it is too early to tell if this will be the case. The POA is watching developments, and we will do what we can to protect your interests. If there is a case to be made to protect Residents' Rights, the POA will make it. We can't count on the VHA to do the same because of its close association with the developer.

So why should you join and support the POA? Basically, because the POA is all you've got looking after your interests as a Villager when problems arise. However, membership is voluntary. You can choose not to join and simply get a "free-ride" off your neighbors' dues and efforts. (Unfortunately, the great majority of Villagers, in fact, do get a free-ride since the POA has only 5,000 members out of a total population of over 70,000 in The Villages.)

On the other hand, you can do your part to protect your rights and those of your neighbors by joining the POA. Better yet,

don't just join; join AND become active -- participate in the POA with your enthusiasm, time, and skills. The choice is yours, but we do need your help. This is your community now and you need to support an organization like the POA as a champion of your rights.

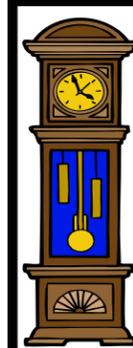
If you don't support the POA, you risk losing it. The POA is struggling to pay the monthly charge of over \$5,000 for printing and distributing the Bulletin. The POA is struggling because it lost about \$25,000 in annual advertising revenue when its two Select Sponsor advertisers did not renew recently because of the business slowdown. If we don't secure enough financial support, the very existence of the organization is in jeopardy. So, we need your financial help now. This is a serious call for all Villagers to help us in the POA's time of need.

Nicholson is New POA Secretary

We are pleased to announce that Mr. Dean Nicholson has joined the POA Board as Secretary. Dean hails from Boston and Connecticut and has recently worked in the financial services industry. Dean is a new resident in The Villages and lives in Poinciana. Please join us in welcoming Dean to the POA in his new role.

Ms. Nancy Sprenz has agreed to manage our Discount Partner program. Nancy moved here recently from Cleveland and lives in Silver Lake. She has sold yellow pages advertising and loved it. Nancy was also a top sales producer at Xerox. She is contacting all of our current Discount Partners to confirm their participation in the Discount program. She is also signing up as many new Partners as she can. Thanks, Nancy, for helping us out on this program.

Mr. Dennis Petrucelli has resigned as a director. Thanks to Dennis for his service. □



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Conflict of Interest Courtesy of Chapter 190 Why This Law Needs To Be Changed

Florida Statute Chapter 190 allows district supervisors to be employees of the developer and district employees to be stockholders of the developer's companies. There are few other situations where such a blatant conflict of interest would be tolerated, let alone encouraged. But Chapter 190 was written by developers, for developers. You have to hand it to them – Chapter 190 excludes community development districts (CDDs) from other Florida statutes that would prohibit such oppressive control by the few at the expense of the many residents.

Previous issues of the Bulletin have pointed out some specific examples of former district manager Pete Wahl working closely with developer "elected" supervisors to enter into agreements with the developer that were not in residents' best interests. This has been going on since day one and is permitted by Chapter 190. For example, the expense of creating and maintaining storm water runoff ponds for the commercial land along CR42 (Mulberry Shopping Center, Citizens Bank, professional offices, etc.) is borne by the residents of CDD4 because Mr. Wahl, as their district manager at the time, obligated them by implementing an agreement between the CDD4 Board and the developer to pay for the construction and maintenance of additional retention ponds with the capacity needed for these commercial entities. While the developer paid nothing, the residents of the district were required to assume portions of the infrastructure bonds and thus pay for the ponds to service the commercial district. This would not have occurred if Chapter 190 and the Florida Legislature had not allowed the board such a conflict of interest.

Thus far vigilant residents have uncovered at least two other benefits received by the developer at the expense of the residents:

(1) the failure of the VCCDD to bill the Developer's Entertainment Division for use of the Savannah Center, a bill which totaled over \$110,000 by the time it was discovered, and

(2) the permitted use of the amenity fee

funds for Community Watch to provide security services for all of the developer's commercial properties. These services include checking the doors of all of the stores and country clubs each night without ever charging a penny to the developer. Now that this "oversight" has been identified, the developer will be billed approximately \$1,000 per month for the service in just the VCCDD geographical area.

As previous issues of the Bulletin have pointed out, the conflict of interests allowed by Chapter 190 has apparently resulted in at least four district employees receiving potentially very valuable financial interests in developer owned companies. While residents who serve on our numbered district boards as elected supervisors are regularly cautioned about doing anything that might even be "perceived" as inappropriate, district employees under Chapter 190 apparently have total freedom to receive whatever financial "benefits" the developer is offering.

It is going to be very difficult to solve the 190 problems. Past efforts to have the legislature even consider a bill requiring full disclosure to residential purchasers were doomed -- developers made sure the representatives they got elected kept it from being discussed. (See the POA-proposed Disclosure Reform bill on the POA website.)

Any representative who would champion residents' rights that could limit the powers of developers would likely see his/her campaign funds evaporate, flowing to the next puppet ready to represent the developer's interests.

Too many residents in Florida have abdicated their voting rights and believe only what they are permitted to read and hear by wealthy developers who control much of life around them.

We hope that the IRS inquiry of the VCCDD will at least alert the conscientious Florida legislators to the unfair advantage CHAPTER 190 is giving to developers. Hopefully, the legislators will be motivated to make appropriate amendments, and we further hope that residents throughout the State of Florida will wake up and vote for legislators who represent the people, not the power.

Residents south of CR466 need to pay attention and see what is going on before it is too late. Most of the amenities south of

CR466 are yet to be "turned over" to the SLCDD, and residents in that area need to be involved in the deals before they are consummated.

For example, your amenity money will not go far if it is used to subsidize commercial attractions rather than resident recreational facilities. The commercial interests in Lake Sumter exist to draw customers to the commercial district; thus the commercial district amenities should be operated and maintained by the commercial district, not by the residents. You can't always count on a district board composed of developer employees and associates to have your best interests in mind. □

Guardian Angels

Once upon a time there was a child ready to be born. The child asked God, "How am I going to live there being so small and helpless?"

God replied, "Among the many angels, I chose one for you. Your angel will be waiting for you and will take care of you."

The child further inquired, "But tell me, here in heaven I don't have to do anything but sing and smile to be happy."

God said, "Your angel will sing for you and will smile for you every day. You will feel your angel's love and be very happy."

Again the child asked, "And how am I going to be able to understand when people talk to me if I don't know the language?"

God said, "Your angel will tell you the most beautiful and sweet words you will ever hear, and with much patience and care, your angel will teach you how to speak."

"I've heard that on Earth there are bad men. Who will protect me?"

God said, "Your angel will defend you even if it means risking its life."

"But I will always be sad because I will not see you anymore."

God said, "Your angel will always talk to you about me and will teach you the way to come back to me, even though I will always be next to you."

At that moment there was much peace in heaven, but voices from Earth could be heard and the child hurriedly asked, "God, please tell me my angel's name."

God said, "Her name is not important. You will simply call her Mom."

(author unknown) □

AAC MEETING SUMMARY

April 8 and April 15, 2009

Old business topics included:

- La Hacienda Catering Services Agreement and Resident Council Guidelines Regarding Catering – The board recommended approval of the Catering contract and also updated the Resident Council guidelines regarding catering services to reflect the changes which will allow residents broad flexibility for catering alternatives at recreation centers north of CR466.

- Health-Related Medical Support Groups – The board approved on a trial basis, a staff recommendation to allow resident council support groups that are defined as “a non-funded group with health conditions that are recognized through the American Medical Association” to qualify for an exemption allowing up to 10 guests per support group meeting. This will be allowed for a trial period through December 31, 2009. Since these groups already have meeting rooms assigned with sufficient unused capacity, the expectation is that this will have no negative impact on residents or the amenity system.

- Proposed Changes to Guest ID Card Policies – The board reviewed the staff recommendations of the resident focus group. There was significant board and audience discussion. At the continued meeting on April 15th the board decided to hold a workshop session on April 27th to work out a more definitive proposal for board action.

- Single Resident Guest ID Privileges – The board authorized staff to do further investigation into the possibility of allowing single resident households to have a second ID card. It is possible that this information will be available to the AAC at their May 6th meeting. Please check the agenda at the district web site prior to the meeting.

Discussion Items:

- Cart Path Interlocal Agreement – Staff is working with the numbered districts’ attorney, Valerie Fuchs, to begin developing the interlocal agreements needed if the numbered districts and the AAC wish to have AAC settlement funds used to refurbish certain recreation trails. Staff is also negotiating with the selected engineering firm regarding prices for services needed to develop trail

refurbishment plans and the associated costs.

- The AAC board approved a schedule of budget workshops to be held April 27th, May 7th, May 13th and May 27th.

The continuation meeting on April 15th was preceded by an AAC Workshop where the board reviewed several Pool Monitoring scenarios, which will be considered during the budget workshops.

Please go to the www.districtgov.org website for the official minutes, agendas and meeting schedule.

Next AAC meeting – May 6th, 1:30 p.m. at the Savannah Center.

PS: For those of you who get most of your information from the Daily Sun, a recent report on the VCCDD board meeting made it clear that the reporter does not understand the roles of the AAC and the VCCDD. While the VCCDD awards contracts for the use of amenity funds, it is the AAC that has to approve them. Per the lawsuit settlement agreement, the AAC has authority over ALL amenity funds not required for bond repayment, and the VCCDD is obligated at their next meeting to enact, adopt, etc. the actions of the AAC. For that reason, the VCCDD board awarded “without discussion” the bunker sand replenishment bid. □

Letter to the Editor:

Resident-Only Golf

Why does the Golf Advisory Board go against the wishes of the golf players and open all the Executive Golf courses to guests. It is tough enough to get T-times now without having to compete with the huge numbers of guests that come to this place. It doesn't seem in the best interests of permanent Villagers to have to compete with outsiders for a T-time. Voting by golfers seemed to indicate that they preferred to leave those "resident only" courses for Villagers only. The Villages seems to be catering to guests and children more than they do residents. Give us a break!

Mike Stevko

Editor's Note: This decision to open up the three “Residents Only” executive courses (out of 24 total) to play by guests of residents was discussed at a recent AAC meeting. There was no opposition voiced at the meeting to the change. It should be noted, however, that due to a recent change any golf group with a guest using the golf reservation system will be placed at the bottom of the reservation list after all groups with just residents have been accommodated. □



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Need To Update POA Database

We have learned recently that we need to update our membership database for email addresses. The problem is that too many of the 2,700 or so email addresses in the POA database may be obsolete or non-functional.

To cite a recent situation, a few weeks ago we had to send emails to the entire database with the corrected FertiGator ad that contained some wrong information in the April issue of the Bulletin. Some of these came back and some were not delivered or read. We would like to correct our database to have the most up-to-date information and eliminate these problems.

So, if you think that we have your email address on file, but you did not receive the FertiGator ad, then we need to update your email address in our database.

It might be that we don't have your latest or updated email address after you made a change in your internet service provider. If so, please email your corrected or new email address to us at poa@poa4us.org.

It might also be that your spam filter does not recognize us as an acceptable emailer. If so, please add our email address (poa@poa4us.org) to your list of acceptable senders so that your spam filter doesn't send our emails directly to your spam folder.

It could also be that we never had your email address. It would help us now if you could email your address to us.

Please rest assured that we will use your email address only for important email communication from the POA. We will never

sell this information to others or allow non-authorized use of our email database.

Almost all of our recent use of the email database was to send out membership renewal notices. With 2,700 in the email database, the cost saving for just postage, envelopes, and photocopying could amount to well over \$1,500, not to mention the time and effort involved in sending out the notices. Thus, you can see the importance to us in having the correct email information. □

From the POA Website Forum

Need To Boil Water

Apr 10 - It should be policy to place timely public health alerts on the front page of the Daily Sun. Today an announcement to "boil water" for residents of Hadley and Amelia villages was found tucked away in section C page 5 under Tri-County news. A problem of potable water is a serious concern especially to those who are seriously ill. It was very specific to the village affected. I was disappointed with the lack of concern shown for residents. When I called the District Office and the editor of the newspaper to point out the problem, the attitude seemed to be that it was my fault – they posted it, and had it on VNN. I, and everyone else I suppose, should have been watching. I could not get across the issue of prominent placement of the notice, or the irony of the newspaper telling me to go for news to the television.

Letter to the Editor:

Need To Spray Bugs

It isn't bad enough that we are surrounded by landscaping, golf courses and swimming pools using dangerous chemicals and fertilizers, but also we are being sprayed by the counties for insect control with Malathion, a dangerous chemical that has been banned for use in California. Increased spraying is done in the summer making it more toxic because the air is hotter and more humid, therefore the chemical is more concentrated.

My late husband, who had lung cancer, requested a letter from his doctor to give to the County Mosquito Control so they would not spray our residence, since we had been able to do this when we lived in Mt. Dora. The doctor, located in The Villages, would not honor our request because he was concerned with political repercussions. I know people who have moved from The Villages at the suggestion of their doctors because of lung cancer, asthma and allergies.

There are alternatives that are non-toxic, among which are "Suredye" and "pyrethrum." It would be a good idea to start signing petitions to encourage the counties to use a less toxic substance in The Villages.

Find out all the information on the harmful effects of Malathion on <http://www.chemtox/malathion/research/> It will scare the daylights out of you.

Shirley Snyder □

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Roof Ridge Vents

We have heard of a “silent” recall of the ridge vents on roofs in some areas of The Villages. This just affects homes built in the 1994-2004 time period and then almost exclusively north of Hwy. 466 and west of Hwy. 441/27 in the VCCDD administration area. The new areas south of Hwy. 466 are generally not affected.

Ridge vents are the extra strips of roofing material on the very top horizontal ridges of a roof. The purpose is to allow hot air to escape from the attic. These were manufactured by Alcoa who is paying for the full replacement cost.

It is possible to see these from the ground. The defective vents are grey in color – and not black or metal. Usually, shingle material is affixed to the grey plastic vent; metal roof vents generally don't have shingles on them.

SPS Roofing, a local roofing company, is handling the warranty work. It suggested that residents inspect their ridge vents from the ground to determine if replacement under the warranty is required. If so, SPS Roofing will come to your house, verify the needed replacement, take the required pictures and fill out the necessary form. The homeowner sends this package to Alcoa, which authorizes a no-charge repair and no inspection fee.

If SPS Roofing is asked to do the inspection, there is a \$35 charge if no warranty replacement is necessary. In that case, SPS does a full roof inspection for the \$35 charge to determine if any other warranty work is available.

Call SPS Roofing at 347-8530 to set an appointment if you think you need the replacement. Try to determine beforehand whether you actually have the defective ridge vents. If you can't be sure, be prepared for the \$35 charge if you don't have the defective roof vents. □

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Letter to the Editor:

Boorish Behavior

A few weeks ago my wife and I attended a Sumter Landing music event. All event chairs were taken when we arrived. We brought our own chairs, aware that seating can be difficult. We found a spot in front where we would not be in the way of dancers. Immediately a man behind me yelled "Don't sit in front of me." We opened our chairs to the side of this man. Another in the group swore and some of the women complained that "Someone always has to spoil things." This hostile behavior continued but did not drive us away.

Recently my son was visiting and standing in line at the Sumter Landing Movie theater during the early evening, about 7:00 pm. He called me on his cell phone: "Dad, you won't believe this. Two men are fighting in the street."

In the last few days another incident happened to residents in our Village. They opened their chairs at Sumter Landing to watch the entertainment. A woman to the rear of them pulled the lady's seat out from under her as she sat. Fortunately, her son prevented her from falling. The chair-pulling woman's companion knocked the lady's hat off followed by loud obscene language.

There is something I'm missing here. I don't understand how someone can leave a shirt on a chair many hours before an event

to "save the chair." This is common practice. Supposedly, they feel they own the chair and space" from that moment on. Worse, they can dictate to others where they may or may not sit.

My personal observations: Apparently some folks arrive early or "claim a seat with a garment." After a beer, or many, they feel they own the space in front of them. I'm not a small individual. I was prepared for a physical attack. What does this say about "Florida's Friendliest Village?" This "chair ownership" is rampant and WILL end in an assault, or worse. Publicity of an incident will take off and be damaging to all of us.

My neighbors and I feel evening entertainment at Sumter Landing is becoming dangerous. The mix of boorish residents and outsiders is reducing our pleasure and positive attitude.

Reserving chairs by dropping a garment should be forbidden. A worker should circulate after chairs are set up and remove any articles of clothing from ALL seating. Publicity should be circulated advising residents that the pavilion is public and folks may bring their own chairs and sit where they wish.

If an incident occurs, who is there to respond? Whom do we call? If Security personnel at these events, in the absence of police, have not been provided for, there may be fertile ground for civil recourse.

Paul Endersbee □



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Letter to the Editor:

Nuclear Power Plants

I would like to present an opposing view to the article on nuclear power by Sue Michalson, Chair, The Village Greens [in the April issues of the Bulletin]. I am a physicist who became a nuclear engineer, and I am in favor of nuclear power.

I am sure Progress Energy has good economic models for projecting comparative costs of producing electricity by different technologies. Initial costs, operating costs, licensing costs, transmission, and environmental damage all have to be considered. If wind or solar form a significant part of the generating base then a storage system must be constructed with attendant loss of efficiency. One nuclear power plant produces more than 1000 megawatts on a nearly continuous basis. Currently wind or solar plants will cost more per megawatt to construct than nuclear. Coal plants will cost more to operate if their carbon emissions have to be reduced. Natural gas has future supply uncertainties.

I understand the objection to paying now

for future generating capacity. However, the utility has an obligation to secure a source of electricity to meet future demand. Spending should begin now on the plant to avoid our electricity supplier having to bid on the spot market in the future for scarce out of state electricity. Note that this sensible move is the opposite of the often criticized action of passing on the burden of a growing national debt to our children and grandchildren.

In 1978, as part of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act, our politicians stopped the US nuclear industry from recycling nuclear fuel. Their not very good alternative was to bury the valuable fuel, untreated, under Yucca Mountain. This is feasible but while Congress deals with the "Not in my backyard" problem the rest of the world has proceeded to extract the useful plutonium and uranium from the fuel, put it back into new fuel, and concentrate the bad radioactive stuff in a tenth of the volume for burial. It will always be poisonous but there are engineering solutions that can keep it isolated from the environment - solutions to the problem that are in place for our defense industry radioactive waste.

Before using the German study on cancers and leukemia in children near nuclear plants, and other similar studies in the United States, you must compare nuclear plants with other significant sources of electricity and even against other industries like oil and chemical. There are also health effects on people living near coal plants and other processing plants and factories. We tolerate these effects when we balance the costs and benefits of the things we manufacture that provide us with our quality of life.

Do not misunderstand me, everything possible must be done to reduce cancer causing emissions, one cancer or leukemia case is one too many. I am encouraged that over the years there have been improvements in emissions and newer plants of all kinds meet stricter limits.

What can we do to protect the environment? I feel strongly that we should all work to improve education in science and mathematics so that our children and grandchildren can make informed decisions, whether they become businessmen, health workers, engineers, teachers or politicians.

Allan McFarlane, Bonnybrook. □

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Letter to the Editor:

Non-Villagers Using Recreation Facilities

At its monthly meeting on April 8, 2009, the Amenity Authority Board (AAC) voted to allow local non-Village residents to use our recreation centers by a vote of 3 to 2.

On the AAC agenda under old business titled as "Revisions to Residents Council Guidelines Language for Health-Related Support Group Participation" was nothing more than a request to allow non-Villagers to use our recreation facilities.

Several speakers from the Villages made

very compelling speeches for allowing non-residents to use our recreation facilities to the point one could feel sorry for the people. The opposition also made a very compelling case against allowing nonresidents into our recreation facilities.

Bottom line is that each support group club in the Villages will be allowed to have 10 nonresidents at each of their meetings. There are 31 support groups clubs meeting in our recreation centers with no limit as to how many more can be created. This allows 310 additional nonresidents to use our facilities now with no limit in the future as more clubs are created.

As one resident pointed out, people

elected (her friends) other near-by communities to live in for many different reasons and are not paying amenity fees so why should they be allowed to use our facilities. Also, pointed out by the same person, what happens if a nonresident gets injured while using one of our recreation centers? This question was never clarified by the AAC.

The AAC board members from CDD1 and CDD2 voted against allowing nonresidents to use our Recreation Centers. As Carl Bell put it, "he must uphold the rights of the residents." AAC board members from Lady Lake, CDD3 and CDD4 voted to allow nonresidents to utilize our recreation centers. What will the AAC response be when a group or Church wants to use our swimming pools?

If clubs want to bring in members from outside The Villages, they should be charged a "user" fee. That is the only way that there may be any fairness to this issue.

Village residents should let their representative know if they want nonresidents using their recreation facilities. You can reach your representatives by phone or email:

CDD 1 – Carl Bell 750-1251, carl.bell@district.org;

CDD 2 – Marty Rothbard 753-9065, marty.rothbard@district.org;

CDD 3 – John Wilcox 259-1716, john.wilcox@district.org;

CDD 4 – Rich Lambrecht 751-4380, rich.lambrecht@district.org;

Lady Lake – Eldon Sheldon 750-0198, elden.sheldon@district.org.

Bill Garner

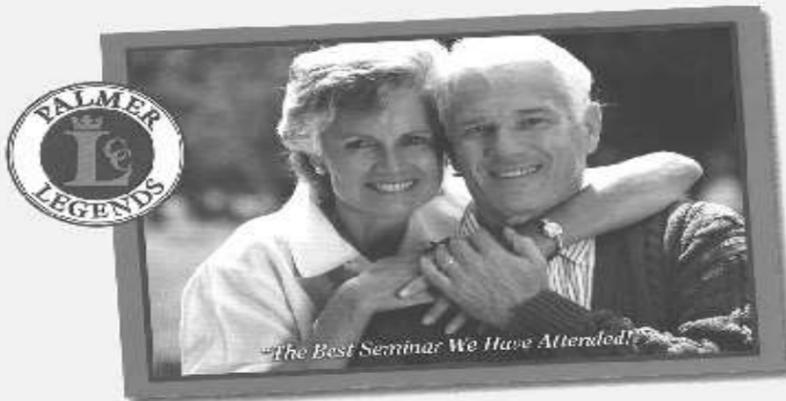
Editor's Note: Mr. Garner is a director of the POA expressing his personal opinion. □

Membership Forms

We are continually trying to make things easier for our membership when it comes to filling out our membership form for either a new member or a renewing member.

If you go to the POA Website at <http://www.poa4us.org/> to fill out your new or renewal membership form, you will find that it is now in a PDF (Portable Document Format) fill-able form. This allows you to type your information directly into the form as displayed on your computer screen. Type in the information requested, print form, add your check, and mail. □

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Villages Lifelong Learning College (VLLC)

Issues With Our Amenity Facilities

The Villages Lifelong Learning College (VLLC) is not a part of The Villages amenity program. It is privately owned and charges for its services. Its classes are held in either The Villages Charter School Buildings, which are operated by public funds, or in The Villages Recreation Facilities, which are committed to the use of the amenity-fee-paying residents of The Villages (and their guests -- who, unless an identified relative, must live outside of the tri-county area).

The VLLC classes are open to the public - they do give priority registration to Villages residents, but they are open to the public.

Why is it that a resident may not bring in a friend, who may live in Spruce Creek, to participate in a line dancing activity at one of our recreation centers, but the VLLC is per-

mitted to enroll and bring in outsiders?

The Recreation Department staff has stated that we have very little room for new activities requested by residents, yet we permit non-residents to use our much-in-demand facilities through the VLLC. This must stop now, as it is only going to get worse as build-out continues.

At a minimum, if the VLLC is permitted to use our facilities for classes with an open enrollment, they must be charged the hourly rate and certainly not just \$3+ per head per course.

Even if we were to permit the VLLC to receive resident rental rates (as we residents must rent the facility if our activity/event is open to outsiders) instead of merely charging them \$3 per head for a class that might take many hours - some as high as 35 hours, they would have to make a hefty contribution to our amenity revenues - enough so that it might force them to make all classes held in Villages recreation facilities open to Village

residents only.

If you total up the hours the VLLC used in The Villages recreation centers just for the winter/spring art classes, it was over 575 hours. One can only imagine what the total number of hours of our amenity facilities are being used by the VLLC and are open to the public that we cannot, as residents, entertain in our own recreation centers.

It is a fact that some of these facilities are still owned by the developer, who also owns and operates the VLLC. But the developer has an agreement with the Center districts to continue to build and operate recreation facilities for the current as well as future residents and is thereby not in a position to make special rules for facilities he still controls.

We really need to get a handle on this thing now. □

Vinyl Siding Repair Firms

We have found that the following companies have done acceptable if not good work for residents in the repair of their vinyl siding problems, etc.

We cannot guarantee their work, but we have heard from residents that they are pleased with the results.

So, if you need vinyl siding repairs, consider these companies. And, please let us know how they performed for you.

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The POA Survey

We plan to summarize the recently completed Residents' Survey in the next issue of the Bulletin. Many thanks to the over 1,300 residents who took the time to respond.

Thanks also to the many who took the time to add comments to their survey form. We know from past years that these were of particular interest to residents. Reading the comments of residents was one of the more popular features which we published just after the survey was completed.

However, since we can't print all the comments, we plan to put these on our website when we have them summarized next month.

□

Letter to the Editor:

Woodbury Electrical Noise

Our Woodbury Village neighborhood has been subjected to a 24 hour constant noise from a transformer installed last November by Progress Energy. We'd like to contact other Villagers who may be affected by this noise so that we can petition Progress with a full list of names. We ask anyone suffering with us in silence to please contact us at tb4n255@embarqmail.com. We are just trying to get back to the peace and quiet we expected when we moved into The Villages and try to enjoy the rest of our retirement years.

Tom Browne 751 4653 □

Is there any Chinese Wallboard Here?

Last week in an item the Nightly News in the New York area, there was a story about sheet rock made in China that contains a high level of sulphur. This item has been coming into our country since 2004 and due to the shortage of sheetrock during hurricane season, a lot of this sheetrock from China was sent to Florida. This sheetrock gives off a sulphur smell.

Are any of the houses in The Villages using this sheetrock or drywall? Was any used during previous years when several hurricanes caused shortages in a lot of materials...shingles, building supplies, etc?

I thought of the POA right away since you have access to so much information related to The Villages...you are doing a great job keeping us informed as to what is happening here...thank you.

Charlotte Rupakus

Editor's Note: We have not heard any reports of this problem in The Villages. □

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Your CDD Meetings

The Villages CDDs meet at the Laurel Manor district offices:

The VCCDD and the SLCDD Center Districts meet on the Thursday before the third Friday of each month at 8:00 am and 9:30 am, respectively.

The residential CDDs in the VCCDD administrative area meet on the second Friday of the month as follows: CDD1 at 8:00 am, CDD2 at 9:30, CDD3 at 11:00, CDD4 at 1:30 pm.

The residential CDDs in the SLCDD administrative area meet on the third Friday of the month as follows: CDD5 at 8:00 am, CDD6 at 9:30, CDD7 at 11:00, CDD8 at 1:00 pm, CDD9 at 1:30, and CDD10 at 2:00 pm.

The AAC meets on the Wednesday before the second Friday of the month at 1:30 pm, usually in the Savannah Center.

These meeting days and times may change, so watch the Daily Sun, the district governments' websites, or the Our Place column on Thursdays, for notices of date and place changes.

All Villagers are welcome at any of these worthwhile meetings which show our local governments in action. Residents wanting to know what's going on with their governments should attend, watch, listen, ask questions.

Also, the District Manager's office conducts a two-hour CDD Orientation program once a week at 10:00 a.m. on Thursdays. Call 753-4508 for details.

CDD Orientation is informative and provides a good basic overview of how CDDs work and are organized. The POA recommends the program for all residents.

However, the POA also recommends that, after attending the Orientation, you come to a POA general membership meeting for the rest of the story. You will not get the whole story at CDD Orientation. □

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It's Time to Renew Your POA Membership

Our new membership year for 2009 has started. Household memberships run annually from January 1 to December 31.

So, this is a good time to renew your 2009 annual POA membership. Our dues are \$10.00 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 any Bulletin. □

Bulletin Pick-Up

If the Bulletin is not delivered to your driveway within the first ten days of the month, you can get copies at the locations listed below. Please take the time to thank the manager or customer service staff for stocking the Bulletin for pick-up. This would be a big help to us.

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Our Monthly Gardening Column:

Return of the Natives

by Anne Lambrecht
Master Gardener

Spring this year has been wonderful, don't you agree? It's so nice and cool outside. Background music and entertainment provided by the birds and the insects and other creatures. It's such a glorious time of year. Some of the plants that I thought were lost are surprisingly back.

Your garden need not be a passion or even a hobby and you may not be as crazy about the whole thing as I am, but in my opinion, your garden is a privilege, a chance to help the earth and witness first hand the wonders and beauty of nature. I am often asked to advise neighbors and friends about their landscaping. You should know that no landscape or garden is maintenance free, unless, of course, you've got plastic foliage. Yet there are many beautifully landscaped yards with a minimal amount of work if you have the RIGHT PLANT in the RIGHT PLACE.

May I introduce to you the wonderful world of native plants. Florida's flora includes one of the largest assortments of spontaneously occurring species in North America! More than 4100 plants have been cataloged and 2800 of these are "native" which means they were here prior to European contact. The other 1300 are non-native that found their way into the state through agriculture, horticulture, or land management practices or by inadvertent transport by ships, cars, planes, boats and people.

Using natives enhances conservation of natural resources and ensures low maintenance and sustainable gardens. The value of a planted landscape has been measured on how well it serves humans, conserves water and provides for wildlife habitat. Natives excel here because they live here. This does not mean they are maintenance free or water free. But they are low maintenance, low water and relatively pest and disease free.

Obtaining native plants is more challenging than just running over to the big box stores. The Association of Florida Native Nurseries (AFNN) publishes a free annual Native Plant and Services Directory that lists member nurseries by county. It is called The Guide for Real Florida Gardeners. AFNN nurseries have many years of experience

growing and planting natives and observing how different native plants perform in the landscape. Here's their information: AFNN, P.O. Box 434, Melrose, FL 32666 www.afnn.org. For copies of the guide, contact them at: realfloridagardeners@earthlink.net or 321-917-1960.

The Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS) was organized in 1980 to "promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities in Florida." Membership is an invaluable resource and a great way of meeting other plant enthusiasts, sharing plants, obtaining information on local sources, participating in field trips, etc. Our Sumter County local chapter meets the second Monday each month at 6:00 pm. For information, call 352-568-8277.

Other sources for natives are mail order, and events at state and local parks, and botanical garden events. Some local nurseries have a surprising number of natives and are willing to order if they don't have it.

The closest native nursery to the Villages is Shady Oaks Gather All owned by Allen Wise. He's 6 miles south of Wildwood in Sumterville. 352-793-4253. Call before you head out there. He's got native plants, Florida friendly plants and also the new palm fertilizer 8-2-12 with necessary micro-nutrients recommended by the University of Florida.

www.floridagardener.com is another great website with lists of native plants and native plant sources in the area.

Just because a plant is a Florida native doesn't mean it will grow well here in the Villages. I would like to have some of the natives from Miami: Cocoplum, Gumbo limbo, Cinnamon bark - I restrain myself from having them in my Zone 8B garden.

I work pretty hard in my garden. Can you believe the husband tells people that I like to wallow in the mud? And that I drag in dirt like a buffalo? I certainly wouldn't go around telling people that he snores and won't eat his vegetables. When I'm in my garden I usually ask the husband to hold my calls (I'll bet you didn't know he's a wonderful secretary!) but if I forget to tell him and I get a call, he'll bring the phone out for me. I can usually see which way out of the house he's going and I must admit I enjoy eluding him, hiding or running around to the other side of the house, making him chase after me wearing my too small flip flops because he doesn't want to get his feet dirty. I chuckle and laugh then act surprised when he finally reaches me with the phone. Please don't tell him and ruin my fun!

Recommended books:

Florida's Best Native Landscape Plants by Gil Nelson

A Gardener's Guide to Florida's Native Plants by Rufino Osorio

Native Florida Plants by Robert G. Haehle and Joan Brookwell

Florida Wildflowers in Their Natural Communities by Walter Kingsley Taylor □



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The Recreation Centers and the Customer Service Center have the **Roundabout Brochure** available. This shows how to drive through those often confusing Roundabouts in The Villages. You can pick up your copy now.

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The POA Discount Partner Program is a continuing benefit for POA members. Just show your current year POA Membership card when ordering the product or service listed here. And, please say "thanks" to our Discount Partners for participating in this program. (* = new this issue)

All Things Fine - 1171 Main St., Spanish Springs, 352-257-7384. 10% off all regularly priced merchandise. Excludes sale items. Not valid with any other offer.

Away From Home Pet Sitting Service in The Villages, 352-454-2623. 25% off first day service of pet sitting while you are away.

Bonne Chimie Custom Skin Care - 990 Alvarez Ave., Spanish Springs. 352-391-9600. 20% discount. Not valid with other promotions.

Bravo Pizza - 1080 Lake Sumter Landing, 352-430-2394. 10% off dine in & take out (whole meal). Not valid with other discounts.

Caribongo - 1041 Canal St., Lake Sumter Landing, 352-750-6147. Free color changing Tote Bag (retail value \$9.99) with the purchase of \$30.00 or more at the time of purchase. Offer not valid with any other offer or promotion. Sale items excluded. Limit one Tote per family.

* **Charley Bars By Jack** - Secure your sliding glass door from break-ins. Install CHARLEY BAR W/Key. 10% Discount to POA. 259-7637.

Chick-fil-A - 730 Hwy 441, N. Rolling Acres Plaza, 352-430-0223. Value Size any meal and get a free chicken sandwich.

Cingular (Spectrum Global Network) - 972 Del Mar Drive, Spanish Springs, 352-205-7513. 10% off all phones with activation.

The Club Golf Cart Security System for Villagers, email at yunk38@comcast.net, 352-391-5077. \$3.00 discount (apx. 10%) for the Club Golf Cart Security device for POA.

Colonial Medical Supplies - 724 S US Hwy 441, Plaza One north of Oakwood Grill, 352-391-5169. 10% item discount to the POA.

Comfort Suites - 1202 Avenida Central, 352-259-6578. 25% discount, May 1, 2009, through October 31, 2009. All reservations are based on availability. Must call hotel directly in advance for individual reservations.

Coral's Casual Patio and Fireplace Shoppe, U.S.Hwy 441/27, across from Wal-Mart, 352-307-8522. Free bottle of "Dew Not" with the purchase of \$300.00 or more. One per customer.

Cozco Handcrafts - 1121 Main St., Spanish Springs, 352-430-0386. 10% off - excludes sale items.

Custom Apparel & Gifts - 920 Bichara Blvd, La Plaza Grande, 352-750-1600. 10% off any item in stock in store; 25% off custom framing.

Edible Arrangements - 11962 CR 101 - Palm Ridge Plaza, 352-391-1334. \$4.00 off purchases over \$25.00.

Enterprise Rent-A-Car - 1076 Lake Sumter Landing. 352-751-2417. Special rates for POA members. A pick-up service and one-way rentals to Orlando and Sanford airports are available.

Flags & Flag Poles - 845 CR 25 across from Lady Lake Post Office. 352-751-1876. \$4.00 off flag pole order of \$119 or more for POA members showing their current year membership card. Discount on "check and cash orders" only.

Funeral Planners Inc. - For the POA, 10% off regularly priced funeral planning package or 15% off deceased identity theft protection service. Visit <http://www.FuneralPlannersInc.com>

* **Funtime Piano or Keyboard Lessons** - Call Nancy. Beginners to Advanced; All Types of Music. POA Special \$12 per 1/2 hour weekly lesson (\$3 off regular \$15 price). 352-750-6475.

Gourmet Go Go - A delivery service for dinner menus from local restaurants. \$1.00 discount off regular delivery fees. 352-205-0829.

Great Day on the Water Boat Tours - Discounts of \$5.00, \$7.00 or \$10.00 per person on various boat tours. Call 866-269-6584 for details.

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Island Images - 1112 Main Street, Spanish Springs, 352-259-7623. 10% Discount on Mondays. Excludes sales items.

Johnny Rockets - 976 Old Mill Run, Lake Sumter Landing, 352-259-0051. 10% discount.

Kilwin's Chocolate and Ice Cream - 1108 Main Street, Spanish Springs, 352-430-3600. Buy one, get 50% off on any ice cream menu item. One offer per family membership.

MOE'S Southwest Grill - US Hwy. 441 North, Rolling Acres Plaza, 352-430-3610. Buy 1 Get 1 Free every Saturday with the purchase of two medium drinks! Not valid with any other offer. One benefit offer per family membership.

Odd's & Errands by Paula. Your affordable Personal Assistant. 352-430-0764. 10% discount.

Ollie's Frozen Custard - Next to Blockbuster in the Spanish Plainses Shopping Center. Use the Ollie's Coupon in the Bulletin or get a 10% discount by showing your POA membership card.

Panda Express - 869 North Hwy. 27/441, Home Depot Plaza, 352-751-2507. 10% off, not

valid with coupons or specials.

Plaza Jewelers - 16770 S. Hwy. 441, Baylee Plaza, Summerfield, 352-307-3846. 20 to 40% saving off the already low retail price, & all watch batteries \$3.00.

Quality Hearing Center - 16850 S. Hwy. 441, Suite 306, Baylee Plaza, Summerfield. Call 352-307-7377 for an appointment. 10% discount.

ScentSational Candles and Gifts - 994 Alvarez Avenue, Spanish Springs, 352-753-1604. 20% off any one non-sale item.

SmartSafe Tornado Shelters - One day installation in garage floor or carport. Call Pat Tripp at 352-702-6386. See actual installation. 5-10% off selected models for POA members.

Sonic Drive-In - 11211 SE 178 Pl., Wal-Mart Shopping Center, 352-347-2860. Tuesday Nights: 5 single patty burgers for \$5 after 5 PM. Add-on at extra charge. Wednesday Nights: 1/2 price single patty burgers; 99¢ single topping sundaes. Valid at the Summerfield location only.

Southern Image Photography - 97 Del Mar Drive, Spanish Springs, 352-430-2056. 10% off the Special of the Month.

* **Stewart Lawn & Landscape Maintenance** 352-347-3792. 20% discount to POA members.

Sunshine Hair & Nail Spa - The Terrace Shoppes of Spruce Creek, Summerfield, across from Wal-Mart, 352-307-0099. 10% off on retail products or nail services.

Vic's Embers - 7940 US Hwy. 441, Leesburg, 352-728-8989. Complimentary after-dinner cocktail or dessert for each person in the party. Not valid with other special offers.

Villages Car Wash and Lube - Bichara Blvd., La Plaza Grande Center, 352-753-1306. \$1.00 off the reg. price of silver or gold wash.

Villages 24/7 Kart Aide - Triple A Rescue Service for golf carts. 10% discount on yearly membership. Call 352-409-5853 for details.

* **Villagers Home Watch** - call us at 352-753-6545. 10% discount off reg. price of \$40 for first three months of service for POA members.

Village Spa and Salon - 13940 Hwy 441, Suite 802, Oakland Hills Plaza, 352-205-7081. \$15 off Spa Pedicure.

Wholesale Computer Components - The Terrace Shoppes of Spruce Creek, Summerfield, across from Wal-Mart, 352-245-1500. \$15.00 off on any computer repair. □

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