# The POA Bulletin

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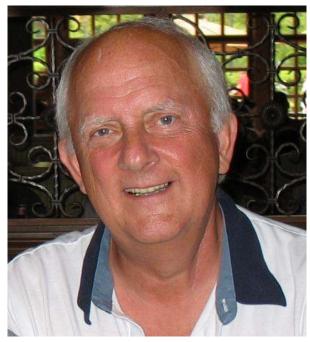


The Property Owners' Association of The Villages

Issue 37.01 Champions of Residents' Rights Since 1975

January, 2011

# Joe Gorman's Reflections: 9 Years as POA President



I have been fortunate over these past nine years to see the growth of the POA as a valued advocate for Residents' Rights and as a trusted information source in The Villages. I can't claim all the credit for our accomplishments, because many fellow POA members helped to make it happen. So, in many respects, I have just been an observer of fellow residents trying to make The Villages a better place in which to live. I think we succeeded to a great degree. It has been an honor and a privilege to represent my fellow Villagers as your President for these nine years.

Perhaps it is worthwhile to review some of the accomplishments of your POA over these past nine years:

#### **Organizational Comments**

Mission Statement and Residents' Bill of Rights - Nine years ago, I felt that residents didn't have a good idea of what the POA was or what it stood for. So, we devel-

oped the Mission Statement and the Residents' Bill of Rights, which we proudly publish in every issue of the Bulletin on page 2. In a nutshell, we stand for Residents' Rights.

The POA and the VHA - Residents, on a continuing basis, need to understand the difference between the POA and the VHA. Hopefully, we made the distinction. Unlike the VHA which was started by the Developer, the POA is independent, with no ties to the Developer, which allows us the ability to speak out for the best interests of residents.

**Budget** - The POA budget in 2001 was about \$6,000 with negative cash flow. In 2002, when I became President, we had about \$1,000 in the bank and unpaid bills of about \$1,500. Today the budget has a positive cash flow and ample cash reserves in the bank. We are not yet financially secure, but we are in better shape financially than ever.

**Bulletin** - We computerized the Bulletin in my first year. We expanded it from 4 pages in 2002 to the 20 pages we have today. The operation now has a budget of about \$70,000, and advertising is covering a larger share of expenses than ever. We made huge strides in attracting advertising to the Bulle-

January 18, 2011
THE NEXT POA
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Third Tuesday of the Month – 7:00 p.m.

Third <u>Tuesday</u> of the Month – 7:00 p.m. <u>Laurel Manor Recreation Center</u>

Pete Wahl, Chairman of The Villages Health System Foundation, Speaking on the Moffitt Cancer Center coming to The Villages Followed by Question & Answer Session

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tin. This alone pays a significant portion of the Bulletin's expenses.

<u>Membership</u> - At the end of 2001, POA membership stood at about 600, probably stagnant, most likely declining. Now it stands at about 7,000. People seem to recognize our efforts on their behalf.

<u>Hall of Fame</u> - We established the Hall of Fame to honor those who went before and made a significant contribution to the POA. We have inducted 16 into the Hall.

<u>Website</u> - A few years into my administration, we made our appearance on the internet with our own website (www.poa4us.org). The Bulletin is online each month and the Archives section dis-

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# Lake Medical Imaging

CHEERS to The Villages Health System (TVHS) and the Moffitt Cancer Center for partnering with Lake Medical Imaging, which will enable TVHS to share the use of a state-of-the-art PET/CT Scanner, a \$1.5M piece of medical equipment, already located in the Sharon Morse Building. Thus, the total needed for new equipment from donations to complete the Moffitt Cancer Center Equipment list was reduced from \$6.3M to \$4.8M.

We hope TVHS will continue to be open to, and solicit additional partnerships with, other outstanding medical corporations, hopefully, one already in possession of a state-of-the-art linear accelerator. This single piece of equipment costs \$2.4M. The ability to access one, already in The Villages general area, through a similar partnership, would lower the grand total of funds needed for equipment to \$2.4M, which is close to the amount originally estimated when the Moffitt Cancer Center partnership was announced in late July of 2010.

(Continued from page 1)

plays issues back to 2002.

<u>Legal Action Fund</u> - We started a Legal Action Fund to give us the flexibility to pursue legal actions when necessary. Villagers made generous contributions. The Fund was a critical resource in 2007-08, when it was used to pay some of the legal expenses in the 2008 lawsuit settlement with the Developer.

<u>Discount Partners</u> - We started this feature of the Bulletin as a way of offering additional benefits to our members.

<u>Board of Directors</u> - A total of 43 directors helped me with the POA business over the years. Thanks to all of them for their dedication and support. Today, the POA has one of the strongest and most qualified Boards it has ever had. In this respect, I am thankful that I can leave the POA in good hands with Elaine Dreidame as President, Bill Garner as Vice-President, and a topnotch Board.

My Organizational Mentors - Thanks, especially, to Russ Day for his guidance in my early years. Also, thanks to Win Shook, Carole Kopp, Sadie Woollard, Frank Renner, and Elaine Dreidame.

<u>Accomplishments</u> - Listed below are some of the notable accomplishments of the POA over the nine years. Throughout all of these issues, projects, and accomplishments, we always focused on straight talk and on what was best for all Villagers.

The Lawsuit Settlement - Villagers achieved a friendly class action lawsuit settlement with the Developer in 2008 valued at \$43 million. The key points of the settlement were: provision for Reserve funds for eventual repair and replacement of our facilities north of Highway 466; provision for renovation of the recreation trails north of Highway 446; creation of the AAC (Amenity Authority Committee), which allows residents,

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elected by residents, to make decisions about the expenditure of amenity funds north of Highway 466; and payoff of the Paradise Recreation Center renovation debt.

<u>Tax</u> - We opposed the creation of this taxing district, which would have taxed Sumter County residents about \$200-\$300 per home for use by our hospital and give 20% of the tax off the top to the Developer's foundation.

**Expansion of the Hospital** - After the defeat of the Sumter Hospital Tax, the owner of our hospital, the Leesburg Regional Medical Center, said it would delay construction of the expansion. We called this delayed expansion of our life-saving hospital morally wrong. After a series of hard-hitting stories in the Bulletin, LRMC finally relented and proceeded with the expansion.

Hospital Emergency Room - Over the years, we noticed continuing poor service and performance in our hospital's ER and documented over 125 instances of serious ER problems. In response, the LRMC brought in a new CEO of the hospital, a new director of the ER, dedicated more resources and staff to the ER, hired more nurses, established better training programs, and brought in three Villagers to sit on the Board of the hospital's parent organization.

Moffitt Cancer Center - We advocated bringing this cancer center to The Villages, for what we believed would be one of the crown jewels in the medical facilities of The Villages. We organized a letter-writing program, researched the demographics, argued for bringing the center here, and voiced our hopes to the appropriate decision-makers.

<u>Vinyl Siding</u> - Sloppy work and installation procedures characterized the building effort of some contractors for homes in The Villages south of Highway 466 in the 2005-2008 time period. Credit has to go to Ray Micucci and his wife Lori for spearheading

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#### **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. □

(Continued from page 2)

the inspection of over 1,500 homes and prodding the work of the warranty department and various contractors to repair problems.

Activity Policy Reversal - The Center Districts voted to restrict residents from gathering to protest anything. A liability insurance policy for \$1 million was also required 30 days in advance of any protest gathering. The POA opposed this action, calling it a violation of our Constitutional Rights of Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Assembly, and argued against it in the Bulletin. The Center Districts backed down and rescinded the rule.

Paradise Center - The original recreation center on the east side of Highway 441/27 was deteriorating and an absolute disgrace. We did a survey, organized residents, pleaded with the VCCDD to renovate the center, advocated renovation in the Bulletin, and were eventually successful in getting this \$5 million project off the ground.

**IRS/Bonds** - We are waiting on this one. But, what we did do was caution restraint rather than wild speculation, and we identified the Developer as the only one to benefit financially from the issuance of the bonds as tax exempt. If we get the negative outcome, we trust that the Developer will do what is necessary to protect residents from any adverse impact.

Performing Arts Center - We began advocating for this center early in 2010 and gave this idea the publicity it needed which helped secure the support of many Villagers. We presented the residents' concerns regarding the Developer's offer of the Church on the Square as a performing arts center. We will continue our support, for the PALMS, until the dream becomes a reality.

Conflict of Interests by District Employees - We documented the fact that some Center District employees were in line to benefit financially from certain dealings with the Developer. We viewed this as a conflict of interest. As a result, one Center District employee was re-assigned. With new District administrators, we do not expect any such problems in the future.

Forgotten \$200,000 Billing - Somehow a VCCDD bill to the Developer for about \$200,000 for expenses related to his use of the Savannah Center was never issued. A POA director, Irving Yedwab, noticed the problem and we publicized the situation in the Bulletin. The Developer did pay up, once the bill was issued.

<u>Sexual Offender Database</u> - We published the State of Florida Sexual Offender Database for our area in the Bulletin and brought it to our meetings for review. We felt it appropriate to publicize names and addresses so that residents could judge for themselves how best to react to any nearby offenders.

Purchase of Common Property - The then District Manager thought it unnecessary to publish details explaining the various common property purchases by the Center Districts from the Developer. We analyzed many of these deals and published detailed explanations in the Bulletin. Unfortunately, the District Manager's reluctance to voluntarily publish these details, has caused huge misunderstandings on the part of residents, which continue to confuse to this day.

**Center District Financial Statements** -

We were the first organization to publish the financial statements of the two Center Districts. Prior to that, the District Manager said that it was not necessary to publish the information for residents. Thankfully, the Center Districts now routinely publish this information on their website, www.districtgov.org.

**Bob Evans Restaurant** - The Developer wanted to build a Bob Evans restaurant on the east side of Highway 441/27 and he needed the residents to approve a zoning

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(Continued from page 3)

change from residential to commercial. We publicized the issue and the local opposition to this plan in the Bulletin. Ultimately, the restaurant was located on Highway 466.

<u>Misconduct on the Squares</u> - We reported in the Bulletin on several instances of misconduct on the Squares. As a result, Center District administration worked with local law enforcement to provide a heightened law enforcement presence on the Squares.

<u>**POA Surveys**</u> - We conducted five Surveys through the Bulletin over the years detailing attitudes about life in The Villages. Some of the actions were later addressed by



the Developer and the Center Districts.

<u>Wind Mitigation</u> - We publicized the details of this state program to save residents literally hundreds of dollars annually on their home insurance for older homes.

**Disappointments**-Unfortunately, the POA has not succeeded in some endeavors, over the years. Here's a listing of some of the more notable:

<u>VHA</u> - One of my fervent hopes was that the POA and the VHA merge to form one property owners' association. If the VHA had been willing to commit to the concept of Residents' Rights, we thought there might be a chance of succeeding. We made several approaches to the VHA, but were rebuffed each time.

<u>Closing of the Clubs</u> - The Developer closed the Silver Lake and the Chula Vista clubs over the opposition of the POA. The POA, under the direction of Bill Garner, our

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## Moffitt Cancer Center Equipment Donation Confusion Still Exists

The POA has received a number of telephone calls and letters, similar to the following, from Villager Bill Meier:

"I saw a full page ad in the Daily Sun for the Robert Boissoneault Oncology Institute here in The Villages. I've lived here for seven years and have never heard of it. I suppose that's probably a good thing, as I've not needed their services. But, this is the first I've noticed, and it's a bit strange to read what the ad has to say. While I can see serious advantages of getting the new Moffitt Center, I didn't realize it would be duplicating services already in place here. I'm wondering if you can set things straight in a future issue of the Bulletin."

Over time, the POA has been fully supportive of bringing the Moffitt Cancer Center to The Villages, even encouraging a letter writing campaign by our readers over a three month period last spring.

However, various statements in the local media have raised questions about what the Moffitt Cancer Center really means to the community, i.e., is this really the Cancer Center that most of us are envisioning, or is it a consolidation of current Villages cancer

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# **Moffitt Equipment**

(Continued from page 4)

caregivers with a skeleton staff of Moffitt employed supervisors? Is the duplication of equipment necessary? Is there another way to finance the equipment other than through donations? Why did the estimated cost of the equipment rise from \$2M to \$6.3M?, etc.

In an effort to help Villagers understand exactly what is involved and why, the POA has invited Mr. Pete Wahl, Chairman of the Villages Health Systems Foundation (VHSF), and coordinator of the efforts to raise the \$6.3M (now 4.8M), to be our featured speaker at the January 18, 2011, POA Meeting (open to all Villages residents). Mr. Wahl will answer audience questions following his presentation at the 7PM Laurel Manor meeting.

Here are more of the questions and comments received thus far. We hope Mr. Wahl will address them for us.





#### **A.The Villages Moffitt Care Center:**

- 1. What is the difference between a partnership with Moffitt and an affiliation with Moffitt?
- 2. How many full time Moffitt Cancer Center medical staff employees will actually be at The Villages on a daily basis? There are a number of different answers circulating.

The October 19, 2010 Daily Sun article stated that '...Moffitt will staff the center with its radiation oncologists, dosimetrists, radiation therapists, physicists and physicians. Non-physician clinical staff will be Villages Health System employees, while medical oncology (chemotherapy) will be administered by local, private medical oncologists, certified by Moffitt.'

A recent e-mail to Orange Blossom Gardens Lions, "The Moffitt/Hospital Partnership Explained," written by Rena Marchand, a volunteer and fundraiser for The Villages Health System Hospital Auxiliary, stated, "... The Villages Hospital System (TVHS)

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will lease the first floor of the new building for the radiation oncology center owned by TVHS and managed under contract with Moffitt Cancer Center. The first floor will also house the Chemo Infusion Center managed by TVHS. The 2nd and 3rd floors will be available for lease to physicians. Moffitt will provide Radiation Oncologist (note that it is in the singular – not plural), Medical Physicists and Dosimetrist (singular – not plural) to the hospital on a contract basis.

The 'Boissoneault' ad referenced the

(Continued on page 7)





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# **BOISSONEAULT CHALLENGES**

#### "A Valid Concern - Or Not?"

The Robert Boissoneault Oncology Institute (RBOI) placed another full page ad in the Daily Sun on November 30, 2010, entitled, "Clarifying Misleading Information".

Therein, they indicate their concern "... has to do with the raising of funds by a not-for-profit when the information furnished to







those donating is misleading..." and they refer to F. S. 496.415 (13), which basically states that if funds are requested by a charitable solicitor, donors are entitled to know the actual circumstances.

The ad further states that "...the perception to Villagers of the Moffitt's presence has been exaggerated beyond reality." (We will know more after we hear from Mr. Wahl on January 18, 2011, at 7 PM, at the Laurel Manor POA meeting.)

RBOI states the reason for the ad is that... "The question of ethics has been raised as to

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those making such incorrect statements to set the record straight. But the request for contributions under false pretenses continued. These statements not only mislead the public, but also negatively affect the reputation of our practice. I knew of no other way to bring this to the attention of those residents who, in all sincerity, were contributing to something they felt did not exist...It is the responsibility of the medical system, hospitals included, to be totally up front with their clients/patients. That was the point of our ad."

the nature of our advertising. We have taken

no action for several months, waiting for

The ad concluded with an invitation for an open Villages forum with the administration of the Central Florida Health Alliance to discuss issues.

At press time, no forum has been scheduled

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# **Moffitt Equipment**

(Continued from page 5)

Ocala Star Banner's August 25, 2010, article wherein it stated, "Each center will employ three Moffitt staff members, including a physicist and a physician who will plan treatment." That would mean just one MD is coming – not a team of physicians.

3) How will the overall services of the Moffitt Cancer Center in The Villages compare to those provided in Leesburg and by the Robert Boissoneault Oncology Institute currently, as well as after they affiliate with the Mayo Clinic?

#### **B.** Donations for the Equipment:

- 1) Did the Agreement with Moffitt require that all of the specialized equipment needed for their operation be housed in the Center itself, even if there was comparable equipment located at an Institute about 1,000 yards away? If so, can you explain why?
  - 2) Who is paying for the equipment to be

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used at The Leesburg Moffitt Cancer Center?

- 3) Will the Developer maintain ownership of the land and building, and receive the lease payments, so that eventually the Developer can receive a profit from his investment? If so, why couldn't the required equipment be handled in a similar manner – on lease, or via a loan - so that those using the equipment would be paying for it via their medical insurance, rather than from the Village residents, in general?
- 4) It was stated in an article in The Villages Daily Sun on October 19, 2010, that Moffitt and The Villages Health System (TVHS) will share in the Medicare payments for the cancer treatment.
  - a) What is the percentage to each?
  - b) Not everyone is on Medicare, so where

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do other insurance payments go?

- c) If the equipment is completely paid for in advance by the residents, what will the money which is received by The Villages Health System from their share of the revenue from treatment be used for, besides maintenance, renewal and replacement?
- 5) What happens if the entire amount of money needed has not been raised by the time the equipment is needed?

These are reasonable questions and we are hopeful that Mr. Wahl will provide us with satisfactory answers. The POA has supported

(Continued on page 8)



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# **Moffitt Equipment**

(Continued from page 7)

the Moffitt Cancer Center coming here from the beginning and we continue to support it.

However, many residents already donate to favorite non-profit charities, such as 'our' Hospice House, Alzheimer's, the local food pantries, etc., and will not want to donate for new equipment IF that same equipment is already available to them in The Villages OR can be funded in another manner (such as leasing – pay as you go).

A \$6.3 million dollar (NOW lowered to \$4.62 million dollar) reduction in donations to our other local charities will be a significant hit to them. Thus, the Villages residents are requesting more specific information before they make a decision.

The POA will provide a full report on this issue in the February Bulletin.





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## **Gorman Reflections**

(Continued from page 4)

new Vice President, organized residents to picket the sales office on both Squares, in an effort to prevent the closing of the Chula Vista club. We were not successful.

Valuation of Common Property - We always felt that the valuation of the Developer's property, when sold to the Center Districts was too high and the estimates of operating expenses too low. We asked for a suspension of the sales until a proper valuation formula could be worked out, but the VCCDD never agreed.

Disclosure Reform - We presented Disclosure Reform language to the Florida legislature on several occasions, but this legislation never got anywhere. The details are presented on our website for review.

The Patron Program - We never liked the idea of the Lifelong Learning Center setting up a Patron Program, for a fee, which allowed Patron members to get a lower charge for classes in Villages facilities. We viewed this as bribery, by the well-off, to get a lower charge than those not-so-well-off. And, this lower fee was for using Villages facilities, which our monthly amenity fee already paid. We publicized and tried to get it changed, but we were not successful.

Save the Buffalo - Would that we could - but, we couldn't. We tried.

(Continued on page 9)



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(Continued from page 8)

**Summary** - Well, it's been a great nine years. Actually, ten if you count the partial year in which I was the POA Secretary.

We have had some successes and some disappointments. But, I trust that we made a positive impact on the lives and well-being of all residents in The Villages.

I will be up north with my family for the summer, but I still plan to be involved with the POA. I'll see you at the general meetings.

In the meantime, please continue to support your POA. And, keep smiling.



# Relay For Life In The Villages

(Are We Robbing Peter to Pay Paul?)

The Relay for Life In The Villages, sponsored by the American Cancer Society (ACS), has been held at The Villages High School football/track complex for the last seven years, but the upcoming 2011 event has been moved to the Associates for Urology Care in Oxford.

The Relay raises money for research for cancer cures and last year the Villages Relay event raised just over \$360,000 for that purpose. Everything was set to go again at The Villages Charter School on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011,



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and the Relay teams had been raising money and selling chances on items, such as a new car, for the last four months.

However, in November the American Cancer Society (ACS) was contacted and advised that the Charter School facility would not be available on the scheduled date because of the need to re-sod the football field playing area.

A representative of The Villages asked ACS if they would be willing to split the profits of their Relay event with the Villages

(Continued on page 11)



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(Continued on page 20)

#### WOW! WOW! And more WOWS!! WOW!

The reconstructed recreation trails are beautiful – safer and smoother. Not only will you be able to enjoy them, but residents living north of CR466 should think of how much they will help their property values as time goes on. Prior to the lawsuit securing funds that could be used for the reconstruction project, these trails were often criticized as being dangerous and in serious disrepair, with no signs of ever getting sufficient funding for improvements. This occurred because the individual numbered residential districts were being held responsible for their maintenance and repair and their residents did not think it was fair that they should pay for recreational amenities that all of the residents were using. Neither did the POA and individual members of their Association and that is why they pursued remedy through the courts.

In previous articles we have thanked the developer, Janet Tutt, the AAC, the VCCDD and CDDs 1,2,3 and 4 for their part in getting this project off the ground. We would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank two individuals who have been hard at work while the project was actually under construction and who have accomplished this monumental task in outstanding fashion.





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# **Relay For Life**

(Continued from page 9)

Hospital System Foundation (Moffitt Center equipment) if another Villages site could be found. The ACS advised The Villages that, while the ACS has a great partnership with Moffitt, and actually funds more than \$5.6 million in research at the Moffitt Center, they would not be able to participate on a sharing basis because the American Cancer Society has a nationwide fundraising policy that prohibits these kinds of revenuesharing arrangements.

Michael Reich, VP for Communications for the Florida Division of the ACS advised the POA that the intent behind the policy is simply to respect our donors; donors throughout the country know exactly where their dollars are going, regardless of what Relay For Life event they are contributing to.

Shortly thereafter, at a Captains meeting in

mid-November, called by Carol Laufersky, 352-751-6040 Noisy Garage Door? We Make it Quieter or it's FREE! \$39 **Satisfaction Guaranteed** 



Chair of The Villages Relay for Life, residents advised us that the competing teams were informed by Carol and the Vice-Chair, Sonny Resmondo, both of whom are current and past leaders for the annual ACS Relay, that the Relay for Life in The Villages could no longer use the football field on April 29<sup>th</sup> because of field problems.

Further, it was inferred that no other Villages property would be made available to them for their annual Relay for Life because the ACS was not willing to share its profits with the Foundation raising money for the purchase of the Moffitt Center equipment. (According to the reports we received, teams were not told about the fact that the reason the ACS could not agree to a revenue sharing proposal was because of the Nationwide fundraising policy highlighted above.)

Mr. Resmondo then advised the Captains that he and others would be organizing a similar event to be held this spring, not sponsored by the American Cancer Society, which would be conducted on The Villages

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Polo Fields and all of the proceeds would go to the Moffitt Center Equipment Fund and urged support for this new event by the attending Captains and their teams.

The POA is concerned that the American Cancer Society was denied a legitimate fund raising event, particularly because the use of the facility had been previously approved and much fund raising and work for the 2011 Relay had already been commenced by the multitude of Relay participants by the time this information was conveyed to the

(Continued on page 12)

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# **Relay For Life**

(Continued from page 11) Captains.

The POA would not be hearing from disgruntled residents had The Villages moved the ACS event to the Polo Field for 2011 and at the conclusion of that event announced that they would not be affiliating with the ACS in 2012 as they would be establishing a similar – but different – event to raise funds for The Villages Moffitt Cancer Center.

It was the abrupt termination and disrup-

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The POA contacted Dorothy Hardee, Area Executive Director for the American Cancer Society, to see if they had any information they wished to pass on to Villages' residents regarding their plans. Her response was as follows: "Thank you for taking time to speak with Michael and for sharing a draft of the article with me. As I said, we have a strong partnership with Moffitt and have enjoyed a good relationship with The Villages for many years. We (ACS) simply want to work with



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our wonderful volunteers to raise money to fight cancer. If it does not work out this year to hold an event in the Villages, we will do something else to support the Villages' residents and hope to be able to return to the Villages location in the future.

I am excited to know that the Associates for Urology Care in Oxford have agreed to host the 2011 Relay For Life of the Villages of Hope at their location (just one mile from the previous Relay site) on April 29, 2011. An information meeting is planned for Thursday, January 6, 2011 at 6PM at the Lady Lake Church of God, 216 Oak Hill Road, Lady Lake, FL, followed by the Relay Kick Off, January 22nd at 2PM at the associates for Urology Care, and Team Captain Jump Start, January 29, 2011 in Leesburg.

In the meantime, I encourage everyone interested in participating to register online at http://relayforlife.org/thevillagesfl or to contact me directly at 352.326.9599 ext. 5706. You can also contact me by email at Dorothy.Hardee@cancer.org."



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## PALMS UPDATE

By Bob Rutkowsi, President Performing Arts for Lake, **Marion and Sumter (PALMS)** 

At PALMS, we are resolved to make 2011 a year of significant progress toward securing a world-class performing arts center for the tricounties to enjoy.

I'm optimistic and look forward to the day when we can just drive a few miles to see firstrank national entertainers and touring plays, as well as local amateur and professional artists.

In 2010, we took major steps forward by (a) adopting a tri-county focus while being mindful of Village patrons (new name and logo), (b) selecting a 12-member Board of Directors with expertise in management, finance, law, communications and the arts, and (c) making significant progress on site selection.

Our goals for 2011 are:

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- Expand and develop our base throughout Lake, Marion, and Sumter counties.
- Complete the capacity study for the main theater.
- Implement a "leadership gift" fundraising program.

The new tri-county focus will enable us to build a facility in the area of 1,500-2,000 seats that can present national performers and touring companies at reasonable ticket prices.

The construction of the facility will be financed by donations; operating costs will be

funded by ticket sales, facility rentals, concessions, grants and donations.

With our site selection narrowed to a few finalists, we are now concentrating on soliciting Leadership gifts to secure financing. Persons interested in making Leadership gifts should contact Bill Hicks, Vice President and fundraising chairman at hicks930@msn.com.

We look forward to working with all interested parties in the region to accomplish our Vision which is to create a Performing Arts Center that is a jewel to be enjoyed by the tri-







# **AAC Meeting December 8, 2010**

#### **Old Business:**

As a result of the November 2<sup>nd</sup> elections, Josephine "Jo" Weber (Lady Lake/Lake County) and Ann Forrester (CDD2) were elected and Carl Bell (CDD1) was reelected to the AAC. Gary Moyer (VCCDD), John Wilcox (CDD3) and Rich Lambrecht (CDD4) remain on the Committee.



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Rich Lambrecht stepped down as chairman due to term limits. Former vice chairman Carl Bell was elected chairman and Ann Forrester was elected vice chairwoman.

Multi-Modal Paths - Richard Busche of Kimley-Horn reported that "substantial completion" has occurred on the Buena Vista Boulevard paths in CDD3 and 4, the Saddlebrook trail and Paradise Park (on Friday December 10<sup>th</sup>, substantial completion occurred for the El Camino Real path). Substantial completion is anticipated for the Summerchase trail on December 16th and for the

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#### Morse Circle bypass on January 4th. Substantial completion means that the trails are safe to drive on, but that some additional "punch list" items still need to be addressed.

While no further detours will be necessary, residents are advised to be cautious where they see finishing activity underway. Final completion for all portions of the project is January 15, 2011.

The AAC recommended approval of an amendment to the trail construction project to separate the completion of the Morse by-

(Continued on page 15)

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## **AAC Meeting**

(Continued from page 14)

pass portion from the rest of the project, for purposes of the retainer due to the contractor.

The Committee agreed with a staff supported recommendation from our engineers to not provide an additional Morse Boulevard trail access driveway at San Juan Drive due to the presence of a utility berm and the proximity of alternative access.

#### **New Business:**

The AAC approved a recommendation for a budget amendment to the Mulberry Fitness Fund. This amendment would provide an additional \$17,960 to the \$15,000 originally budgeted, for the replacement of cardiovascular fitness equipment. This should eliminate the excessive down time currently experienced due to an inability to obtain replacement parts.

The Committee approved a bid from Asphalt Systems, Inc. for the ability to obtain a



biodegradable asphalt rejuvenator product for roadways in the district.

#### **Informational Items:**

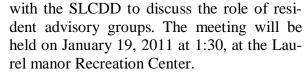
Staff provided the Committee with a RAD Fund Capital Projects Work Plan for the 2010-2011 Fiscal year.

The AAC was informed that 3 trucks would be purchased, one for Community Standards and two replacements for Property Management.

#### **Staff Reports:**

There will be an AAC workshop on December 15th at 1:30 in the Laurel Manor District Offices. This meeting will be to discuss the work plan for the coming year and to bring new AAC members up to speed.

There will also be an AAC joint meeting



All AAC meetings are open to the public. Residents are encouraged to attend. Please go to the www.districtgov.org website (click on Amenity Authority Committee) for the official minutes, agendas and meeting schedule.

Next AAC Meeting will be held Wednesday, January 12th, 1:30PM, at the Savannah Center.



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# \*\*\* LETTERS TO THE EDITOR \*\*\*

## **Our Place**

Mr. Damm forwarded a copy of this letter to the POA

Hello Ms. Kays; (VCDD Budget Director) Thank you for outlining our VCDD government's structure in your column as contained in the Nov. 18, 2010, issue of the VCDD Recreation News. It is important that all our fellow Villages residents understand their government and its funding.

**NOW SERVING** 

As I read your comments regarding what is funded by our monthly amenity fees, it seems to me that you omitted a significant use of those fees, to wit: paying the interest on the (hopefully) tax exempt bonds issued by the District to investors in order to fund the acquisition of properties sold to the District by the developer. If I am incorrect on this use of amenity fee income, please let me know. If not, it seems to me that our residents should be knowledgeable of this, and

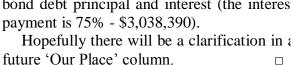
your column would have been a good place to point it out.

Best regards, Robert H. Damm

Editor's Note: He is absolutely correct and this failure to identify the bond debt as being paid by our amenity fees needs to be corrected. For the record, the VCCDD amenity budget for 2010-11 is \$37,078,455; 45% or \$16,588,224 of that total will be used to pay the bond debt principal and interest (the interest alone is 64 % - \$10,593,224) for that time period.

The SLCDD amenity budget for 2010-11 is \$14,216,012; 29% or \$4,058,390 (which will grow considerably as more bonds are issued in the future) will be used to pay their bond debt principal and interest (the interest

Hopefully there will be a clarification in a future 'Our Place' column.



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**Our Monthly Gardening Column:** 

#### Wild Flower Power

by Anne Lambrecht Master Gardener

Florida's state wildflower is the coreopsis, or tickseed. There are 15 species of coreopsis, all native to Florida. Coreopsis is a member of the daisy or aster family, Asteraceae. They are called "tickseed" because of the "bug" or tick like appearance of the seed in the center of the flower. The daisy-like flowers of Florida's coreopsis vary from about ¾ to 2" in diameter and in all but one case are bright yellow. The exception is the swamp or Georgia coreopsis which has pink flowers and is found only in the moist areas of north Florida.

All 15 species of coreopsis grow in some part of the northern half of Florida. Only a couple of species grow in south Florida. Most coreopsis species are either annuals or short lived perennials and flower in spring through to the fall. They are wonderful "re-seeders" and the seedlings transplant well.

Wildflowers are so popular in Florida, there is an organization in their honor called the Florida Wildflower Foundation. You can help support Florida wildflowers by buying your very own wildflower license plate. The tag is \$15 more than the cost of a regular Florida license plate but the \$15 is a tax deductible donation to the Florida Wildflower Foundation. The foundation uses the money to fund native wildflower research, education and planting projects around the state. Your donation also includes a Florida Wildflower Foundation membership. You're not an automatic member, however; you've got to register

on line at lawildflowers.wufoo.com/forms/state-wildflower-license-plate-member-form/

The tag's flower up close looks a little like a shiny red and yellow sun and not much like a flower. Tallahassee artist, Bill Celander, who designed the tag, artistically enhanced the flower to make it more vivid and visible from the road.

The foundation holds plant sales and a symposium to learn about wildflower species for land-scapes, flowering shrubs and trees, advocacy efforts and the wildflower/butterfly connection. Presenters are often professors, authors, native nurserymen and landscape architects. That's a whole lot of fun for us nature nuts.

One of the planting projects of the foundation is the beautiful flower covered medians on our highways. A sure sign of spring is the wild pink phlox. They plant those seeds with the \$15 you donate when you buy the wildflower license plate. The Department of Transportation buys the seed, sometimes from the wildflower seed coop in Crescent City, and sometimes from out of state, depending on the price and availability. Although the pink phlox is not a native, it is a Florida friendly plant and not intrusive to our state's ecology.

If you would like to receive the foundation's newsletter, you can sign up on their website, www.floridawildflowerfoundation.org. The November 2010 issue begins with a plea to tell Governor-elect Rick Scott that we need more wildflowers. There will be a new website in December 2010. It will be the state's foremost source of Florida wildflower information.

The Florida Wildflower Foundation partners with the Florida Museum of Natural History, home of the butterfly house, where they have wildflower/native plant sales every weekend on

their grounds. www.flmnh.ufl.edu/wildflower/

For more information on Florida wildflower seeds and plants already available for cultivation, visit: Wildflower Seed and Plant Growers Association, Inc. www.floridawildflowers.com/ and Association of Florida Native Nurseries: www.afnn.org/

#### **Books:**

Florida Native Plants (by Robert Haehle & Joan Brookwell, 1999)

The Guide to Florida Wildflowers (by Walter Kingsley Taylor. 1992.)

Florida Wildflowers in Their Natural Communities (by Walter Kingsley Taylor. 1998.)

Florida Wild Flowers and Roadside Plants (by C. Ritchie Bell & Bryan J. Taylor. 1982.)

Everglades Wildflowers (by Roger Hammer. 2002.)

The Right Plants for Dry Places, Native Plant Landscaping in Central Florida (by the Suncoast Native Plant Society. ISBN: 0820004235 Second Edition.)

A Gardener's Guide to Florida's Native Plants (by Rufino Osorio. 2001.)

Florida Wetland Plants: An Identification Manual (by John C. Tobe and others. 1998.)

#### **Coming Events:**

Jan. 26-31 - Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival, Titusville. Details on the website. Jan. 29 - 12th Annual Air Potato Roundup,

Morningside Nature Center, Gainesville. Note: this nature center is the scene of two very nice native plant sales, one in the spring and in the fall.

Feb. 18-20 - Rally for the Rivers, Palatka. Sponsored by Putnam County Environmental C o u n c i l . w w w . p c e c w e b . o r g .

March 26 - Florida Wildflower & Garden Festival, DeLand.





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## "WOW"

(Continued from page 10)

CHEERS TO EVA REY, VCCDD Director of Purchasing and Support Services, and her staff for an absolutely outstanding job of coordinating the entire reconstruction project communications with the residents. Her up-to-date detour reports in the Daily Sun, on line, and by e-mail request were tremendously beneficial to all of us travelling by golf cart, walking and bike riding, and we could not have asked for a more responsive coordinator - she was excellent at communicating with residents and following up on concerns and suggestions given to her by residents throughout the entire process.

CHEERS TO RICHARD BUSCHE of Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., the onsite 'point man' for the engineering firm which was hired to address the initial concerns and issues, incorporate public input, perform data analysis and manage the entire project from start to finish. He did an outstanding job of overseeing the contract work on the entire reconstruction project and gave thorough monthly reports to the AAC.

Not only are the trails safer because of their increased width, but our kidneys are thankful for the smoothness as well. The modifications of tunnel entrances and exits will make it safer for everyone (there are actual right angle turns into the entrances, instead of straight aheads and Y's, and the exiting traffic comes out and meets the trail perpendicular with a stop sign, instead of merging into trail traffic with a 'blind yield'). The elimination of unnecessary and often blind curves are also getting rave reviews.

Congrats to Michael Pape and Associates, who designed and supervised the installation of the new irrigation, trees and shrubbery. Members of The Villages Garden Club North had expressed considerable concern when the trail project first began and many shrubs and trees were uprooted in order to widen the trails, upgrade the irrigation system and replace 'overly mature' plants. The Club members, after seeing some of Pape's finished areas, concluded that the result far exceeded even the highest expectations of most residents. Anne Lambrecht, President of the Club, said that "...the landscaping along the newly refurbished trails is clearly deserving of the club's 'seal of approval'".





**AFTER** 









El Camino Real

**Buena Vista** 





**West Entrance** 

**Savannah Tunnel** 

**East Exit**