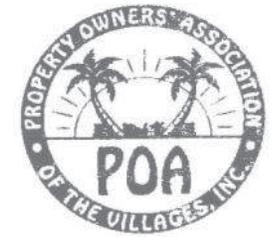


The POA Bulletin

Free Copy



The Property Owners' Association of The Villages

Issue 39.01

Champions of Residents' Rights Since 1975

The POA Website – www.poa4us.org

January, 2013

2012 Summary - Golf Cart Fatalities And Serious Injuries in The Villages

The POA has made an effort to identify golf cart related accidents in The Villages which have resulted in death or serious injuries. Neither the Florida Highway Patrol nor local law enforcement departments keep statistics on golf cart related crashes. Therefore, the POA is trying to make residents aware of the potential dangers that can face both golf cart drivers and passengers, be they on the golf cart trails or the roadways shared with automobiles and trucks.

Each month, starting with the February 2012 Bulletin (you can find all of them on the poa4us.org web page - click on "archived bulletins"; you can also find all of the articles we have written regarding the use of seat belts as well as a month by month listing of all of the accidents we have reported on the web page - click on "current issues" and then golf cart crashes), we have included a listing of all of the accidents (with as much description as we had available) that we were aware of and identified that an extremely large percentage of them involved either someone falling out of a cart onto the concrete, or being ejected from the cart. **OUR MESSAGE IS THAT WE BELIEVE YOU MIGHT BE SAFER IF YOU USE A SEAT BELT**, but the usage of seat belts in golf carts is not required by Florida Statutes so it is your choice.

In 2012 we had:

- **two** known **fatalities**, both of whom were golf cart passengers who **fell out of or off of** a moving golf cart;

- **seven** golf cart occupants who were **EJECTED FROM** their golf cart and had to be **airlifted** to either Shands or Orlando Regional Hospitals because of the severity of their injuries; (We have no knowledge as to

whether any of these life threatening injuries resulted in an eventual fatality.)

- **seven** golf cart occupants who were **EJECTED FROM** their golf cart who had injuries serious enough that they were transported by ambulance to a nearby hospital.

- **fourteen** golf cart occupants who **fell out of** a moving golf cart who had injuries serious enough that they were transported by ambulance to a nearby hospital. □

The Villages Lifestyle During The Holiday Season

Villages Community Development District Recreation Department

John Rohan, Director of Recreation, addressed the POA Members at their November meeting and explained how the recreation staff gets ready for the winter season when The Villages is at near capacity for some of their popular activities. He advised that the planning starts in the summertime – what the

Tuesday, January 15, 2013

POA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Third Tuesday of the Month – 7:00 PM

Laurel Manor Recreation Center

**A "Walk Through" The District
Website - You Will Be Amazed At
What You Can Find!!**

**Speakers - Brittany Wilson and Carrie Duckett
VCDD Administrative Staff**

Video and Audio in overflow room

**Donuts and Coffee for All after the Meeting
All Residents Welcome - Come and Join Us!**

PARADE UPDATE

See Amenity Authority Committee (AAC) Summary - Audience Comments on Page 6. Also see Sample of Letters sent to the Editor commencing on page 15.

programs will be – the new activities that are getting lined up and how they will manage that system with over 60 swimming pools and 28 recreation centers. He reminded us that the activity volunteers are the team behind the magic that takes place at the recreation centers. Staff's responsibility is to help coordinate that – to get it to flow in what they call "organized chaos".

To get ready for the "Fun Season", about two years ago the Recreation Department identified procedures for what they called the Peak Participation Season. (There are times when some of the very popular programs – bridge, exercise classes, etc., will exceed the capacity for the room as each room has a set limit. Many of you have come to the POA meetings where we have exceeded the capacity, so we have options when we try to deal with overflow; we can try to recruit more volunteers to add additional sections of a particular program; we can video record it if we need to do that, or we can separate it out into different programs at different locations on the same day at the same time.)

Staff met with volunteers and residents to get their input regarding the opportunities during the winter months and possible solutions to these challenges. At some of the popular clubs, residents were waiting longer than expected to get in to an activity and it should not be that way so they developed Guidelines to be used during this Peak Participation time period which are as follows:

Recreation Department Peak Activity Participation Guidelines

Villages' residents shall have priority for the activity.

Due to the attendance at Resident Lifestyle Activities, there are times guest partici-

(Continued on page 2)

The Villages Lifestyle

(Continued from page 1)

pation will be restricted due to space availability in order to accommodate resident demand on the activity. We regret any inconvenience this may cause you or your guest.

Eligible guests will be issued a number and asked to wait; if a program is not at full capacity the guest will be allowed to participate.

Valid ID cards are required for participation.

A Volunteer Lifestyle Ambassador/Staff member will help to form a line prior to the activity start time. The location of the line may vary from center to center.

The participation cards (tickets) will be issued **up to one (1) hour** prior to the start of the activity. (Once you get your ticket you have admission into that program so you can walk around, go get a cup of coffee, etc., and then return prior to the meeting start and there will be a spot available for you.)

Each resident participant must be in attendance to be issued a ticket.

Only one ticket will be issued per resident.

Doors will open no sooner than **30 minutes prior** to activity start time as printed on the facility permit.

Once all the tickets for that session have been issued, the activity is considered full.

Where available Overflow rooms will be used, based on day & time. Rooms are subject to change due to prior scheduling commitments.

When programs of similar type activities back up to each other, individuals participating in the first session must exit the room (with their equipment) and join the line for the next session.

Prior to this new procedure, a guest could enter with the resident. Now, however, you could have two residents waiting for their ticket with one accompanied by a guest and the other alone. Who should have priority -

The POA Bulletin is published monthly by the Property Owners' Association of The Villages, Inc. Articles represent the opinion of the POA or the writer, and Letters to the Editor or Forum postings represent the opinions of the writers. Care is taken to ensure that facts reported herein are true and accurate to the best knowledge of the POA and are taken from reliable sources.

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Dilemma time – who gets the ticket? Should the resident be a priority or should it go to the guest of a resident? There are two viable perspectives: it is a challenge to the resident who brought their guest as they want them to get a ticket; but the resident who is waiting for that ticket believes they should have priority over a guest. After meetings amongst staff and volunteers and input from residents, it was decided that the best decision was to err on the side of the Villages resident – to let them get the ticket.

Other recent changes are as follows:

1) The activity schedule now only changes twice a year instead of weekly via the Recreation News. They now have a Fall/Winter schedule (October thru March) and a Spring/Summer schedule (April thru September).

2) Registration is no longer held at all of the Centers as it created chaos because they may only have one staff member who has to 'man' the desk as well as check IDs, fill the water coolers, etc., and 30 residents might walk in and want to register for an activity. So all registration has been moved to the Regional Recreation Centers where there are trained recreation service representatives there who can help out with that situation.

3) The hours on Saturday and Sunday have been extended at La Hacienda and Lake Miona for residents who may work during the week. During this additional time they can pay trail fees and register for activities. □

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. □

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Q&A Regarding Alcohol Consumption

1) **Can you walk around the square with an alcoholic beverage?** If so, are there limitations as to where you can walk? A: You can walk anywhere in the downtown area with an open container. The alcohol license issued to The Villages of Lake-Sumter (the Developer) is for the entire downtown area so if you walk over to the water or you walk toward Ruby Tuesday's in Spanish Springs, you are not breaking the law. However, you cannot, if you are in an establishment, walk off of the establishment's property with an alcoholic beverage. The licenses held by the businesses in the downtown area of the squares are for consumption on the premise only, which is what you will find in 99% of the cases. The alcoholic license which was applied for and approved for The Villages of Lake-Sumter has to do with a Tourist Alcohol license, which allows you to walk anywhere in the downtown area with an open container of alcohol.

2) **What about tailgate parties at the Polo Fields?** If you are parked, can you legally have an open container while sitting in your golf cart watching the polo game? A: This property is owned by the Developer, not the District and does not appear to meet the statute's requirement to be a 'road'. Since we were not positive that this was correct, we contacted Lt. Wolfe with the following question: If you are tailgating at the POLO FIELD, can you sit in your golf cart with an open beer? Lt. Wolfe's response was, "... Yes, as long as the golf cart is not operational." (If the golf cart is moving on Polo Field associated property you can be cited.) □

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If You Appreciate the Efforts the POA Makes on Your Behalf, You Can Show Us Now - Send in Your Membership Application Today

As stated in the POA's mission statement, we exist and function as a "watch dog" for the residents of The Villages. Established in 1975, we are the original home owners association with no ties and/or affiliations to the Developer, local government or business interests. The POA strives to make The Villages an even better place in which to live, where Residents' Rights are respected and local government and the Developer are responsive to the needs and interests of everyone living in Florida's friendliest hometown.

We publish a monthly Bulletin delivered to the driveway of all homeowners (unless you contact us at 352-325-1540) in our effort to keep each of you informed of facts about issues which may not have been clearly or fully presented in other media. We would also like to cordially invite you to attend one of our monthly meetings, which is where we

are often alerted to possible problems that residents are experiencing, i.e., flooding issues, air conditioning line failures, abrupt cancellation of advertised resident parades, etc. The POA meeting is held the third Tuesday of each month at 7PM at Laurel Manor.

Due to a number of overflow crowds this past year, we have now secured additional seating in the banquet rooms and have donated funds to the SLCDD for the purchase of a camera unit so those in the overflow area will not only be able to hear the speakers, but see them as well. A typical meeting consists of about 15 minutes of organization business; 30 minutes of an open Q & A forum; and a guest speaker who will talk for approximately 20 minutes and answer questions for 15 minutes. Attendees are then invited to join us in some social time where the POA provides free coffee and donuts. □

POA 2013 Membership – New / Renewal and Contribution Form

Please complete each section and return to: **The POA, P.O. Box 1657, Lady Lake, FL 32158**

New Renewal Number of People in Household

PLEASE PRINT!

NAME(S)(1) _____
(SAME LAST NAME)

NAME(S)(2) _____
(DIFFERENT LAST NAME)

ADDRESS _____

VILLAGE _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

(We respect your privacy. Your E-mail address is for POA Official use ONLY)

1. **MEMBERSHIP NEW/RENEWAL:** Please enroll my POA membership for 2013 at the **Annual Rate of \$10 per household**. A check payable to POA is enclosed. Memberships are for Households and run annually from Jan 1st to Dec 31st. (check the box that applies)

I will include a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** with this form and my check. Please mail my Membership Card to me At the address above.

Please hold my POA Membership Card for me to pick up at one of the monthly POA meetings.

2. **ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION:** Please accept my additional contribution to the POA in the following amount:

\$ _____ (Please indicate amount)

3. **TOTAL DUE:** _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUING FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

Dues Paid Date _____ (Office Use Only)

Joseph B. Gorman POA Hall of Fame Inductee for 2012

A POA member is nominated for the POA Hall of Fame by one or more POA colleagues. To be inducted into the POA Hall of Fame is testimony that the nominee has made notable contributions to the POA and to residents of The Villages over an extended period of time. The first POA induction ceremony was held in December of 2004, and there have been seventeen inductees into the POA Hall of Fame through 2011. One more highly distinguished POA member, Joseph B. Gorman was inducted into the POA Hall of Fame at the December 18, 2012, POA membership meeting.

Joe is a Chicago native and moved to The Villages some fourteen years ago. He received a Bachelor of Science degree from Marquette University, where he was named one of the "Outstanding Students" in his graduating class. He went on to earn a Master of Business Administration at Indiana University. In his professional career, he worked for Eli Lilly & Company, American Hospital Supply Corp., and the Zimmer division of Bristol-Myers Squibb. Joe started in marketing research and moved into a financial advisor's role for Commonwealth countries and Japan. At Zimmer, he headed up the

mergers and acquisition department for this manufacturer of orthopedic implants. He later founded and was president of a consulting firm, Corporate Development Advisors, Inc. (CDA). This firm focused on mergers and acquisitions for small to medium-size companies in the medical products field.

Joe became active in the POA shortly after moving to The Villages in 1998. He served as Secretary of the POA before becoming President in 2002. When Joe assumed the POA Presidency, there were approximately 500 household members in the POA, and the *POA Bulletin* was distributed to about 10,000 homes. Ten years later, we now have over 5,000 household members of the POA, and the *POA Bulletin* is distributed to 45,000 homes. In addition to being President of the POA, Joe served as chief editor of the *POA Bulletin*. Through the *Bulletin* and in POA meetings, Joe informed residents of "the rest of the story." Because of his determination, courage, and ability to present the other point of view, The Villages is a much better place today for all of us. He was the voice and the image of the POA on so many major issues, a few of which follow:

Joe was out front in leading the effort to encourage the Developer to rebuild the Paradise Center (2003-2005).

Joe led the effort to stop the Hospital Tax (2004-2005).

He led the POA in its efforts to encourage expansion of The Villages Hospital (2004-2006).

Joe helped to restore the Christmas Parade for Village residents (2005-2006).

He was the lead spokesperson in the effort to properly locate a Bob Evans restaurant so that it would be convenient to residents of The Villages (2005-2006).

Joe was an essential POA partner in a hard fought lawsuit against the Developer that resulted in a return of over 40 million dollars to the residents of The Villages (2006-2008).

He insured that the POA would take a lead in the effort to require repair of faulty vinyl siding installations (2007-2008).

Joe was a POA spokesperson for establishing a Cancer Center within The Villages Hospital structure.

The POA website began during Joe's term as POA president.

The POA Hall of Fame started while Joe was president of the POA.

It is so appropriate that Joe now be inducted into the Hall of Fame! □



"We Walk Because We Care"
Alzheimer's Family Support Walk 2013
Saturday, January 26, 2013

Registration forms available at all Recreation Centers

- * \$15 for individuals; \$12 for team members of 6 or more per team; \$7 for children under 12 years or age
- * 7:30 a.m. Registration
- * 8:15 a.m. Golf Cart Rally begins behind Sonny's BBQ

Join us at The Villages Polo Pavilion and Track

- * 7:30-8:45 a.m. Late Registrations
- * 9:00 a.m. Walk festivities begin 1/4 & 1 1/2 mile walks

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RESIDENTS - PLEASE HELP!

If you see that the POA Bulletin is left at an unoccupied house, please be a good neighbor and either dispose or hold for your neighbor's return. Or contact us at delivery@poa4us.org or by phone, 325-1540. MANY THANKS!



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AAC Meeting Summary December 12, 2012

Old Business Topics Included:

- Amber Gartner of Kimley-Horn & Associates reported that surveying and design reviews are underway for "Area A" of the Paradise Park Master Plan.
- The Committee was advised that it is anticipated the Lady Lake Town Commission will on Jan 7, 2013 address the design plans for the expanded Villages Woodshop parking area.
- Workshop sessions were held by the Recreation staff to obtain input from residents regarding possible improvements to Tierra Del Sol, El Santiago, Chula Vista, Silver Lake and Southside recreation facilities. Staff will organize the information received and present to the Committee. Approved projects will be included in the Capital Improvement Plan.
- The AAC approved having the Property Management Staff install additional 4 x 4 timbers to the sides of the wooden golf cart bridge located at Morse Blvd., just north of CR466. This should raise the sides to approximately 13 inches.

Consent Agenda:

- A Consent Agenda composed of the following was approved: amendment five to the contract with Professional Turf Managers, Inc. to include the expanded Rio

Grande lawn bowling facility, donation of the four recently replaced softball scoreboards to the Belleview Youth Baseball Organization, a "carry-forward" of budget items from the 2011/12 Budget, continuation of the Compensating Balances agreement with Citizens First Bank and awarding of a contract to Down To Earth Lawn Care II for Morse Blvd. irrigation renovation.

Informational Items:

- The AAC received a check in the amount of \$2,550.81 from SECO for the annual electric rebate.

Audience Comments:

Elaine Dreidame, POA President addressed the AAC providing information from several clubs regarding the ethnic parades previously held at the town squares. The Irish, Italian and German clubs, as well as several other organizations, were quite disappointed when they were notified by Barbara Vesco of The Villages Entertainment Department, that there would be no town square parades in 2013. No explanation of specific reasons (such as what are the safety concerns) were given to these clubs who put so much into making these events the major success that they have become.

The club presidents would like to meet with Ms. Vesco to understand the reasons for the cancelations and to see what can be done to reinstate the parades as their first choice would be to continue to have the parades held in conjunction with the festivals for Oc-

tober Fest and St. Patrick's Day. So far they have been unsuccessful in obtaining a meeting with Ms. Vesco. (Update – 8 days after the request was made at the AAC meeting, the parade clubs received the following email response from Barbara Vesco: "Thanks for contacting us. As our Entertainment Department is focused on expanding our festivals, we have no interest in revisiting the subject of parades. We are glad to hear that you are working together with other clubs to put on a parade yourself and we wish you the best in that endeavor.")

Failing that, they will contact the VHA President in the hopes that the VHA Officers would meet with the club presidents and perhaps use their close ties to the Developer to broker a viable solution that would restore the parades. As a last resort, the club presidents would then look to the AAC and the Recreation Department to help facilitate some level of future parades celebrating ethnic ties.

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

NEXT AAC MEETING – WEDNESDAY January 9th, 1:30 P.M. AT THE SAVANNAH CENTER.

Below are excerpts of additional dialog that took place at the AAC meeting:

Elaine Dreidame - There are over 4,000 residents that are members of these Clubs and they believe that this is an expression of their heritage and they are very strongly committed to wanting to have their parades. So, our efforts are to try to help them make that happen and we are trying to do it an adult manner. I just wanted to let you know what the

(Continued on page 7)

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AAC Meeting

(Continued from page 6)

status was so you may hear about it again, but hopefully we can work something out as a compromise.

Chairman Wilcox - First of all, I would like to thank you for taking that action...it's a topic that seems to have mixed emotions and there are some problems that have come up with size and I personally thought that the Christmas parade was a mighty fine parade... So, thank you for taking the lead that you are taking.

Mr. Bell (AAC Member) - When we think about the parades, do we think that the polo field is the right answer or do we think that streets are the right answer or what is the sentiment of the people in your opinion?

POA - Ideally what they would like would be to have the parades in conjunction with the downtown activities. I know that the Developer has the square from 3 to 10 every day, but even if they had the parade around 1:30 in the afternoon the people could then stay over and join in the rest of the festivities. I know in talking with them, the Italian and the German Clubs would be willing to get together to have one parade in conjunction with October Fest...The Christmas parade is great, but it's just not the same as it is when you have the flux of people around like we see in the squares...

Ms. Tutt - There are some misconceptions out there and I appreciate that you are going to speak to Ms. Vesco, and that is your direction. But let me just caution that Ms. Vesco has no control over the streets and the Developer has no control over the streets in the squares.

POA - So, are you saying that they were told by the Town of Lady Lake that they cannot have a permit for a parade on the streets?

Ms. Tutt - I'm not speaking to the permit, I'm saying that if in fact there is a request for use of the streets it comes through the District office - through ME - for approval with coordination back to the Town of Lady Lake or Sumter County...

Mr. Lambrecht (AAC Member) - Given that, can we ask John Rohan to do an estimate on what it would take for the amenity system to take them over.

Ms. Tutt - I think that there is a bigger question than that. I said you have to get permission to use the downtown which is actually controlled by the District Manager for the downtown. I also have had the same concerns that the Town of Lady Lake and the Sheriff's Department have had or Mike Tucker with health, welfare and safety issues.

POA - Are the 5K's run on the streets?

Ms. Tutt - We get permission from Sumter County and we have to do that well in advance - that's a HUGE undertaking for the 5K and it's done early in the morning so that it is a lesser impact on traffic.

POA - And you do that twice a year?

Ms. Tutt - Um hm,

POA - I don't know the answers. All I know is that on behalf of the club Presidents we want it to really be looked at to see if there is any way to do it...

Mr. Lambrecht - Could we ask someone to kind of outline it so that we can see where

the stumbling blocks are - whether it's time of day - safety - security - trouble getting a permit or whatever.

Ms. Tutt - I don't think that is Recreation's direction at this point. The Board can direct staff to do whatever. I just think that it is premature and an assumption on recreation that we are going to do something.

Mr. Lambrecht - We've done things for a lot smaller groups than 4-5,000 residents. Why shouldn't we be looking into this for those residents that want to have a parade?

Ms. Forrester (AAC Member) - I think you've (POA) outlined your plan and I would suggest we stick with your plan. You brought it to us.

POA - If the District Manager and the Recreation Director can give us some assistance along the way, we would welcome it because we are trying to get an outcome for the residents.

Mr. Bell - When I think about parades I don't think about the Polo Fields. I think about shutting down half of Camino Real or half of Buena Vista - have a parade. If you are going to do this thing, do it right. Can't we shut down a street? NY City shuts down half the city. I understand it's a big expense and I understand there are some issues there but they are all surmountable. If the squares are a problem - abandon ship and go to other streets - shut down Avenida Central... If we don't ask about permits for these streets we will never know. My approach would be to

(Continued on page 12)

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Low Speed Vehicles

Including “Converted” Gas Powered & Electric Vehicles

The state of Florida recently authorized the inclusion of gas powered golf carts for conversion to Low Speed Vehicles. Information is available through the county tax collector from vehicle registration personnel. Once converted, the converted vehicle will be given a state issue vehicle identification numbers and require registration, license, additional safety features and appropriate insurance, in addition to the cost of conversion. Please note that the process is currently not reversible back to a golf cart, but there is a Senate bill (#62) which would permit the “conversion of a vehicle titled or branded and registered as a low-speed vehicle to a golf cart”. Also note that resale of a

golf cart converted to a Low Speed Vehicle may be more difficult than a golf cart resale.

PRIOR TO THE SUMMER OF 2012 - Statute 320.01(42) stated that Low-speed vehicle meant any four-wheeled **electric** vehicles whose top speed is greater than 20 miles per hour but not greater than 25 miles per hour including NEV or neighborhood **electric** vehicles.

REVISED LAW AS OF SUMMER OF 2012 - Statute 320.01 (42) “Low-speed vehicle” means **any** four-wheeled vehicle whose top speed is greater than 20 miles per hour but not greater than 25 miles per hour, including, but not limited to, neighborhood electric vehicles. Low-speed vehicles must comply with the safety standards in 49 C.F.R. s. 571.500 and s. 316.2122.

THE CHANGE IN STATUTES AUTHORIZES **GAS** POWERED CARTS, ALONG WITH THEIR ELECTRIC POWERED COUNTERPARTS TO BE CONSIDERED A LOW-SPEED VEHICLE AND THUS ANY GAS GOLF CART THAT CAN TRAVEL FASTER THAN 20 MILES PER HOUR, BUT NOT GREATER THAN 25 MPH, MUST COMPLY AS FOLLOWS:

316.2122 Operation of a low-speed vehicle... on certain roadways.—The operation of a low-speed vehicle as defined in

s. 320.01(42)... on any road is authorized with the following restrictions:

(1) A low-speed vehicle... may be operated only on streets where the posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour or less. This does not prohibit a low-speed vehicle... from crossing a road or street at an intersection where the road or street has a posted speed limit of more than 35 miles per hour.

(2) A low-speed vehicle **must be equipped with headlamps, stop lamps, turn signal lamps, tail lamps, reflex reflectors, parking brakes, rearview mirrors, windshields, seat belts, and vehicle identification numbers.**

(3) A low-speed vehicle... must be registered **and insured** in accordance with s. 320.02 and titled pursuant to chapter 319.

(4) Any person operating a low-speed vehicle... must have in his or her possession a valid driver’s license.

(5) A county or municipality may prohibit the operation of low-speed vehicles... on any road under its jurisdiction if the governing body of the county or municipality determines that such prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

(6) The Department of Transportation may prohibit the operation of low-speed vehicles... on any road under its jurisdiction if it determines that such prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

The POA says thank you to Bob Schnessel who advised us of the Statute revision. □

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Golf Cart Crashes with Injuries

Recent reports (**ONLY THOSE THAT INVOLVED EJECTION, FALLING OUT OF THE GOLF CART, AND/OR INJURIES are provided**) that we have received from Village residents, Public Safety, and area law enforcement. (Note: we cannot guarantee that the information we receive is completely accurate about all the details.)

USE OF SEAT BELTS WILL KEEP YOU IN YOUR CART!

Monday, November 19th, 11:30 a.m.

Vehicle 1 (V-1) was north bound on Morse Blvd. V-2, a golf cart, was north bound on Morse Blvd. in the golf cart lane. V-1 was stopped at the intersection of Morse and Martinez Drive waiting for a vehicle to pull onto Morse from Martinez so that V-1 could turn right. V-2 was continuing north on Morse when V-1 attempted to make a right turn onto Martinez. V-2 applied his brakes but was unable to stop before hitting the curb causing his left leg to fall out of the interior of the golf cart. V-2 came to rest next to a light pole. The left leg of the golf cart driver was caught between the golf cart and light pole. He had a large laceration to his left calf

and was transported to the Villages Hospital. The driver of V-1 was cited for an improper right turn.

Friday, November 23rd, 9 a.m.

I was on the way home this morning, about 9 AM, at the Morse/441/27 Gate, out bound, where there was an accident involving a car and a cart. They had a stretcher out and it looked like they were picking someone up from the street.

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COLUMBIA PAR CAR

Friday, November 23rd, 6:30 p.m.

Bachman Path. Woman driving golf cart. Went to make a right turn. Did so not having noticed a trailer parked near the intersection. She ran into the back of the trailer, fell out of the cart and struck her head on the

trailer. She had a head laceration and was transported to Villages for evaluation.

Sunday, November 25th, 11:20 a.m.

A 61 year old female golf cart operator was driving a golf cart south bound on the golf cart path that runs parallel to Buena Vista Blvd. She approached the curve in the area of Buena Vista Blvd. and Old Mill Run. **SHE HAD HER FOUR GRANDKIDS (ages 3, 4, 8 and 9) IN THE GOLF CART WITH HER.** She advised law enforcement that she was traveling at approximately 14 MPH and that while navigating the curve her three year old grandson leaned toward the edge of the golf cart and **fell out of the cart** landing on the bushes next to the cart path. The child had a laceration to his lip and some abrasions on his legs. He was transported to the Villages Hospital by Rural Metro to be checked out further. (Imagine if the 3 year old had landed head first on concrete instead of a bush.)

Saturday, November 30th, 9 p.m.

Accident occurred at the intersection of Belle Meade and Argyll. **Both** occupants of the golf cart were **ejected**. One was sent to the hospital by ambulance and the other airlifted as a trauma patient. The driver of the automobile involved stated "he came out of nowhere". Further details were not available.

The POA needs your help. If you see a golf cart accident scene, email us with the date, location, etc., at poa4us@hotmail.com. □



TIM BABIARZ
Lawyer

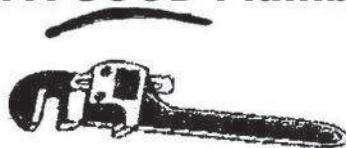
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Meet Your POA Directors

The POA is proud to introduce you to the other members of the 2013 Board of Directors (you met the officers in the December issue). As you can see from the resumes below, we have a very talented group of volunteers. We all look forward to working together to carry out the mission of our organization.

Ray Banks - Special Projects - (St. Charles)

Ray grew up in Queens, NY. He moved to Islip, NY in 1970. There he owned his own Daily News circulation franchise for 42 years. He also worked for the Department of Public Works in the Town of Islip for 28 years. In 2011, Ray retired and with his fiancée Anne, made the Villages their permanent home. He enjoys the sun, golfing and retirement.

Ken Copp - Information Technology Coordinator and POA Database Manager - (Duval)

Ken and his wife Joyce moved from Michigan to the Village of Duval in Decem-

ber 2007. Ken was a Production Coordinator & Business Analyst for Steelcase Inc. for 35 years. He is a 2003 M.O.S. Certified (Microsoft Office Specialist) and has extensive experience developing Microsoft Access Databases and Excel spreadsheet programs. His Degree is in Architectural Drafting and Construction and he was a Licensed Residential Builder in Michigan for over 30 years. His career also includes 21 years in the U.S. Navy and he is a Vietnam Veteran. Ken has held numerous offices in both the N.E.R.A. (Naval Enlisted Reserve Association) and the Knights of Columbus.

Paul Fusco – Special Projects – (Hemingway)

Paul is a native of Boston, MA, but spent the last 15 years in New York City, before moving to The Villages 3 years ago with his partner, Genevieve. Paul is a seasoned Senior Technology Executive - during his time in NYC he served as Chief Technology Officer, Chief Information Officer, and Chief Operating Officer for companies in the Retail, Investment and Software Development space. He is a Vietnam Veteran (1969-73) and while serving, he developed computer based software for radar guidance systems. He received his BS in Business from Mercy

College in New York. He is an avid golfer, enjoys the sun, gardening, and spending time with family and grandchildren, who live locally in the area.

Myron Henry - Hall of Fame/Special Projects – (Hadley)

Myron is a native of Peru, Indiana. He received a BS from Ball State University and the MS and Ph.D. from Colorado State University. Myron has served as a mathematics professor and administrator at Montana State University, Central Michigan University, Old Dominion University (VA), Kent State University (OH) and the University of Southern Mississippi. He was also a visiting professor at North Carolina State University. An Eagle Scout, Myron has served on the Great Trails (OH) and Tidewater (VA) Councils of the BSA. He and his wife Mary moved to The Villages in July 2008.

Ed Highland – Special Projects - (St. Charles)

Ed and his wife Carol, both natives of Philadelphia, moved fulltime to The Villages, St Charles, in August 2010. Ed spent his entire working career in the financial industry working in banking and mortgage servicing operations. He retired after eleven years from

(Continued on page 11)

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From L to R: Ketan Doshi, MD, Craig H. Reynolds, MD, Rama Balaraman, MD, Roderick L. Paras, MD, Thomas H. Cartwright, MD and Maury B. Berger, MD

POA Directors

(Continued from page 10)

Standard & Poor's in May 2012. Ed is a veteran of the U.S. Army (1966 Aug - 1969 Mar) with an overseas duty assignment in South Korea with the 2nd Infantry Division. After his discharge from the Army, Ed furthered his education by attending night school at the Community College of Philadelphia, and LaSalle University where he attained a B.S. in Finance and an MBA in Management.

Ron Husted - Special Projects - (Tall Trees)

Ron and his wife Kathleen moved to The Villages from Hutchinson Island in south Florida. They were originally from the Mid Hudson Valley in New York. Prior to relocating to The Villages Ron had served as Treasurer and President of his Condominium Association during its \$2.5M reconstruction from the 3 hurricanes. Ron retired from the IBM Corporation after 36 years where he held a number of Senior Financial Management positions, including pricing management responsibilities both in the US and Europe. Among his responsibilities he served as Business Manager for an IBM Senior Corp. Vice President, and as Senior Marketing Development Representative for Wall Street Traders. In addition, Ron taught at IBM Pricing Schools at Pace University and

at some European Pricing schools. After retiring in 1990, Ron returned to IBM as a Financial Consultant in a Corporate Development Organization. He left this position in 2008 to enjoy his retirement.

Ron has served on a number of Boards and Organizations throughout his career.

Mary Paulsboe – Special Projects – (Palo Alto)

Mary Paulsboe moved to the Villages in July of 1999 from Arlington Heights, Ill. She spent most of her work career in downtown Chicago having worked for three major corporations over 25 years. Mary was Secretary of the POA for six years, is a Senior Sleuth for Seniors vs. Crime and volunteer at her Church. She also enjoys golf, bowling and traveling.

Sal Torname – Special Projects – (St. James)

Sal was born and raised in Massachusetts and became a full time resident of the Villages in 2011. He worked in the telecommunications industry for nearly 40 years starting with New England Telephone, now Verizon, and ending his career with General Service Administration, a Federal Agency providing communication services to other Federal Agencies. His assignments involved routinely working with large and small telephone companies and acting as a liaison between those companies and agencies to negotiate a variety of telephone agreements and contracts. While employed, Sal became ac-

tive in many civic and charitable organizations including service on Conservation Commission and was elected to his town's Planning Board. Sal received a BS Degree from Salem State College in Business Administration and an MS Degree from Anna Maria Collage in Quality Management. He and his wife Kathleen became full time residents of The Villages in 2011. Sal was recently elected to a four year term as a Villages CDD 8 Supervisor.

Jerry Vicenti – Membership Director – (Hemingway)

Jerry was born and raised in Staten Island, NY. He retired from The Port Authority of NY & NJ after 35 years. Jerry worked in the Procurement Department as a Buyer and Contract Administrator and supervised the uniforms services department, and the construction, operation and security of the Brooklyn Cruise Ship Terminal. He served as Trustee on the Supervisor's Union Executive Board, worked in the World Trade Center Recovery Unit in 1993 & 9/11 and also worked with Secret Service and Homeland Security Department. He received Special Citation awards for his work in the WTC Recovery Unit. Jerry and his wife Annette moved to The Villages in June of 2008. He joined the POA board in February 2011, and in June of 2011, Jerry was elected to serve as the POA Membership Director. He was recently elected to a four year term as a Villages CDD 7 Supervisor. □

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AAC Meeting

(Continued from page 7)

move forward and yes, I would ask staff to assist to the extent that they can because I think we need to do something here.

POA - For example, if the District Manager controls the streets maybe for the next club presidents’ meeting she could attend and give us some idea of what her perspective would be...

Ms. Tutt - ...I am not opposed to working through and coming up with alternatives. I would comment that for years I was involved in the Ocala parades and those parades were not funded through their local government - it was a community that came forward... You need resident involvement in a parade of that type of volume, the amount of staff and effort that takes place, not only in advance, but on the day of the parade, as it is not purely a dollar item. The dollars are a drop in the bucket. An \$8-10,000 hard cost for the Christmas parade. Parts of the soft costs are not having

facilities ready for residents on the day of the parade, and the amount of staff that is used. All I am saying is that if these groups are willing to actually provide the staffing - the core committee - to make it happen, then it becomes a partnership. If in fact Mr. Bell was talking about that kind of parade, there is a core group. When you go into any city you will find dozens of people who coordinate the work group. Yes, the city may provide law enforcement and absorb those costs, but you have to have the involvement and commitment in that core group who comes up with their plan - their idea. It cannot be initiated from us because the amount of staff and work to put on those consistent parades is huge...

Mr. Lambrecht - That is exactly what these Clubs are trying to find out - what the stumbling blocks are so that they can help with the solution.

Mrs. Tutt - The FIRST THING they have to do is solidify to actually say they are willing to come together to coordinate, to com-

mittee, to sponsor to make it happen. If, in fact, that is what, as Mr. Bell said, to make it a real parade. If, in fact, they take that involvement then we work as a partnership and we act as support to help co-sponsor, take care of insurance, help with communication and if you want, to throw some dollars, but the amount of work of staff and personnel is the issue. We are not sustainable to do that with more than the Christmas parade. If your group is serious and they are willing to get that core group to make it happen to do something - and not say at this point, Developer put it on for us or District put it on for us, that core group has to say we’ve got “X” amount of people - we will commit - we will set up the committees, we will make it happen. It is a year-long effort. IT’S GOT TO BE A COOPERATIVE EFFORT.“

(The POA will continue to provide follow-up information on the status of the parades each month in the Bulletin.) □

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Questions & Answers

December POA General Meeting

1) I just want to thank the people that repaired El Camino, but my main concern was for the eastbound – outbound lane by the gate. It is still sinking, so I hope they are not finished. **A)** Brittany Wilson, Janet Tutt's Assistant, is with us tonight and she will see that it is addressed, but remember, it might take two months or so because as a government they have to jump through several hoops to secure the funds to do the project.

2) I was quite surprised when I heard that the POA funded the purchase of some video equipment and I have noticed that other clubs are buying audio-video equipment to be used so I have two questions: a) Should that not be paid for by amenity fees and be part of a capital budget, and b) Is the video equipment that you bought going to be used by Laurel Manor with other clubs or for other purposes, **A)** We are fortunate to have an overflow room, but we wanted to be able to have video into that room (audio was already available). There is no recreation facility that has the room-to-room video capability. Savannah Center does not even have it – they rent the equipment (for \$600 a night) when Mark Morse does his annual presentation to the VHA. We have 12 meetings a year and we never know when we will need the overflow room so renting the equipment was not financially the best alternative. We did not actually purchase the equipment – we did as we did

for the AED for Public Safety's use – we donated the money to the District for the purpose of purchasing a video unit to be installed in Laurel Manor. The Laurel Manor budget will assume the expense of maintaining it, and yes, it can be used for other Clubs because it belongs to the District. If the District had approved purchasing it with amenity fees, then every regional recreation center would demand that they get one as well. (For the record, when facilities are transferred from the Developer to the District, the District agrees to keep them in as good or better condition than they were at the time of transfer. There is no agreement that they must provide equipment, etc., that was not present at the time of the transfer.)

3) Is there still water in that indoor pool? **A)** Yes there is. However, it is no longer used as a part of a Wellness Center. It is now

used as a modality for the Rehabilitation Center.

4) At the Virginia Trace pool they have closed the CIC Box and taken away all of the applications. That's a suggestion box but it is closed now. **A)** District staff will check it out. However, to be perfectly honest with you, the CIC, while they are a wonderful organization, but why would you want to wait a month for something that you can get an answer on the same day? You can call the District Customer Service at 753-4508 and they will help you immediately. In contrast,

(Continued on page 14)

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December Q&A

(Continued from page 13)

the CIC takes your suggestion, they find out which part of the organization is responsible for it, they contact them for an answer and then get back to you with the information.

5) I'd like to see an arena somewhere around here where we can have indoor sports and a bigger Savannah Center where you can have a bigger stage and which would seat about 7 – 8,000 people. A) If you read your deed restrictions you will find that if you want to add a facility that's not currently here, in order to have that happen, you first need to have it approved by the Developer and then 51% or more of the residents must approve it and agree to give up their cost of living cap on their monthly amenity fee because when the amenities are transferred there is no projected need for funds to maintain such a facility. The Performing Arts Center group (PALMS) was just getting a good running start when we hit the recession so they are currently on hold waiting for the economy to pick up again. □

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

“Marcus Welby” Health Plan Info

We've all seen and read the glorified articles in the Daily Sun regarding the "Marcus Welby" health plan which is being promoted by the Doctors of Belleview and The Villages. (Since receipt of your letter all Villages residents have also received a letter from the Developer, Mr. H. Gary Morse.)

We were so excited to read about it because our Doctors are with the Doctors of Belleview. We thought that we would be going from very good medical care to Excellent medical care. However, this wonderful idea is only for a few people - those who can accept the insurance promoted from this practice.

We have Blue Care/Blue Shield Medicare Advantage. The Doctors of Belleview were participators until this month when, just before the Medicare cutoff date of December 7, we were informed that they would no longer accept our insurance. We've since learned

that many others were to be discontinued also. The letter stated that they would accept Preferred Care Partners and United Health Care. Since we cannot use these plans, we have no choice but to find new doctors.

Seems to me that the articles in the Daily Sun are misleading. I'm sure that the medical care will be wonderful, but only for the 'chosen few' who are willing or able to use United Health Care or Preferred Care Partners plans.

Linda Owen

Editor's Note: We have confirmed they only accept Preferred Care Partners and United Health Care Insurance Companies. Our issue at this time is that because the Care Centers will only take Preferred Care Partners or United Health Care Insurance, the 'program' eliminates many residents from access to the care centers because they have partial or full payment of their supplemental plan premiums by their former employers and they are not with either of these companies. Hopefully this concern will be addressed. □



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Overcharged Bond Interest

Lot of stuff going on - looks like and hearing that some others are getting their refunds of the overcharged interest. Great job of getting the word out and the POA is definitely being recognized on TOTV for being the ones to stand up for the residents. More and more people are wondering why they are not either contacting the 880 residents that have been identified as being overcharged or just mailing them a check? I was wondering if the POA would have any leverage to obtain a copy of the names of the 880 people identified as being overcharged? Maybe we could contact them. I will chip in on postage if needed.

Would there be any kind of way we could demand a copy maybe through the firm that helped with the 2007 lawsuit? Just seems

bad that they know they overcharged these people and don't plan on making refunds unless they find out about it.

Anything I can do I will be glad to do it to help with this... Danny Smith

Editor's Note: First, thank you again for bringing the interest due at bond payoff miscalculation problem to our attention. Thanks to your efforts, the staff has corrected the problem going forward and more than 900 residents and former residents are eligible for refunds. We agree with you that the CDDs should be more proactive with notifying those who were overcharged. We see no reason why at the very least each CDD does not simply issue a check to any resident who was overcharged and still lives here in The Villages. We understand the staff's concern that by calculating specific refund amounts for former residents whom they might be unable to locate, the Board might have to turn the funds over to the State Unclaimed Property fund. Hence, we believe that the CDDs should simply send a form letter to the last known address of any former resident who paid off their bond during the subject time periods, with a copy of the claim form (the same information staff plans to put on the District website and in the local newspaper).

As of the December residential District meetings, only CDD4 is planning on mailing notices to all who have paid off their bond. It

will be a form letter explaining the miscalculation and will include a form to be filled out if a refund is being requested. The CDD4 Board turned down a suggestion by one board member to automatically send a refund check to any resident still living in The Villages who was overcharged. **None of the other CDDs** will be doing any proactive notification to those who were overcharged. As a result, the POA will inquire as to the availability of a contact list of affected residents and former residents and consider direct notification of all those overcharged.

For a complete explanation of the bond interest miscalculation situation, go to the districtgov.org web site and click on the bond interest link at the bottom of the column on the left. □

Parade Letter Samples Received By The POA

Keep the St Patrick's Day parade and all other parades in the Villages **Background (Preamble):**

The Villages is Florida's Friendliest Hometown. Parades have always been a wonderful part of The Villages, to go to either Square and watch with your friends and neighbors as we celebrate a holiday.

(Continued on page 16)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Parade Letter Samples

(Continued from page 15)

St Patrick's Day parades are celebrated in almost every city in this country on March 17th, and we want to continue this tradition in The Villages, the Friendliest Hometown in Florida. I think we need to remember we are all senior citizens and parades were part of our youth.

Parades give a sense of belonging, and that home town feeling we had and have. It is my feeling that canceling parades, in part, takes away the spirit of a community and chips away at its identity.

Petition: We, the undersigned, call on Gary Morse and the Entertainment Department to continue to celebrate St Patrick Day with our usual parade in both town squares. And, also, continue with all parades that were here in The Villages in 2012.

We do not want parades eliminated in The Villages.

Petition published by Jackie Campbell, President of one of the four Irish Clubs on November 12, 2012.

Copy of letter sent to Barbara Vesco:

After reading about your decision regarding future parades in The POA Bulletin, we are sadly disappointed. We and our Village Friends often attend these parades and we enjoy ourselves. We cannot understand your reasons for cancellation and we strongly suggest that you make these reasons public and provide the backup data upon which you based your decision. Then, we hope you will meet with the affected Club Presidents and work out a deal so the parades may continue...
Joe and Chris Ward

The primary (if not only) reason I paid a premium to live in The Villages was the town square entertainment and parades. How can I make my feelings known to the Developer?

Greg Launhardt

Will this subject be on your meeting agenda? There is so much information and misinformation going around. The Irish, German, Italian and other clubs deserve the answers to our questions. If anyone can get to the bottom of this issue, it's the POA. Several

(Continued on page 17)

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LETTERS

Parade Letter Samples

(Continued from page 16)

petitions have been signed (hundreds of names) to keep the parades. Peggy Carli

Is it true that all parades have been canceled by The Villages for 2013? What is being planned to protest this with the Developer and how can I help? Glorianne Lowe

We just moved to The Village of Charlotte and have heard some distressing news - effective 2013 there will be no more parades. Can you verify if this information is accurate? Patricia DeLosier

Editor's Note: The POA has been actively involved in working with the Club Presidents to help them find a solution to this problem. You will find a summary of our activities on page 6 in the AAC Summary under Audience Comments. We hope that the VHA will step in, which has been requested by the Eight Club Presidents and assist them, as they will have better leverage to engage the Developer, but until then, or if they refuse to help, the POA will continue to assist the "parade clubs" in any way we can. □



Martin Luther King Day

January 21, 2013

Lightning Matters

By Len Hathaway - Study Group on Lightning

This is a heads up directed to new Villagers and particularly those new homeowners south of CR-466A. You may experience a door-to-door solicitation from a lightning rod installer. Be advised that there is no county or state oversight for residential lightning protection systems commonly called lightning rods. Therefore this is a buyer beware marketplace. Only you the homeowner can decide if you need direct lightning protection. If you do, consider only accepting bids from those lightning protection system installers that are "listed" by both Underwriters Laboratories and the Lightning Protection Institute. They do not conduct door-to-door solicitations.

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Seniors Vs Crime

Leading the Fight Against Scams Combating Door-to-Door Peddlers

Villagers often voice frustrations over door-to-door solicitations. Some mistakenly think we are a ‘gated’ community and can keep solicitors out. Most of us know that is not true – our roads are public property. Anyone can use them. Our gates ‘monitor’ access but do not restrict access to our Villages.

The State of Florida does have laws governing door-to-door sales. The Villages has policies in place to reinforce state laws. Knowing the rules is the first and most important step in doing something to control door-to-door solicitations within our community.

The Villages displays “No Soliciting” signs at all entrance gates in The Villages which prohibits individuals from trying to sell unwanted items or services (solicitation) to residents. The only legal way for vendors to sell anything door-to-door within The Villages is when they have a valid Home Solicitation Sales Permit from the county. (There are some individuals and organizations that are exempt from having a permit, but they must be able to show how they are excluded from having a permit.)

Posting a sign on your door or in your window at your residence that reads “No Soliciting” should keep sellers you have not invited to your home from trying to sell you goods or services. Florida law prohibits individuals from trying to sell items or services to individuals who have posted “No Soliciting” signs at their residence. Even though Florida laws are a little unclear on when solicitation becomes trespassing, the first line of defense is for you, as a homeowner, to post a “No Soliciting” sign on your property.

When someone comes to your door selling something, and you did not invite them, first ask to see their Sales Solicitation Permit. FS 501.022(8) requires them to display their permit BEFORE initiation of the solicitation of a sale. If they do not have, or refuse to show you, a Solicitation Permit, ask them to leave immediately. If they refuse, and become persistent, tell them that you will report them to local authorities, and then do so!

(Continued on page 19)

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Seniors Vs Crime

(Continued from page 18)

If you want to report individual(s) violating the Villages policy, call the Villages Deed Compliance Office at 751-3912. After hours and weekends call Community Watch at 753-0550.

If you want assistance from the police to remove these unwanted individuals or to report solicitation without a permit, call 911. Tell the law enforcement officers who come to your house that you want to report these people for solicitor misconduct and give as much detail to the officers as possible. Otherwise, the police will not be able to apprehend the violators.

If you are ever concerned for your property security or your personal safety, call 911.

Florida Statutes 501.021 through 501.055 covers Florida home solicitation.

It is up to you to know your rights when it comes to solicitors and how to report violators of Florida “No Soliciting” statutes.

Remember, no one will watch out for your interests better than you. Whenever you think something – a call, letter, email, text message, whatever – may be a scam, you can come to any office of Seniors Vs Crime for free advice and assistance. There is never a charge for their services and they have two offices in The Villages to serve you. They can be reached at 352-753-7775 at their Marion County Office or 352-689-4600, Extension 4606, at their Sumter County Office.

Volunteers at both offices are ready, willing and able to assist you.

Seniors Vs Crime will also come to your club, church, or social group meeting to speak about scams, how to recognize them, and what you can do to protect yourselves.

To schedule one of these free presentations for your group, contact either office of Seniors Vs Crime at the above numbers.

Seniors Vs Crime representatives are also available in the rear of the room at each POA monthly meeting. □

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Our Gardening Column:

The Magnificent Magnolia

by Anne Lambrecht, Master Gardener
annegarden@embarqmail.com

The Magnolia is a stately, broad leaf evergreen tree with large, shiny leaves and huge, creamy, fragrant flowers.

The Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) and Sweet Bay Magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*) are the trees most grown here in central Florida although many of the other species do just fine here, too. They are native to southeastern United States down to the Caribbean and parts of South America and also native to Southeast Asia. There are 210 species belonging to the family Magnolia. When the early botanist dudes were categorizing plants, they named it for a French botanist, Pierre Magnol, but one of its other

names was "talauma". Magnolia is an ancient genus. (A clue would be the hard leaves and weird-looking seed pods). They were here before the bees and so the flowers evolved to encourage pollination by beetles. To avoid damage from pollinating beetles, the carpels (reproductive parts) of Magnolia flowers are extremely tough. Some fossils of the Magnolia family have been found dating to 95 million years ago.

The leaves, sometimes as much as 12" long, have dark green, highly glossy upper surfaces and an equally attractive lower surface covered by a dense, velvet layer of rich cinnamon brown hairs. The huge white flowers are richly aromatic and combined with the foliage make this one of our most beautiful native flowering trees. The Magnolia flower is the state flower of both Mississippi and Louisiana.

Magnolias can grow up to 65 feet high. The foliage is attractive all year. The huge, fragrant flowers bloom from late spring into

autumn. Flower colors range from white to pink, red, purple or yellow. There are both evergreen and deciduous kinds of Magnolias. The "fruit" (what comes after the flower is finished) is a prominent cone with red fleshy seeds inside. The bark is smooth and grayish.

The Sweet Bay Magnolia is a small to medium sized tree, 20-30 feet high. They like moist to wet, acidic sites in partial shade to full sun. Zones 8-10. Sweet Bay can withstand "wet feet" and is good for areas near ponds. They are also good in the home garden as long as the soil is acidic or the leaves might become yellow and chlorotic. The undersides of the leaves are a silvery-green and the flowers have a crisp lemon scent. Since Sweet Bay has a large distribution throughout Florida, it is important to obtain locally adapted strains for your garden. There are many "improved" cultivars that are propagated by way of grafting or specially treated seed cuttings. It is so important to buy your trees from a reputable nursery that stands by their stock.

Magnolias like rich, moist sites in full sun to light shade. They are not attractive to deer. Most nurseries only carry a few varieties so in order to get a prized specimen; you'll

(Continued on page 21)

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Magnificent Magnolias

(Continued from page 20)

probably need to hunt through mail-order catalogs.

There are just a few drawbacks to Magnolias: some will take up to ten years to flower. Their dense shade and shallow roots make it impossible for grass to grow beneath the canopy. The roots often crack or uplift pavement if planted between sidewalk and curb. Leaves drop 365 days a year. Fallen leaves and cones decompose slowly. They grow to 40 feet wide so they take up a large amount of garden space. All are hard to move once established. We needed a fork lift to move ours to the backyard.

What Magnolias need:

- Careful Placement--pick a location where the shallow, fleshy roots won't be damaged by digging or by soil compaction from constant foot traffic.
- Soil--fairly rich, well drained neutral to slightly acid soil amended with plenty of organic matter at planting time.
- Mulching--at least in the early years, keep a cooling mulch over the root area.
- Watering--irrigate deeply and thoroughly, but don't waterlog the soil or the tree will drown. Only Sweet Bay can take lots of water.
- Fertilizing--feed trees if new growth is scanty or weak, or if you see significant die back despite adequate watering and drainage. Use a controlled release prod-

uct; magnolias are very susceptible to salt damage from over fertilizing, resulting in burned leaf edges.

- Pruning--for deciduous magnolias, the best time is after bloom; for evergreen kinds, do the job before the spring growth flush (January or February). The best method is to remove the entire twig or limb right to its base.

Magnolias seldom have serious pest or disease problems. Scale and mealy bugs are known pests.

There has been some cancer research done on magnolia seeds. The research, funded by the National Institute of Health, yielded an encouraging discovery: the cones have substances that inhibit the growth of new blood

(Continued on page 22)



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Magnificent Magnolias

(Continued from page 21)

vessels, critical in stopping the growth of tumors. In fact, the substances cut tumor growth by half in lab mice.

I got in big trouble a few weeks ago. We have a pond with four waterfalls. This spring, the Husband was anxious for the foliage around the pond to fill in. Now we all know--except the Husband-- that this time of year all plants have become a little “jungle-ishous”. And so the pond plants have grown over into the stream and their roots matted up on top of the rocks blocking the falling water. This caused hardly any water to be in the pond: it was all over the yard! The Husband was so mad about his water bill - - ooh, you should

have seen him whining and complaining, ranting and raving, jumping up and down.

What could I do: I just rolled my eyes.

Sources:

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

The Southern Living Garden Book □

Fitness Challenge

Happy New Year Couch Potatoes!!

By Judi Da Costa, Personal Trainer

C'mon Guys and Gals. It's time to MOVE off the couch! How often do you take the golf cart to get the mail or to see a friend a few doors down? Could you walk instead? Maybe not all the way to start, but just think if you were to move around a little more how much fitter you could become and very often aches and pains will lessen the more you can move. Exercise can also help lower your blood pressure and burns calories which is a great way to shed those extra Holiday pounds you put on without too much effort. □



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