

THE



BULLETIN



Issue 39.12

December 2013

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Champions of Residents' Rights Since 1975

The POA Website – www.poa4us.org

“Class Action 5” POA Hall of Fame Inductees



**Plaintiffs Sign Settlement Agreement
December 10, 2007**

Standing L to R - Rich Lambrecht, Joe Gorman,
Irv Yedwab
Seated L to R - Bill Garner, Elaine Dreidame

POA Hall of Fame nominations would normally be accepted through November of 2013. However, this year the POA Board of Directors voted to celebrate the **five year anniversary** of the Class Action Lawsuit Settlement, which was approved by the Circuit Court on March 8, 2008, by inducting “The Class Action Five”, the named plaintiffs who made it happen, into the POA Hall of Fame.

The “FIVE” are Elaine Dreidame, Bill Garner, Joe Gorman (previously inducted), Rich Lambrecht and Irv Yedwab.

Induction into the POA Hall of Fame is an honor reserved for past or present POA members who have made notable contributions to the POA and to the residents of The Villages. The efforts of these inductees overwhelmingly met these criteria.

These five residents were the “named” Plaintiffs, who, on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated, exhibited steadfast and courageous leadership in pursuing and successfully completing a class action lawsuit settlement in March 2008. The agreed



settlement was an immediate payment to the Center District of \$11,803,168 and annual payments totaling \$28,021,000 over the next 13 years. All monies go into the Amenity Division Budget to assure adequate reserves and continuity of amenity services. It is these settlement monies that paid for the ten miles of replacement recreation trails north of CR 466 and the numerous refurbishments and additions which are taking place and will continue to take place on the older recreation centers and executive golf courses. More than that, however, **they have saved all residents north of CR 466, millions of dollars personally by**

(Continued on page 2)

Tuesday, December 17, 2013

POA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Third Tuesday of the Month – 7:00 PM
Laurel Manor Recreation Center

**THE VILLAGES
CHARTER SCHOOLS**
in the Context of All
Sumter County Public Schools

Presented by **Richard A. Shirley,**
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Followed by **Questions & Answers**

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POA Election Results

POA elections were held at the November membership meeting.

ALL 2013 OFFICERS were re-elected.

President - Elaine Dreidame - Chatham

Vice President - Jerry Ferlisi - Poinciana

Treasurer - Ed Highland - St. Charles

Secretary - Carolyn Reichel - Sunset Pointe

ALL 2013 DIRECTORS have returned and were re-elected. In addition, two new Directors were elected.

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Hall of Fame

(Continued from page 1)

protecting the resale value of all of their homes.

In his four page December 14, 2007, letter to all of The Villages residents, **Mr. H. Gary Morse**, President of The Villages of Lake-Sumter, Inc., stated,

“The complaint of the Plaintiffs’ group about amenity sales can prove to be the best thing that ever happened for every resident that’s here today and those yet to move here.”

The January 2014 Bulletin will include an article detailing their efforts to establish this task. □

POA Elections

(Continued from page 1)

Director - Ray Banks - St. Charles
 Director - Ken Copp - Duval
 Director - Myron Henry - Hadley
 Director - Mary Paulsboe - Palo Alto
 Director - Sal Torname - St. James
 Director - Jerry Vicenti - Hemingway

NEW DIRECTORS:

Victor Ray - Tamarind Grove
 Cliff Wiener - Piedmont

The newly elected Officers/Board of Directors will commence their duties January 1, 2014.

You will find a brief bio of each member of the Board of Directors on the POA website, poa4us.org. Just click on the box entitled Officers and Directors. □

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 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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The Villages District Government Followed By Questions & Answers

Ms. Tutt, District Manager for The Villages Community Development Districts, was the featured speaker at the October 15th Membership Meeting. She provided a review of some of the accomplishments of District government during the past year and provided information on plans for the upcoming year.

Highlights from the last year are as follows:

- The Recreation Department, under the direction of the Amenities Authority Committee (AAC), responded to the residents request to assist them in sponsoring the Irish, Italian and German parades after the Entertainment Division decided to no longer sponsor parades. It was a cooperative effort.
- Responding to a request from residents, the fitness club hours were changed to an earlier opening time.
- The Villages Public Safety Department opened their 7th and last fire station.
- There are now over 7,000 residents who have received CPR training and there have been numerous saves as a result of the large number of CPR trained residents throughout The Villages.
- The Districts were able to refinance some of the infrastructure bonds in CDDs 3, 4, 5 and 6. Those refinances have saved residents and the Districts in excess of \$20 million dollars over the life of those bonds.

(Continued on page 4)

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, unslanted news reporting from local news sources.
10. Be informed beforehand by the Developer on any major change in our community. □

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Bulletin Distribution

The POA places a Bulletin on almost every driveway in The Villages every month, regardless of whether or not you are an active POA member. We believe it is important that all residents have all of the information about happenings and events in The Villages as they make decisions on various issues. Note, the Villages of Collier and Hillsborough are growing. We begin driveway distribution to a Village once approximately 50 percent of the homes have residents, so we anticipate that we will begin delivery to those two Villages in February or March.

If for some reason you did not receive a POA Bulletin on your driveway, you can find it on line at poa4us.org – just click on “Current Bulletin”, or if you wish to have a hard copy, we do have them available at the following retail establishments:

- Colony Plaza Publix
 - La Plaza Grande Winn Dixie & Ace Hardware
 - Kiley & Sons Plumbing
 - Spanish Plainses Ollie’s Frozen Custard
 - Spanish Plainses Walgreens & Publix
- Any distribution questions, adding to or removing your address from the “No Throw” list, contact Shelley Pfaff at 352-325-1540 or at delivery@poa4us.org. □

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NOW ACCEPTING 2014 POA MEMBERSHIPS

On behalf of the Officers and Directors of your POA, we would like to say “thank you” for the tremendous response of members renewing their previous years POA memberships and also for the many, many new members who are joining with us in 2014 as a way of supporting Residents’ Rights for all Villagers. Our desire is to keep each of you informed of facts about issues which may not have been clearly or fully presented in other media. The POA Mission Statement and the POA’s ‘Bill of Rights for Villages Residents’ can be found on page 2 of this Bulletin.

Our membership year runs from January 1 through December 31. We are now accepting

2014 POA memberships. Please use the form below. POA members will have access to discounts provided by our Discount Partners listed on our web site – poa4us.org, and POA members who have provided us with an e-mail address will receive our monthly POA Email Newsletter reminding them of the speaker and date of the upcoming monthly POA membership meeting, as well as informing them of any matters that we believe they should be aware of on a timelier basis than what our monthly Bulletin can provide.

If you appreciate the efforts the POA Makes On Your Behalf... **IT'S TIME TO SHOW IT** – Send In Your Application TODAY! □

THE POA HAS YOUR BACK – DO YOU HAVE OURS?

POA 2014 Membership – New / Renewal and Contribution Form

Please complete each section and return to: **The POA, P.O. Box 386, Oxford, FL 34484**

New
 Renewal
 Number of People in Household

PLEASE PRINT!

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

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

ADDRESS _____

VILLAGE _____ VILLAGES ID# _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____
(We respect your privacy. Your email address is for POA Official use ONLY)

1. MEMBERSHIP NEW/RENEWAL: Please enroll my POA membership for 2014 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)

District Government

(Continued from page 2)

- Discover Card was added this past year to pay Recreation bills and American Express will be added this upcoming year to pay utility bills as well as your amenity fees.
- All of the audits for all 14 Districts came back totally clean. There were over \$250 million dollars in budgets which were being managed.
- The District purchased Sumter Sanitation which will eventually result in a savings for residents since the operation will not be driven by a profit margin because it will be owned by a government.
- In the area of deed compliance there were 5,553 Architecture Review applications, 4,973 deed compliance concerns that were filed, and of those there were only 929 that required deed restriction reminders.
- We are not giving pay raises to our full time employees this year, as we have budgeted for a pay and compensation study to be performed for District employees. Over the last three to four months, we have been losing a substantial number of our experienced, knowledgeable employees to other governmental entities. The pay and packages they have been offered are substantially more than what we are providing. The District Management is not looking to turn the employees into wealthy individuals, but do believe it is time, and appropriate, that they make sure that they take care of the folks who make sure this community is maintained in the manner that it currently is taken care of. We know

that things are tough for many of the residents as far as a return on their investments and the fact that Social Security is only going up 1.5%. The State of Florida just increased the minimum wage by 1.74%.

Highlights for the upcoming year (October 1st through September 30th) are as follows:

- Bond issues for District 10 will be concluded.
- Provisions will be made for the additional homes that will be built as a result of the Purchase of the Fruitland Park property. It was noted that the addition of the 2,000 plus homes, executive golf courses and recreation centers, will only extend the final build out date by seven months.
- The Districts will move toward electronic agendas for all 70 board members.
- All of the District Staff, with the exception of Community Watch and Public Safety, will be moving under one roof into offices located at Sumter Landing. The rent will be substantially less than what is being paid now.
- The District will have a pay and compensation study performed for all full time

positions. This wage study will include 250 full time employees, 100 of them are in the fire department. Currently, the \$245 million dollar budget provides all of the District services - recreation, executive golf courses, Community Watch, Property Management, etc.

- The AAC has taken on a very aggressive capital improvement program, so we will need your cooperation as far as disruptions caused by the construction. Watch the District website, districtgov.org, and the Daily Sun for updates.

Questions and Answers:

1) What is the rationale for the increase in the water/sewer rates? **A)** When I was hired I found that a number of our funds and enterprise funds had not been aggressive in establishing reserves. The monies raised are for reserves and capital improvements. It is critical, if you have infrastructure, that you establish adequate reserves so that you have sustainability of that infrastructure.

2) Will there be a dilution of our amenity facilities with the addition of another 2,000 plus homes in Fruitland Park? **A)** That will not be the case because additional executive

(Continued on page 5)

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District Government

(Continued from page 4)

courses and recreation facilities are also being added.

3) How many districts are there that are not numbered? **A)** The numbered districts are the residential community development districts. There are three commercial districts – Village Center, Sumter Landing, and Brownwood Community Development Districts. Additionally, there is an independent utility district.

4) I have lived here for ten years and I am concerned about the formula for the water rates we are assessed. I have a corner property and I have four or five times the area which needs irrigation than the typical Villages home. I keep getting letters saying I am using too much water. The water rates increase with usage. Isn't there something that can be done for residents who have corner properties? **A)** There is a maximum sewer charge. However, in regard to water usage, we are directed by water management districts in the State of Florida. They do not care about

how large your lot is, they only are concerned with the amount of water consumption on each property. Our District has no control over this procedure.

5) What's the difference between north of CR 466 and south of CR 466? **A)** There are different governmental entities that manage the operations and they have separate budgets, but the policies, procedures, activities, everything the districts do are intertwined. Residents should not see a difference in what is available north or south of CR 466 – it is seamless. Additionally, everybody pays an amenity fee, and everyone has a CPI annual increase. In regard to the numbered residential districts there is more variation depending upon when that district was built. If it was built twenty years ago, the cost of that infrastructure was a lot less than it is today so the bond and maintenance costs will be higher at the newer districts.

6) Are the amenity fees the same for everyone? **A)** No. The amenity fees each resident pays are dependent upon when they pur-

chased in The Villages and what their annual CPI increases have been.

7) Will there ever be a cap on the amenity fee charged? **A)** There already is one. The current cap was set at \$155 per month. There are a relatively small number of residents who are not receiving annual increases because they have reached the cap. □

You can find
ACRONYMS for Villagers
online at poa4us.org/acronyms.html



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AAC Meeting Summary November 6, 2013

Old Business Topics Included:

• Staff is working with the I/T Department with regard to Entry Gate Connectivity and will provide an update at the December 11, 2013 meeting.

• Paradise Park Area A – The multi-modal trail has been laid out and the curbing is being installed. The Petanque courts and restrooms are under construction. Change orders for additional tree trimming (approved) and construction of a picnic pavilion (future date) were discussed.

• Paradise Park Area B – The design process has begun and the engineers have met with the Town of Lady Lake to begin the permitting process, with likely submission in December.

• Construction is on schedule for the La Hacienda Sports Pool and the Southside Recreation Center improvements.

• While construction has been delayed, the April 2014 completion date remains in place for the Silver Lake Recreation Center project.

• The Tierra Del Sol Recreation Center expansion project has entered the design phase with more information to be provided shortly.

• A variance request has been submitted to the Town of Lady Lake for the Lindsey Lane Golf Maintenance Building, with approval

anticipated for December.

• The AAC was advised that architectural plans for the Saddlebrook Picnic Pavilion will be presented at the AAC’s December meeting.

• At the request of Committee member Forrester who was not present, the AAC tabled its review of home repainting options until its December 11, 2013 meeting.

• The transfer of the Developer’s portion of the Marion County Recreation Trail to the Amenity authority will be accomplished via a quit claim deed with the Developer sharing the cost of the survey expense.

• The AAC supported a staff recommendation to table a request from the Radio Control Racing Car Club for a dedicated site, until the Fiscal Year 2014-15 Budget discussion.

Consent Agenda:

• The AAC approved Resolution 14-02 to amend the 2012-13 RAD fund budget for Settlement projects. This moved \$672,746 from the Settlement Fund to the General Fund for the expenditures on the Woodshop Parking Area, Paradise Park Areas A & B, El Santiago Restaurant purchase, Lindsey Lane Golf facility, Southside Pool, La Hacienda Pool, Chula Vista, Silver Lake and De La Vista Postal Station trail.

• Approved the change order (\$2,640) for

Paradise Park landscaping and recreation improvements.

• Approved the awarding of RFP 14P-017 to various contractors for on-going roadway and parking lot maintenance services on an as needed basis.

New Business:

• The AAC decided not to address participation in the Governance Improvement Committee (GIC) until after feedback from the residential CDDs is received. An AAC member questioned whether a consolidated CDD could legally include the operational aspects of the AAC as the PowerPoint presentation suggested. While District Manager Tutt agreed that there was no GIC interest in the operational activities of the AAC, VLS Vice President and AAC member Gary Moyer stated that “... everything was on the table as part of that discussion.” He explained that if the GIC was interested, the changes could require legal action or a special act of the legislature to make it happen.

Please go to the districtgov.org website for the Official Minutes, Agendas and Meeting Schedule.

Next AAC Meeting – Wednesday, December 11th, 9:00 A.M. at the Savannah Center. □

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 **EVENTS in Mount Dora**
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*TASTE of OUR TOWN- A guided food & wine tasting tour.
Every Thurs-Sat @2PM \$49 www.TourMountDora.com

*Jan 11-12 **FL HIGHWAYMEN Art Show & Sale**
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Traffic Control on Colony Boulevard

What a challenge it has become. So much so that the Project Wide Advisory Committee (PWAC) has reached out to the Developer for assistance with coming up with a solution that will solve both current and future usage problems on this roadway, as well as asking him for help in funding the ‘fix’.

Below is the content of a letter sent by Janet Tutt to Mr. Morse on November 4th:

“The Project Wide Advisory Committee (PWAC), a committee of the Sumter Landing community Development district, has been meeting to discuss the traffic challenges along Colony Boulevard. The PWAC is concerned about the safety related issues they believe are being caused by a combination of volume and impatience because of the delays.

“The Community Development District No. 7 Board of Supervisors and the PWAC believe there is a traffic volume and design problem resulting in a current traffic configuration which does not work. In addition, the PWAC believes the build out of Community Development District No. 10, and now the possible addition of homes in Fruitland Park,

will only exacerbate the challenges currently being encountered.

“In exploring options for retrofitting this site, the PWAC recognizes there will be substantial cost associated with the proposed improvements and believes it is appropriate to reach out to you for your input and financial support of recommended solutions.

“The PWAC respectfully requests that you consider participating in the solution to the safety related issues that have developed along Colony Boulevard due to traffic volume and configuration of the roadway and path which causes safety problems for golf cart and vehicle interaction.

“Should you have any questions regarding this request or what is transpiring along Colony Boulevard, please do not hesitate to contact me.”

Mr. Mark Morse responded the following day with the following letter:

“Thank you for your November 4th letter relaying the request from the Project Wide Advisory Committee (PWAC) related to Colony Boulevard.

“We are aware that concerns have been raised and are agreeable to opening a dialogue with the PWAC as they explore the situation. Should we all be able to agree on an alternative configuration that makes sense from both

a safety and a cost standpoint, we are open to discuss sharing in the funding of that solution.

“Please let us know as to how we may be helpful to the PWAC’s discussion.”

Maybe now, with the assistance of the Developer and his staff of engineers, etc., a solution can be found, and work can begin, before there is a serious accident at this intersection.

The most dangerous area is where the golf cart traffic meets automobile traffic at the golf cart path crossing, which is located on Colony Boulevard between the Plaza and the Recreation Center. The PWAC has considered a four-way stop, a traffic light, and a tunnel under or a bridge over Colony Boulevard, to name a few, with the last two mentioned cost is in the one million dollar range. In the meantime, while they are studying the issue, the PWAC approved funding, commencing October 28th, to hire Community Watch to provide traffic control at the golf cart path intersection daily from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. It was estimated that this will cost the residents approximately \$200 a day so it could become expensive if it takes too long to determine and actually make the ‘fix’.

RESIDENTS CAN HELP WHILE WE WAIT FOR THE “FIX”!!!

If you are driving your automobile, do not use the Colony Boulevard “short cut” – Simply stay on Morse Boulevard and turn East on CR 466A and enter and exit the Plaza at the east end. In the long run, it will probably save you time and frustration. □

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Golf Cart Crashes

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.)

Monday, October 21st – 11:40 AM – A golf cart operator eastbound on Pinellas Place made a left turn into Bonifay Country Club tipping the cart towards the passenger side. The responding officer stated there were approximately 50 feet of “yaw marks” or side tire marks left by the passenger side tires while the driver side tires were not in contact with the roadway, eventually tipping the cart over on its side. The driver was cited for the accident. Both occupants were transported to The Villages Hospital for further treatment.

Monday, October 29th – Mid Afternoon – A golf cart operator swerved to avoid contact with an oncoming car at the intersection of Tamarind Grove Run and St. Charles Place. This action caused her to fall out of the cart onto the concrete. She injured her head and upper body and was transported by

ambulance to the Ocala Regional Medical Center.

Sunday, November 3rd – 3:00 AM – A 52 year old Village resident was found dead at the Saddlebrook Softball Complex. He was found lying across the floorboard of a golf cart. The golf cart had collided with a fence at the complex. Initial reports advised that the cause of death was under investigation as there were no apparent fatal injuries. On November 4th, the Florida Highway Patrol released the autopsy results which concluded that the resident died as a result of a golf cart accident. The traffic homicide investigation by the FHP continues.

Thursday, November 7th – 7:30 AM – A golf cart operator on Buena Vista, off of El Camino Real, said she was distracted by a “candy wrapper”. She lost control of the golf cart and struck a tree. She was EJECTED from the cart and landed face first on the cart path with chest injuries and others as well. She was trauma alerted by ambulance to Ocala Regional Hospital.

Thursday, November 7th – 6:30 pm – A hit and run crash occurred on Jason Drive in Lady Lake. The golf cart driver said his cart was hit by a truck. He was EJECTED onto the pavement and received major fractures and abrasions. He was trauma evacuated by

helicopter to Ocala Regional Medical Center.

Saturday, November 9th – 6:45 PM – A golf cart operator struck a concrete barrier at the intersection of Charlotte Court and Greenwich Place, just north of Hillsborough Trail in the Village of Charlotte. Golf cart driver was EJECTED, landing head first on the concrete and had head and facial trauma, as well as, other injuries. She was transported by ambulance under a trauma alert to Ocala Regional Trauma Center.

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Governance Improvement Committee Meeting

Representatives from each of the residential CDDs 1 – 9 met on October 1, 2013, for their second session to “Identify and evaluate potential opportunities to achieve material productivity improvements in operation(s) of CDDs within The Villages.” The meeting was begun by Chairman Bill Ray (CDD3) who read a lengthy prepared statement that covered his view of the background and a proposed process for the Committee to follow. This was followed by a review of a thirty-two page PowerPoint presentation.

Unfortunately Mr. Ray’s opening statement was not available to anyone attending the session and the PowerPoint presentation was only made available to Committee members shortly before the session started. Since it had been four months since the Committees’ previous meeting, both audience members and Committee members voiced dissatisfaction regarding the lack of advance availability of the information. Still the representatives and audience members tried to follow along with Mr. Ray’s proposed process to identify potential

productivity improvement opportunities to channel back to the CDD Boards.

Nine items were listed for the Committee to discuss and determine if they felt further consideration by the CDD Boards and Staff was warranted. These items are: (1) Periodic Reporting – consider extending the timeframe for reporting certain items to CDD Boards, rather than every month; (2) Increase use of automation – lower cost of printing hard copy by providing laptops at board meetings; (3) VCCDD Staff Attendance at Meetings – selective attendance of staff at each CDD meeting; (4) County Sheriff attendance and reports - reduce attendance/reporting to quarterly; (5) CDD meeting schedules – consider having meetings less often than monthly; (6) Expand use of Committees – establish cross-CDD committees to handle certain items and have the authority to act on behalf of the CDD Boards; (7) Resident information exchange and participation – increased usage of surveys, questionnaire, forum meetings and more extensive web site tools; (8) CDD meeting consolidation – multiple CDDs in the same meeting; (9) Consolidation of CDDs – reducing the

number of CDDs.

From the comments made by the various CDD representatives, the most interest was for follow-up activity on items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 – reduction in reporting requirements, more automation, more selective staff attendance at meetings, less in-person reporting from the Sheriff’s Office and more resident input capabilities. The majority of the Committee seemed to have no interest in consolidating CDDs or CDD meetings, prompting one audience member, as well as a Committee member, to ask why the chairman kept bringing the discussion back to consideration of District consolidation.

During the CDD meetings the first and second Fridays in November, each of the residential CDDs reviewed items 1-4 and 7 and agreed to have staff work on implementation. The next meeting of this Committee will be to discuss feedback from their particular CDD on these items. The meeting is expected to take place in the January/February 2014 timeframe, hopefully with some advance handouts. □

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Do You Have A “Spirited Heart”?

It must be in the family genes, because our webmaster, John Donahe, has volunteered his services to the POA for 11 years. As a thank you to John, we are including this announcement of how you can help his son, Michael, help the Lakota Sioux Native Americans.

Spirited Heart, created by Michael Donahe of Summerfield, Florida, is a non-profit organization which provides aid to the Lakota Sioux Native Americans on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. These people are living in poverty in a third world nation in the United States of America. Last year *Spirited Heart* collected 6340 blankets and over 50 heaters, which were delivered and distributed personally by Michael on the reservation in South Dakota. The vast majority of these items were donated by Villagers.

The Blanket Drive for 2013 has changed this year from donating blankets to donating a gift of \$6.57 per blanket. Each donation of \$6.57 will provide a new individually wrapped blanket, plus delivery to a site in South Dakota designated by Spirited Heart. Donations will also be accepted for space heaters for \$34.42 each.

Michael Donahe, and his family, will meet with the delivery truck and deliver the items to the individual residents on the reservation. The purpose of this change is to save the high cost of delivery from Florida to the reservation, which included truck rental fees, gasoline, motels, etc. Overall, this is a more efficient way to obtain the most blankets and heaters with less funds. The drive for the funds will end December 15th, 2013.

Donations can be dropped off at She Scrapbooks 918 Bichara Blvd, The Villages, FL 32159, (352) 259-6226, or donated through Pay Pal on the web site spiritedheart.org. Checks, payable to **Spirited Heart, Inc.**, can also be mailed to: Spirited Heart, Inc., 9411 SE 161st Street, Summerfield, FL 34491.

Thank you for your donation. We really appreciate you helping keep the residents on the Reservation warm again this winter. □

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Golf Cart Traffic Citations

Sumter County Sheriff's Office Update

From July 10th, 2013, through September 27, 2013, in the Sumter County portion of The Villages there were 50 tickets issued to golf cart operators. Thirty eight were issued for “no motor vehicle registration”, which appears to mean operating a golf cart in excess of 20 mph, the maximum allowed for a golf cart; 6 were charged with running a stop sign, all at the Lisbon Lane/Panama Place intersection; 2 were cited for failure to yield; 2 cited for careless driving; and there was one citation each issued for driving with a suspended license and improper operation. The majority of tickets issued for no motor vehicle registration were on N. Morse Boulevard, Bailey Trail, Canal Street, St. Charles and Oak Forest. We urge all golf cart operators to obey THE RULES OF THE ROAD. □

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IRS Update

Nationally recognized expert in the municipal bond industry, Professor Ellen P. Aprill, who is not affiliated with the IRS, recently published an analysis of the IRS Technical Advice Memorandum (TAM). She supports the District’s position that the District is a political subdivision of the State and that any negative finding should not be retroactive.

Her concluding paragraph published in the November 4th edition of “TAX NOTES” reads:

“Whether an entity qualifies as a political subdivision for purposes of Section 103 is, of course, a question for federal and not state government. Still, this delicate area of state-federal relations calls for comity (The principle by which the courts of one jurisdiction may give effect to the laws and decisions of another, or may stay their own proceedings in deference to those in another jurisdiction.) and deference to state decisions. At the very least, a major change to the criteria of what constitutes a political subdivision, such as the unprecedented requirement of direct or indirect accountability to the general electorate that

appears in the District TAM should be offered in a format that gives notice to the tens of thousands of local governments and political subdivisions that provide services to U.S. Taxpayers. Giving those local governments and political subdivisions an opportunity to offer comment to the IRS on the enormous disruption that that kind of change in legal standard would produce is critical to our tax system. The recent announcement in Treasury’s 2013-2014 Priority Guidance Plan, released August 9, that it will provide guidance on the definition of political subdivision under section 103 is a good first step. An unprecedented and radical change should not be formulated in non-precedential guidance with retroactive effect, such as a technical advice memorandum. That approach undermines the respect accorded the IRS and its procedures.”

Additionally, the District learned from news reports that the former Acting Director of Tax Exempt Bonds has now been replaced by Rebecca L. Harrigal. Hopefully this will prove to be positive for the District and she will take the same position in the matter as Professor Aprill and the District’s attorney, Perry Israel. □

New Mulberry Lane Traffic Pattern

An “All-Way” stop sign has been added to the intersection of **Mulberry Lane and Belle Meade Circle near Hwy 42** in the Marion County portion of The Villages. There is currently an advance warning signal present to notify drivers of the traffic changes. **Please use caution when navigating this area.** (Habits are hard to break.)

This is now a four-way stop intersection, but watch out because many of those coming off of CR 42 are failing to stop, and those automobiles and golf carts coming north on Belle Meade also seem to be forgetting to stop. Remember that golf carts, as well as automobiles, are to come to a **full stop** before going through the intersection.

It is expected that the Marion County Sheriff’s office will periodically have officers monitoring the intersection and issuing citations if drivers fail to come to a full stop before going through the intersection. □

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Be Careful With Holiday “Spirits”

Possession of open containers of alcoholic beverages in vehicles (INCLUDING GOLF CARTS) is prohibited. F.S. 316.1936 reads:

“(1) As used in this section, the term:

(a) ‘Open container’ means any container of alcoholic beverage which is immediately capable of being consumed from, or the seal of which has been broken.

(b) ‘Road’ means a way open to travel by the public, including, but not limited to, a street, highway or alley. The term includes associated sidewalks, the roadbed, the right-of-way, and all culverts...” (According to Lt. Nehemiah Wolfe, of the Sumter County Sheriff’s Office, this does NOT include the recreation trails running parallel to our Boulevards, but it does include the golf cart lane when it is on a roadway shared with automobiles).

“(2) (a) It is unlawful and punishable as provided in this section for any person to possess an open container of an alcoholic beverage or consume an alcoholic beverage while operating a vehicle in the state or while a passenger in or on a vehicle being operated in the state.

(b) It is unlawful and punishable as provided in this section for any person to possess an open container of an alcoholic beverage or consume an alcoholic beverage while seated in or on a motor vehicle that is parked or stopped within a road as defined in this section...” (While discretion is used by area law enforcement officials in the road areas around our town squares, be aware that they can give you a ticket for this offense.)

“(3) An open container shall be considered to be in possession of the operator of a vehicle if the container is not in the possession of a passenger and is not located in a locked glove compartment, locked trunk, or other locked non-passenger area of the vehicle.

“(4) An open container shall be considered to be in the possession of a passenger of a vehicle if the container is in the physical control of the passenger...” (If the container is in a cart cup holder it is considered to be in the possession of the operator.)

“(5) Any operator of a vehicle who violates this section is guilty of a noncriminal moving traffic violation... A passenger of a vehicle who violates this section is guilty of a non-moving traffic violation...”

THE CURRENT PENALTY IS A FINE OF \$116.00 PER OCCURRENCE. □

Overnight Parking

Per the 2/15/11 Community Watch – Community Standards Quick Reference

NO OVERNIGHT PARKING by anyone at Neighborhood Pools or Postal Facilities. Permits are NEVER issued for these lots. Any vehicles parked within these areas after 10 PM will be reported to CW Dispatch and will have a “For Your Information Tag” placed on the windshield by a CW Patrol Driver. Dispatch will create an activity and log date/time, the state, license #, model and color of the vehicle

(Continued on page 15)

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Overnight Parking

(Continued from page 14)

and contact Law Enforcement for them to record/investigate.

Residents May Park at Village Recreation Centers and Regional Recreation Centers IF THEY HAVE A PERMIT. Permits are issued by regional and village recreation centers. The CW Patrol Driver will verify with the Supervisor at the Recreation Center if there is a permit. If there is no permit on a vehicle after 10PM the same procedure will be followed as indicated above for Neighborhood Pools and Postal Facilities.

Residents and their guests do have the right to park on public streets or villa streets (cars, truck and RV's if not lived in or hooked up). CW Patrol Drivers will verify that streets are accessible, i.e., emergency vehicles can move reasonably along the roadway and will call Law Enforcement to clear vehicles obstructing streets. **According to Community Standards, anybody can park in Villa extra parking spaces, on the streets or in any visi-**

tor parking lot. Questions or concerns can be directed to Community Standards at 751-3912.

Boats, RVs/Conversion Vans: Case 1. Vehicle noted above in driveway not hooked up and no person living in it, Patrol Driver will start a 72 hour clock on clip board. **After 72 hours, Possible Deed Violation will be logged** on and "For Your In-formation Tag" will be placed on the wind-shield after 72 hours. Case 2. Vehicle noted above in driveway hooked up and/or a person(s) is living in the vehicle. **Immediately log on Possible Deed Violation Sheet.** Contact Dispatch to immediately advise Community Standards and place a "For Your Information Tag" on the

windshield.

Inoperable Vehicles (i.e., flat tires, no plate, up on jacks being repaired, etc.) on a lot or street will be **immediately recorded as a Possible Deed Violation.** □



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LETTERS

Letter to the Editor:

Daily Sun Coverage

While I fully understand the Developer publishing an on-going commercial for new home buyers, it is more than sad that (most?) of the community thinks the Daily Sun is a newspaper. Unfortunately, without a community newspaper reporting all of the news, not just the happy news, Villagers fail to see (and thereby prepare) for real issues. The prevalence of golf cart accidents and crime issues are but two examples. Understandably, some Villagers want only happy news. It is only human to want to shut out the bad things. The Villages is a wonderful place to live and would be better with a newspaper that reported all of the news. Dana Lambillottee

Editor’s Note: We agree with you completely. That is why we have devoted a full page to reporting golf cart crashes/incidents with injuries in our monthly Bulletin for almost two years. Note, that during this last month, the Daily Sun did provide information on several golf cart incidents. We hope they will continue doing so and that they will make an effort to solicit information to be able to

report on all of the crashes that result in injuries not just some of them. Additionally, it is for that same reason that we have commenced working with the Sumter County Sheriff’s office to be able to publish any criminal activity impacting Villages residents that occurs in The Villages portion of the County. Our information will not be as timely as the Daily Sun’s would be because we are only published monthly, but it would at least provide an awareness of things that are going on around them that we believe residents are entitled to know. □

Letter to the Editor:

Orange Blossom Hills

Please continue to keep up the good work to keep us really informed as what is going on in and around The Villages.

We have not had a restaurant since the end of last May, 2013. We hear a lot of grumbling at the OB pool. There has not been any remodeling, new furniture or anything being done at the Orange Blossom Hills Country Club restaurant and Tiki Bar. We thought maybe they were waiting for the “seasonal visitors” to show up and provide them with a new restaurant so that they are able to have food and drink at the pool. It is embarrassing

when we are unable to take visitors to our country club restaurant, especially when they have been here before and enjoyed it. When are they going to open the restaurant for business? Thank you. Kenny Reeve

Editor’s Note: We remain in the dark as to the Developer’s plans. We don’t know if the Developer has found someone to run the restaurant, or if there is some other reason for the delay in reopening. The POA believes the residents east of CR 441 deserve better. After the “Middle of the Night Wall” fiasco, knowing if and when the restaurant will be up and running again should be a top priority on his list. □

Letter to the Editor:

Center Lines on Trails

My husband and I are not travelers on the cart paths after dark because of the difficulty of seeing the path. Wouldn’t it be great if they painted a white line down the middle of the cart path? It wouldn’t have to be a solid line, a dotted one would work just as well. I’m sure we are not the only ones with this difficulty and now, that it gets dark earlier, going to the squares for evening entertainment would be a lot safer for everyone. Would like to know your thoughts on this matter. Thanks, D. Trotta

(Continued on page 17)

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Center Lines on Trails

(Continued from page 16)

Editor's Note: The POA has received this suggestion on several occasions and we believe it would be a sound expenditure of resident funds. We have approached an AAC member who will request that the AAC use amenity funds to provide a dotted center line on the Buena Vista Boulevard and El Camino Real recreation trails north of CR 466. The Project Wide Agreement Committee was recently asked to consider the same thing south of CR 466. The Villages "claim to fame is its use of golf carts to be able to get anywhere". That being said, the Districts should do whatever needs to be done to make them AS SAFE AS POSSIBLE. □

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Letter to the Editor:

Health Care Centers

As Villages residents and as retirees under an employer provided health insurance plan and Medicare, Humana Medicare (Employer PPO), a Medicare health plan with prescription drug coverage, we are tremendously upset that we will be unable to utilize the new Health Care Centers due to the exclusive contracting arrangement with United Health Care.

When the new centers were announced, we were extremely excited about the prospects of such centers close to our home. Now we find that we cannot participate due to the exclusive arrangement. That is not fair to those retirees who worked many years for an employer who provided post-retirement health plans only to find those plans rejected at the new health care centers.
 Mickey & Charlotte Poole

Editor's Note: We understand your frustration, and have heard it expressed by a significant number of residents. However, this is a business operation, the Developer can set it up any way he wants. There are likely more than enough residents who qualify for this service who will 'fill' the centers and he owes us nothing in terms of medical care opportunities. We regret we cannot provide you with a more positive response. □

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Letter to the Editor:

Algae in The Ponds

Would love a report from the POA on who is responsible for pond maintenance in The Villages. Specifically concerned about the algae and weed growth and random low levels of water that otherwise detract from the beautiful landscaping in the common areas that get near constant attention and resources. Can understand that water management might make fountains impractical, but what about solar powered, bubbler aerators to keep some oxygen in the water?

Editor’s Note: We contacted Janet Tutt, District Manager, with your questions, and she responded: Each district and the Project Wide Advisory Committee have addressed the issue. It is more than the aerators. We are in process of dealing with invasive plants. When they die it takes a balance of chemicals, time, and weather to clean up the algae. Aerators cannot work in all ponds and they are not always successful. The District is taking a more proactive approach in some ponds with the addition of fish - which have amazing appetites. In reality, the ponds are living bodies and require the same type of balance we do.

She contacted Dave Burgess asking for time a frame on the fish and he responded as

follows: In order to answer clearly about which basins are in question for fish, I would need to know this, as all basins didn’t receive permits by the State to have them. We do have some more fish coming between Thanksgiving and Christmas. We have a lot of fish already in many of our basins. As far as the lower water amounts, most of the basins are tied into Golf Pump stations, which provides the water for irrigation of the golf courses, and at this time of year we are watering in the over seeding process, so that the courses have green tees and greens. Once completed, the effluent water will bring the ponds back up, but rain is the best way to bring them back. □

affirmed again that this is indeed the case. Then you added that you would pursue the reimbursement of those fees, if not offered by the Developer, when the dispute was settled. I have been waiting for this "other shoe to drop" for a while now and I applaud both your intent and resolve to protect the interests of our citizenry. David goes to meet Goliath again, but this time much stronger and more experienced. Should be a slam dunk! Thank you! And let’s hear it for the POA! PeterAllen

Editor’s Note: Thank you for your comments. I fully expect the Developer to offer to reimburse the amenity budgets for all legal expenses incurred by them in defending the District’s position. However, nothing is a slam dunk, but it is a reasonable position in that the Developer is the one that benefitted from the bonds being issued as tax exempt as his payment on each transaction would have been a lot less if the interest debt was based on a bond whose interest was not tax exempt rather than one in which the interest earned by the bond holder was tax exempt. Stay tuned. □

Letter to the Editor:

IRS Legal Fees

I raised my glass and cheered when I read the comment you made on page 17 of your recent Bulletin. A question was raised about whether our amenity fees were being used to pay for the legal fees in this dispute and you

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Our Gardening Column:

Great Holiday Plants

by Anne Lambrecht, Master Gardener
annegarden@embarqmail.com

Poinsettias – Euphorbia Pulcherrima

An American diplomat with an interest in botany, Joel R. Poinsett, saw these plants on a visit to Mexico in 1821 and fell in love with them, brought them back to his greenhouse in South Carolina and gave them his name. (I'm sure the Mexicans had them already named). The poinsettia is a member of the Euphorbia family which basically means it has milky sap which is irritating to some people and poisonous to pets. The red or white or pink part is not actually a flower, it is a colorful bract-or false flower-like the bougainvillea. The colorful part looks just like the other leaves. The flower is actually the little yellow dots in the middle (white dots in the bougainvillea).

Poinsettia "flowering" is photosensitive which means that flowers begin to form when the nights are long enough. Without long nights, this plant will continue to produce leaves and will grow but will never turn red.

They do not like the cold. When the holidays are over, put the poinsettia on the porch or in the lanai (protected from cool air-they

don't like under 55 degrees) and water once a week. Do not over water! Do not fertilize while it's in bloom. You will probably have leaves start to fall off but don't worry. Starting in January, apply a household fertilizer once a month. In March, cut back each of the old flowering stems to 4 to 6 inches in height right above the leaf node. This will promote new growth. March 10th is our last frost date and you can transplant them to a bigger pot or plant them outside in any exposure except due north where they won't get too much sun.

The University of Florida has "Poinsettia trials" each year in Gainesville. They grow and "try" different kinds for color, longevity and replantability, etc. You choose which in a certain group is your favorite. The Gators use this data to make a better poinsettia. After the trials, you get to shop! This year the date of the Poinsettia Trials is December 6th and 7th. The greenhouses are located up the street from the Natural History Museum, Performing Arts Center and the Butterfly House. For more information: gatorpoinsettia.com.

Christmas Cactus

This is a nice plant for the holidays with their red, white, or pink blooms – some double, some single. They are bred to bloom at this time of year and some are bred to bloom in the spring. They grow large slowly and

many have been in families for generations. They are succulents and members of the Zygocactus family, most of which are native to Central and South America. Although they are called cactus, they are actually epiphytes (air plants) and are found where you would find orchids in the wild. You should water your cactus sparingly, especially when blooming. At other times, water the cactus thoroughly and let it dry out. Try to keep your cactus where it receives indoor indirect bright light during the day and total darkness at night.

They like the temperatures to be cool, also. And they like humidity to be about 50-60%. You could place a glass, vase or tray of water near the plant and as the water evaporates, it will provide the humidity the cactus needs.

Start to fertilize in February and then regularly during the growing season with all purpose liquid houseplant fertilizer. If buds fall off early, it is usually caused by over-watering, lack of humidity or insufficient light. After the holiday season, the Christmas cactus should be given about a 30 day rest. Again place it in a cool room and provide limited water. Don't worry if it loses a few leaves or joints and appears weak during this rest period. This is not the time to pinch, prune or shape a Christmas cactus. The best time is when the new growth begins in March or early April.

Likewise, the best time for repotting a cactus is in February, March or April. However, keep in mind the plant will flower best if it's kept in a container where it's pot-bound.

On the rare occasion when I need help in the yard is when the Husband actually goes outside. The other day I needed help sawing a Viburnum branch. Well, he comes out and immediately starts fussing about all the growth that's taken all summer to climb and gather here and there. I tried to explain to him that this is the time of year when the garden becomes incredibly "jungle-ishous". Many creatures, like butterflies, bees, birds, and lizards, need our gardens now to get ready for winter. The jungle part will eventually die off and the yard will get cleaned up, just not yet. He doesn't get it and I'm beginning to think he just doesn't want to get it—on purpose. □



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Seniors Vs. Crime Scam Artists and Holiday Giving Leading the Fight Against Scams

The holiday season is fast approaching and just about everyone you know and don't know will be asking you for a donation of your hard earned money to help a person, school, organization or charity in dire need of funds during the holidays.

Many of us feel like we need to help organizations, charities, and folks less fortunate than us by giving of our time, and our money to assist in making the holidays easier for those in need. As seniors, we need to remember there are unscrupulous individuals, companies, scam artists, and criminals in our world who all want our money - any way they can get it. We, on the other hand, want our

generous gifts to go to the charitable cause of our choosing and not into the pockets of some con artist or drifter.

Criminals will approach us hoping that we, as senior citizens, my not fully understand what we are being asked to donate, who we are donating to, or how our money will be used when donated. Unscrupulous individuals will do their best to become our friend, get us to feel at ease with them as an individual, and then ask for our donations. Once given, our donation may not be used for what we thought the donations would be used for.

We have to be sure to do independent research of the information being provided to us by the individual, company, organization, or charity we want to donate money to, and know exactly how our donation will be used before we donate.

On January 1, 1992, the Florida Solicitation of Contributions Act went into effect. This law regulates solicitation of public contributions and requires full disclosure of certain information from persons soliciting contributions in Florida. You can check for information on individuals, organizations, companies, or charities you want to donate to by going to the Florida Department of Consumer Services “Gift Givers Guide” website at <https://csapp.800helpfla.com/cspublicapp/giftgiversquery/giftgiversquery.aspx>.

There are many internet sites you can use to research the individual, organization, company, or charity. Two sites to check out:

- National Consumers League on Charity Fraud Scams, www.nclnet.org/personal-finance/64-fraud/449-tis-the-season-for-charity-scams;
 - or Charity Navigator, charitynavigator.org.
- Both the National Charities Information Bureau (NCIB) and the Better Business Bureau Philanthropic Society (BBBPS) have set their own standards, including record keeping, expenditures, etc., for organizations that solicit contributions. They publish a list indicating whether organizations have met their standards.

(Continued on page 21)

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Seniors Vs. Crime

(Continued from page 20)

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There is never a charge for their services. They can be reached at 352-753-7775 in the Marion County Sheriff's Office in The Villages, at 352-689-4600, Extension 4606, in the Sumter County Sheriff's Office in The Villages, and now at 352-750-1914 at the Wildwood Police Department Annex in Brownwood, next to the Barnstorm Theater in The Villages. Volunteers at all of those offices are ready, willing and able to assist you. □

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