

The Bulletin

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The POA – Champions of Residents' Rights Since 1975

NOVEMBER 2018

POA4US.org

Issue 44.11 | Circulation 58,900

UPCOMING POA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Tuesday, Nov. 20, 2018 • 7 P.M.

Laurel Manor

SERVING HEALTHCARE NEEDS

OF ELDERS (SHINE)

Tuesday, Dec. 18, 2018 • 7 P.M.

Laurel Manor

TAX AIDE

INSIDE THE NOVEMBER BULLETIN



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Seniors vs. Crime: Protect Against Utility Scams see page 22

The Ins and Outs of Deed Restrictions

By Sal Torname, POA Director

Periodically, the POA samples its membership, sending e-mail surveys out concerning the life style here in America's Friendliest Hometown. **Our most recent survey released to membership came back with close to 2000 responses involving opinions on internal and external deed restrictions.**

The four questions asked in the survey (*see page 5*) related to existing violations and how they were being enforced by the appropriate authorities – Community Standards for external deed restriction violations, and the developer for internal deed restriction violations.

Deed restrictions are part of real property jargon that fall within the Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CCRs) regulations of some sales of real estate. They are privately created rules between parties, usually the buyer and developer, regarding the use and improvement of real property. Deed restrictions, similar to covenants, are agreements to do or refrain from doing a particular act. In The Villages, these restrictions are attached to the property and are transferred to any subsequent owner. Obviously the main benefit to these regulations is to maintain housing values and make it more desirable to future buyers by preserving uniformity.

The way it has worked in The Villages is that as the developer builds new homes in areas that become part of a Community Development District (CDD) and the developer imposes both internal and external restrictions. Both are overseen and regulated by the developer until such time the amenities and amenity fees are purchased by the local government, a.k.a., The District. It is at this juncture that the District accepts and adopts certain deed restrictions as stated in the first paragraph of the adopted rules document. This document is issued to simplify, recognize and explain all regulations stated in the developer's Declaration of Restrictions.

The Property Owners' Association, Inc. (POA) is the original property owners' group in The Villages. Established in 1975, the POA operates with complete independence from the Developer of The Villages. Membership is open to all property owners and residents of The Villages. The POA is committed to acting as a watchdog to ensure that the Developer and local government are responsive to the needs, interests, and rights of residents.

The POA Declaration of Independence

The POA is free of any outside influence. This is the only way we can assure our members of absolute autonomy to act on their behalf. From the very beginning in 1975, we recognized this need for independence, and we've cherished and nurtured it ever since.

Vision The Property Owners' Association, Inc. (POA) is a champion for the rights of residents of The Villages. Guided by member input, investigation and determination, the POA brings attention to and acts on issues that may impact property values and quality of life.

Mission Statement The POA provides 1) a forum for discussion of issues; 2) research and analysis; 3) programs of interest; and, 4) is a conduit for objective and accurate information. Specific attention is given to resolving housing, community and local government issues.

Values

- Independence Honesty
- Objectivity
- Respect
- Fairness

POA SPEAKERS AVAILABLE For Your Group or Club. Call Cliff Wiener **POA President** 352-418-7372

Deed Restrictions continued from page 1

Here is the preamble that states the purpose of the Adopted Rule:

"The purpose of these External Deed Restriction Standards is to identify, clarify and interpret the adopted Rule to Bring About Deed Compliance (Rule) relating to the exterior appearance or use of real property within the boundaries of Village Community Development Districts."

TThe adopted rules are dozens of pages defining specific activities and fines for all units and villas in The Villages. Its matrix details guidelines for noise, garbage, lawn ornaments, maintenance & modification to structures, trees etc. Along with the guidelines, if infractions are not rectified after two written warnings, it imposes fines for the various violations for non-compliance after proper notice is given. However, the vast majority of these violations are corrected by the second notification.

If you were observant, you noticed that the purpose of the preamble was only to administer External Deed Restrictions, those that only affect the outside perimeter of the house. You might ask yourself, what about Internal Deed Restrictions that you and the developer agreed with to be enforced at the time of closing?



The answer is that it has remained under the developer's purview to oversee and enforce. Why, you say, when Florida Statute 190, the CDD enabling act created in 1980, was it limited to only External Deed Restrictions to be enforced by the Districts, regrettably leaving Internal Restrictions with its original creator, the developer?

If violations of an internal nature are reported to Community Standards (CS), their procedure is to log the complaint and relay such information to the developer's agent, however there is no follow up by the District because they are not a party to the purchase agreement. In reality, the complaint drops into a black hold without any future disposition.

The conundrum arises in how one reports a violation of restrictions that affect what activities are within the household. For example, how does the owner(s) of a property that is mandated by the Declaration of Restrictions contact the developer when they are leaving the property for more than seven days and furthermore disclose the date of their return? Other violations may surface as to conducting a commercial enterprise within the home or having no more than two pets per lot. In addition, at least one owner must be 55 years of age and older and no individual under the age of 19 may be a permanent resident of a home for more than 30 days in any calendar year.

Within the Declarations of Restrictions there are two options to seek redress to rectify any internal violations. The enforcement section states that the owner has the right to prosecute through law any person(s) violating the covenant or conditions to prevent prohibited activity. In addition, the developer shall also have the right, but not the duty to enforce said covenants or conditions, as though the developer were the owner. It goes on to say the cost for the two options, including attorney's fees, shall be paid by the party losing said suit.

There are various villages and subdivisions within The Villages that overlap into surrounding municipalities (e.g., Lady Lake, Fruitland Park, Wildwood), each that have their

Deed Restrictions continued on page 4

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POA Annual Officers & Directors Elections

Election of Officers and Directors for the 2019 membership year will be conducted at the November POA membership meeting on November 20. The swearing-in will be conducted at the December POA membership meeting, and the one-year terms will commence on January 1, 2019.

POA SLATE OF CANDIDATES for 2018 Officer and Board positions are as follows:

OFFICERS

President - Cliff Wiener - Piedmont

Vice President - Jerry Ferlisi - Poinciana

Treasurer - Donna Kempa - Glenbrook

Secretary - Carolyn Reichel - Sunset Pointe

DIRECTORS

Andrew Curtis - Mallory

Susan Ball – Buttonwood

Ken Copp - Duval

Theresita Dumagsa – Fenney

Cathy Peppers - Tamarind Grove

Bill Schikora - Santo Domingo

Peg Tackett - Santo Domingo

Sal Torname - St. James

Nominations will be accepted from the floor for any of the above positions. Anyone wanting more information on serving on the POA Board should speak to any Officer or Director for more information.

If you are interested in serving as a Director on the POA Board, please contact President Cliff Wiener for more information at president@poa4us.com or call 352-418-7372.

Renew or Start Your POA Membership for 2019!

Your completed renewal form will be arriving soon in the mail. You can return that form or go online to pay your 2019 dues. Join thousands of other Villages property owners who belong to the ONLY Independent advocacy organization – Champions for Residents' Rights Since 1975!





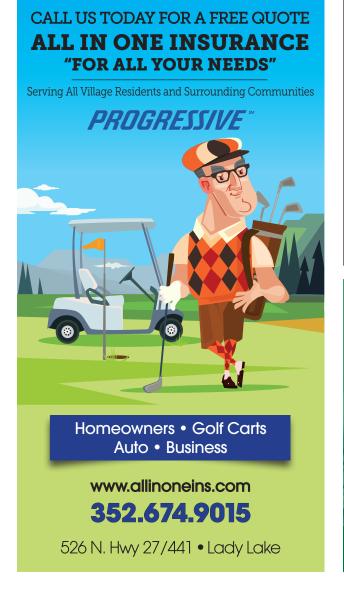
POA 2019 AND BEYOND MEMBERSHIP & CONTRIBUTION FORM

The POA, 8736 SE 165th Mulberry Ln, PMB 111, The Villages FL 32162 Please print on this form, or use the online form at **poa4us.org**

| New Renew How Many Occupants: Member ID (if known) | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| FULL NAME(1) | FULL NAME(1) | | |
| FULL NAME(2) | | | |
| ADDRESS | | | |
| | VILLAGES ID# | | |
| VILLAGE | VILLAGES ID# | | |
| CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE | CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE | | |
| PHONE | | | |
| EMAIL | EMAIL | | |
| We respect your privac | We respect your privacy. Your email address is for POA Official use ONLY. | | |
| MEMBERSHIP DUES | One year – 2019 - \$10 per/household | | |
| (Please Select One): | Two years – 2019/2020 - \$20 per/household | | |
| | ○ Three years – 2019/2020/2021 - \$30 per/household | | |
| ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION IF DESIRED: \$ | | | |
| TOTAL AMOUNT FOR DUES AND ANY CONTRIBUTIONS: \$ | | | |
| Enclosed is a Stamped, Self-Addressed Envelope, along with this form and my check. Please mail my Membership Card to me. | | | |
| Please hold my POA Membership Card for me to pick up at one of the monthly POA Meetings. | | | |

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Deed Restrictions continued from page 2

own zoning laws that regulate land use in their jurisdictions. Owners should be encouraged to inquire at these municipalities if internal complaints have been ignored and proper redress has failed by the developer.

The problem is compounded in that there is no record of how, if at all, any of the complaints were rectified by the developer. There is a slight chance to address internal violations without enforcement by the developer, depending on the type and severity of the infraction, where remedy may be found in one of these three municipalities.

Furthermore, we are recommending that residents of The Villages call or e-mail their CDD board supervisors to create an agreement that will urge the developer to meet his/ her contractual obligations. The developer's representative for the enforcement of internal deed restrictions is Martin Dzuro who can be reached at (352)-753-6260. The District also shared that Mr. Dzuro is available to meet with residents on a weekly basis to discuss concerns.

In conclusion, if residents are obligated to abide by the Declarations of Restrictions, so must the developer, without being capricious or arbitrary of what is enforced and not enforced. The developer must be accessible to the owners, and should review, investigate and take action where appropriate.



POA4US.org

The Results Are In! Deed Restrictions Survey



Recently, we asked POA members to provide input regarding Deed Restrictions and nearly 2,000 of you answered. Thank you! There was a wide

variety of responses and examples given of both inside and outside deed restriction violations. While a majority (64%) had no issue with how complaints are handled, of those that did, the anonymous complaint process was mentioned most often.

Of those respondents who indicated they knew of violations, there were 80 reported as internal and 464 reported as external.

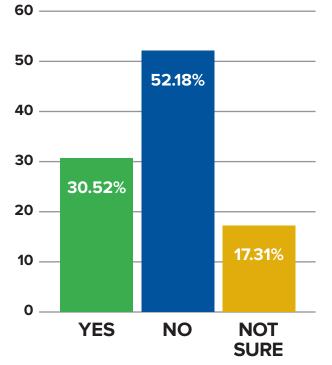
Internal Deed Restrictions are the hardest to get resolved because they are totally controlled by the Developer and at his discretion to enforce (see page 1). External Deed Restrictions are somewhat easier because they are enforced by the Community Standards Department and under the jurisdiction of your elected CDD Board of Supervisors.

The POA will continue to consider these issues and the Membership Committee will continue to send periodic surveys for your input. This will enable us to continue to best represent you and share your input with District staff and boards.

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Q1 Do You Suspect there are violations in your neighborhood?

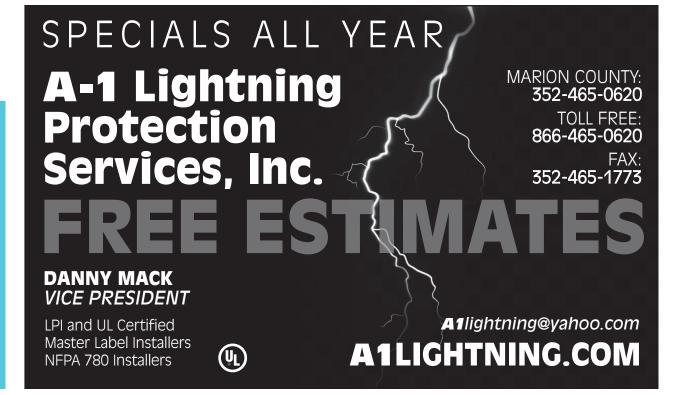
Answered: 1,930 Skipped: 0







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In Case You Missed It...News Highlights from October Meetings

Dancers Pack PWAC Meeting

Dancers, choreographers and instructors packed the October meeting of the Project Wide Advisory Committee to call attention to slippery floor conditions at various recreation centers, saying they have caused falls and injuries during practices and performances.



More than 2,000 hours are logged weekly at 23 recreation centers by the various dance groups in The Villages, according to the group's spokesman, Bill Yelverton. He also said there seems to be a big discrepancy in the slipperiness of some floors over others. The group requested that when floors are replaced that they be replaced with flooring similar to Chula Vista, Tierra Del Sol, Fenny and Fish Hawk. They also requested an on-line scheduling system for recreation center space, similar to the online tee time scheduling used by golf operations.

According to District Recreation and Parks Director John Rohan, all floors are Luxury Vinyl Tile (LVT), have been "slip" tested, and meet or exceed the engineer's guidelines for safety. However, with so many different uses, various cleaning products used on the floors, age and brand of flooring, and other factors, the conditions may not be uniform.

The Committee directed staff to identify the differences in the surface of the flooring at centers, including type, manufacturer, installation and maintenance when flooring needs to be replaced, and add to Old Business on the PWAC agenda.

Access Lifts to be **Installed at Largo** Family Pool and Rio Grande Pool

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PWAC directed Staff to proceed with the installation of the Aquatic Access Lift at the Largo Family Pool. PWAC has budgeted for installation of three lifts per year and has a prioritized list. Their practice has been that when a specific request is made, the list can be reprioritized to



Facility Maintenance Standards Upgraded

In response to an issue of maintenance at Postal Facilities brought up at the September PWAC meeting, District staff reported to PWAC members that they completed a visual inspection and identified overlooked maintenance items that have not been addressed. A PowerPoint Presentation provided an overview of janitorial and maintenance standards, clarification of contractual obligation versus expectations and how, going forward, the facilities will be maintained to a higher level. The Committee addressed the management aspect concerns of the Districts' contracts, and Committee Member Don Wiley requested that District Staff put sufficient "pressure" on the janitorial contractors to ensure that the contract level of service is being addressed to the expectation of the contract and ensure that appropriate supervision and management is occurring. The Committee acknowledged and appreciated management's approach to addressing the concerns brought forward and asked for monthly reports.



renters who will occupy The Lofts at Brownwood will have access to amenities throughout The Villages, yet they will not be paying amenity fees. The issue was also raised by a resident at the CDD 10 Board of Supervisors meeting. "How do we justify this?" Mr. Wiley asked. No one seemed to know the answer, and at the CDD 10 meeting, the resident was told to take it up with the Developer.

District 7 Conducts Hearing on Flag as "Yard Ornament"

"Anonymous" struck again, this time in the Village of Hemingway, turning in a couple for having



various yard ornaments and flags in their yard. All have been removed, except an American flag. Community Development District 7 (CDD7) held a public hearing at its October meeting after the property owners have refused to remove the flag.

The District's attorney, Valerie Fuchs, said that residents gave up certain constitutional rights when they signed the Declaration of Deed Restrictions, agreeing to adhere to certain rules. CDD Supervisors said, "not so fast." They want a chance to consider the matter further before ruling. The hearing will be reopened at the CDD's November meeting.

CDD 2 Supervisors Promise Villa Road Repairs

Residents from Villa de Leon in Alhambra complained to the CDD 2 supervisors that roads in the villa areas have been neglected and are in disrepair. The work was scheduled to be done last year, but Hurricane Irma interrupted that schedule. Supervisors approved \$337,925 to repair the roads in Villa de Leon and Villa del Canto in Alhambra, and Villa Escandido in Santiago.

Highlights continued on page 8







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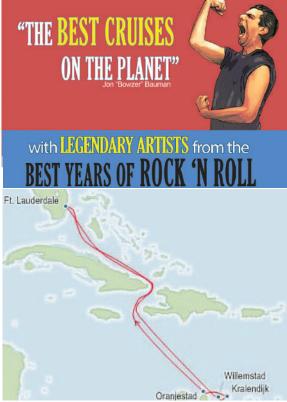


Dancing

Let's Get Ready to Rock Dance Party DJ Al Brady's High School Reunion Dance Prom Night Dance Sock Hop Dance Good Night Sweet Heart Dance









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Wayfinding Signage Plan Ready for Bid

Richard Baier, District Manager, advised members of the Multi-Modal Path Discussion Group (MMPDG) that the guide signs for key destination locations throughout The Villages will provide cohesive signage throughout the community and adhere to the requirements set forth by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). These signage standards have been provided to the Developer, and it is the hope that this standard will be utilized for signage in new development.

Amber Gartner of Kimley-Horn & Associates advised the design plans have been developed for the bidding process and it is anticipated a contractor will be selected early 2019.

- Guide signs will be placed at decision points along the multi-modal paths specifically related to tunnels at decision points at stop controlled tunnel exit locations, major turnoffs into tunnels and turnoffs for major destinations.
- Existing signage will be removed.
- A detailed layout of each of the 88 signs has been established.
- Tunnels where decision points exist: Currently there are 3 signs on the left side at the tunnels which, for the majority of tunnels, will be replaced with 1 sign on the right side with greater advance notice, which is the expectation that mirrors the standards for vehicles. All granite signs will be removed.
- The District has completed the process of relocating all tunnel notification signage onto the tunnel and the signage has been removed
- Brownwood Roundabout signage will be posted to provide guidance for exits instead of entrances - Powell Road, south to Brownwood, east to Tunnel B27, north to Tunnel B₂₅
- An example of signage for M11 Tunnel - Morse Blvd. /CR 466A was provided. Concerns about this location have been brought forward previously.

POA Membership Forum Q & A

Each POA General Membership Meeting features a Forum for residents to ask guestions. We try our best to provide answers. If we don't know the answer, we'll find out. Sometimes, unfortunately, there is no answer or one we don't like.

Here's what was on people's minds at recent meetings.

A neighbor's son has had a car parked on our street for 2 ½ years. What can be done about removing it?

You should call the Community Standards office at 352-751-3912, and also attend your District's Board of Supervisors meeting. The Board has the authority to make or enforce rules about towing of cars and temporary parking. If a car's license plates are expired, you can also call the County Sheriff's office to report the vehicle.

There are often palm fronds in the roads after a wind storm. Why can't Community Watch pick those up?

Community Watch Chief Nehemiah Wolfe said the operating procedures have changed, and they now do sweeps of areas after storms, move any debris out of the roadway, and contact District Property Management to pick up the debris

Residents of the Village of Fenney have been experiencing blasts that feel like earthquakes. What is it? Why wasn't this information disclosed to residents before purchasing a home there?

There is a quarry that operates nearby and has a permit to blast five times every month. It has been there for years. The Properties of The Villages is the only representative of new homes. It is always a good idea to ask specific questions and do your own research.

Speeding is a problem in many areas of The Villages. Why don't they post signs?

County Commissioners do not want to put speeding signs in The Villages. Signs are posted throughout that the speed limit is 25 mph, "unless otherwise posted."

There is a moss growing on trees that appears to be killing the trees.

The moss is not killing the trees, but it often attaches to a tree or limb that is dying or has something wrong with it. See the Gardening column on page 20. ■

POA of The Villages FL is on Facebook!

We have over 100 Likes! Please type POA of the Villages FL in the search on Facebook and you will find our page. Click LIKE!

Other meeting and relevant information will be posted on a timely basis. This page is NOT intended to be a "social media blog" or to be used as an opinion center for residents. Please continue to send questions or comments via email or call the POA phone number 352-418-7372. ALL content will be monitored by the Administrator and posts containing opinion or debate will be removed.

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(Stop/Restart Date)
Email: delivery@poa4us.org
Call: 352-325-1540



AARP Driver Safety now offers a 6 hour "Smart Driver" course for seniors; it is designed for those 50 and older. In The Villages, there are at least 4 classes each month. The classes are either two days, 9 A.M. to Noon or one day* 9 A.M. - 4 P.M. Fee is \$15 for AARP members, \$20 for non-members. Select your class and call the instructor to register. Instructor will give

instructions and time to arrive to complete registration. All available courses are listed at www.aarp.org/findacourse or call 877-846-3299.

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AARP now offers a 90 minute Smart Driver Technology (SDTEK) program for mature drivers. For more information: www.aarp.org/findaworkshop10 or 352-430-1833.

| DATE(S) | LOCATION | INSTRUCTOR | CONTACT # |
|-------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Nov 5 & 6 | Colony | Paul Scannell | 352-399-6414 |
| Nov 7* | Harbor Chase | Al Cloutier | 352-633-3793 |
| Nov 6 & 9 | Laurel Manor | Wink Daniel | 352-753-8563 |
| Nov 17 & 24 | Paradise | John Shepard | 352-399-2344 |
| Nov 27 & 28 | Rohan | Art Donnelly | 631-792-2203 |
| Dec 5 & 6 | Colony | Paul Scannell | 352-399-6414 |
| Dec 11 & 14 | Laurel Manor | Don Walker | 352-430-0610 |
| Dec 12* | Harbor Chase | Chet Kowalski | 352-430-1833 |
| Dec 15 & 22 | Paradise | John Shepard | 352-399-2344 |
| Dec 17 & 20 | Savannah | Don Walker | 352-430-0610 |





Medicare Annual Election Period (AEP)



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> **Langley Health Center** 1389 S. Hwy 301, Sumterville

> 1st & 3rd Thurs. 2 pm - 4 pm Appointment Only

Chula Vista Rec Center 1011 Rio Grande Ave. 1st & 3rd Fridays

Nov. 2, 9, 16 & 30; Dec. 7 3 pm - 5:50 pm

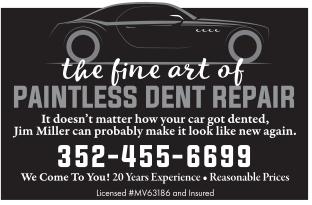
Lake Miona Rec Center 1526 Buena Vista Blvd.

2nd & 4th Tuesdays Nov. 13 & 27; Dec. 4 & 11; 9 A.M. – 11:50 A.M.

Eisenhower Rec Center

3560 Buena Vista Blvd. 1st & 3rd Wednesdays Nov. 7, 14 & 28; Dec. 5

Lady Lake Library 2nd & 4th Wednesdays Nov. 7, 14 & 28; Dec. 5 & 12





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Tim Burke 352-661-7001



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Bob Woodsford 352-430-5249



Greg Wood 352-210-8186



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Dottie Wise 610-420-4066



Sharon Lee Smith 352-409-0672



Jaci Newmark 954-812-9880



Nancy Moran Fallon 781-422-9692



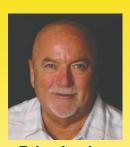
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Golf Cart Safety Practices & Common Sense Can Save Lives

Well-known golf cart attorney, Timothy Babiarz, clued in Villagers at the September POA General Membership Meeting about fundamental safety issues when using a golf cart on Villages roadways and multi-modal paths. He also discussed the law and insurance coverages for motor vehicles and golf carts.

Top 5 Safety Concerns:

Seat Belt: should be retractable with a center and side anchor.

DUI – the same charges of driving under the influence in a car can be made when driving drunk in a golf cart.

"Street legal" does not mean street safe. Remember with whom/what you are sharing the road!

Secure children to keep them safe and inside the cart.

14-year-old drivers - do you allow your grandchildren to drive your car?

How to Insure Your Golf Cart:

- Additional coverage under your homeowners' policy
- Additional coverage under your auto policy
- Separate recreational motor vehicle policy

Mr. Babiarz emphasized that you need to specifically list your golf cart as an insured item and advised that you double check your Declarations page to make sure it is covered. He also said you should have bodily injury and uninsured/underinsured motorist coverages. He said you should have enough coverage to protect yourself and your assets in the event of a crash, citing the "Babiarz Golden Rule" - Insure yourself as you would have others insure for you.

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Florida is one of the top 5 states for uninsured motorists.

- 23% of Fla. drivers had no auto insurance in 2007 according to a report by the Insurance Research Council.
- 25% with no auto insurance in 2013 according to an August news investigation by Channel 10 news Tampa Bay.
- Even greater percentage have minimum insurance Personal Injury Protection (PIP/No-Fault), but no Bodily Injury (BI) Liability Coverage.

BI Liability Coverage protects you if you injure someone else. You can be liable through the ownership, maintenance or use of your vehicle. Uninsured / Underinsured Motorist Coverages (UM/UIM) protects you from drivers without liability coverage or with inadequate liability coverage. Remember: Florida law does not require bodily injury liability coverage.

Your Worst Nightmare - UM/UIM where you are maimed and can't recover, because the at-fault driver was uninsured or underinsured.

Worst Nightmare – BI Liability where you cause an accident in which someone was injured, and you are sued. Golf Carts continued on page 15



Golf Carts continued from page 14

Questions & Answers

Is standalone coverage preferred for the golf cart?

It is more important to look at the coverages you choose, i.e. PIP or BI.

If a child aged 14 or older is driving the golf cart, is an adult required to be in the cart?

No, it is not required, but common sense says that you wouldn't let a 14-year-old drive any vehicle on their own.

Which type of insurance is preferred, homeowner or auto?

Mr. Babiarz said that there are very few auto insurance companies that insure golf carts, so that leaves either homeowners' or standalone coverage.

What about carts that go faster than 20 mph?

You need to let your insurance company know so they can properly cover you.

If a home rental includes the golf cart, who is responsible for any claim?

Mr. Babiarz suggests that you wouldn't want that liability and the better thing to do is give the renter a list of companies where they can rent their own cart.

What is an umbrella policy?

It covers above and beyond your policy limit. Not everyone needs an umbrella policy.

When a golf cart is rented, how do you know there is insurance coverage with it?

Go to a reputable company and make sure you ask to see the coverage information.



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Neighbors Saving Neighbors

CPR/AED Community Emergency Alert Program

The POA has launched a new partnership with the Villages Public Safety Department (VPSD) to proliferate the neighborhood automatic external defibrillator (AED) program. Our Villages' AED program is one of the best in class lifesaving initiatives that has exceeded the cardiac arrest national survival rate by multiple times. This AED initiative currently covers some 25% of all homes in America's Friendliest Hometown, leaving much room to expand.

The POA has created a neighborhood presentation to encourage non-participating areas to get involved in getting their units underway. Neighborhood coordinators are needed to initiate and shepherd the effort toward becoming an AED community. The presentation answers questions of the necessity of the AED program, how it works, and recurring and non-recurring costs associated with the program.

Presentations are available for your neighborhood by calling Cliff Weiner, 352-418-7372 or Sal Torname, 352-350-2218.

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To provide additional parking, shuttles will be available from the Savannah Center and the Fenney Recreation Center. While this is a free service, tickets are required. Tickets will be available on October 18, 2018 at all Villages Box Office locations.

For additional information, please contact the District Customer Service Center at (352) 753-4508.

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Gardening Spot

I Like Lichens

by Anne Lambrecht Fanatical Gardener mrsanne04@gmail.com

What is that hairy green stuff growing on my tree? The answer is lichens: a flaky, moss-like ancient subspecies of fungus. Lichens are rather pretty. They can be light green, gray, yellow, orange, and brown. They are most often found growing on rocks, gravestones, tortoise shells and on the bark and branches of our trees and shrubs. Lichens grow on every continent of the earth except Antarctica.

Actually, lichens consist of two organisms: fungus and algae that live and work together happily. This relationship is called symbiosis. The algae derives water and nutrients from the fungus and then the algae makes food (photosynthesis) for the fungus. Everybody's happy.

Lichens are long lived and well adapted to extremes of heat, cold and drought. Huge amounts of Reindeer Moss (not a true moss, but a lichen) cover the northern Arctic and are food for many creatures living there.

There are mainly three kinds of lichen:

Foliose lichens are leaflike

Crustose lichens are crusty (crustose lichens consist of 75% of all lichens on earth)

Fruticose lichens are round (common fruticose lichens are called "powder puff" and model train people use them for mini trees and shrubs).

"A rolling stone gathers no moss" describes why lichens and moss do not grow on young, healthy, actively growing trees. Stressed trees and shrubs grow very slowly and often have lichens and moss growing on them.

Spanish moss and lichen have earned an inaccurate reputation for damaging trees and shrubs in the Florida landscape. Although they may be found in plants that are in decline or showing stress symptoms, they are simply taking advantage of space available to survive. Both plants are epiphytes and are obtaining moisture

and nutrients from the atmosphere rather than from the plants they rest upon.

Lichens and moss are not pathogens; they don't cause disease in plants. They use the plants as a surface to grow on. Plants covered with lichens look sick and the reason is that the plant or tree is sick, allowing sunlight in for the opportunist lichen. Upon further investigation, you will discover the cause of the plant's decline: stress, drought, disease or insects, plant competition, over watering, poor nutrition, improper soil pH or improper pruning. Lichens are not considered pests so there are no chemicals to spray to control lichens. You can pick them off, or as a neighbor of mine does, wash them off with detergent and scrub brush.

I think lichens are lovely. Lichens are often found growing on trees planted in small islands in parking lots. These trees are stressed by limited soil and root growth, compacted soils and heat stress due to paved surfaces.

Lichens serve an important role in the ecological community by monitoring the amount of pollutants in the environment. Lichens also provide food and shelter for wildlife including some insects, deer, moose and elk, certain squirrels, mice and bats.

So if you can rule out lichens as the cause of killing your landscape plants and check for the other possibilities, you can like lichens, too.





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Seniors vs. Crime **Protect Against Utility Scams**

At least a few times each month, we at Seniors Vs Crime get calls from victims or targets of utility scams. Here's how they usually work:

You get a call saying your electricity or water will be shut off unless you pay a past due bill. You may not think you have a past due bill. But the caller sounds convincing, and you can't afford to ignore it.

Actually, you can't afford to believe it! This scam can cost you money!

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has been hearing about scammers impersonating utility companies in an effort to scam you out of your money. According to Lisa Lake, a Consumer Education Specialist with the FTC, these are some warning signs of a utility scam:

If you know you already paid, stop and think – take a deep breath. Even if you deny you are "late" on paying a utility bill, the caller insists you have a past due bill. That's a big red flag. Just hand up on them.

Never give out your banking information by email or phone. Utility companies don't demand banking information by email or phone. And they won't force you to pay by phone as your only option.

Did the caller demand payment by gift card, cash reload card, wiring money or cryptocurrency? Don't do it. Legitimate companies don't demand one specific method of payment. And they don't generally accept gift cards (like iTunes or Amazon), cash

reload cards (like MoneyPak, Vanilla, or Reloadit), or cryptocurrency (like bitcoin).

If you get a call like this, here are some things you can do:

Concerned that your bill is past due? Contact the utility company directly using the number on your paper bill or on the company's website. Don't call any number the caller gave you.

Never give banking information over the phone unless you place the call to a number you know is legitimate.

Tell the FTC. If you spot a scam, report it at **ftc.gov/complaint**. Your reports help the FTC and other law enforcement investigate scams and bring crooks to justice. And report it to the real utility company.

If you already fell for this scam and paid the bogus utility bill, tell the payment provider – such as the wire transfer or gift card company. You may not get your money back, but it's important to tell them about the scam. Your reports help the FTC and other law enforcement investigate scams and bring crooks to justice.

The utility scam is a good demonstration of how crooks are always dreaming up new ways to get your hard earned money.

If you need assistance with understanding any aspects of Utility Scams, contact your nearest Seniors Vs Crime office in The Villages for advice or assistance. Seniors Vs Crime can be reached at:

The Fruitland Park Police Department Annex in the Moyer Recreation Center in The Villages -(352) 674-1882

The Marion County Sheriff's Office in The Villages – (352) 753-7775

The Sumter County Sheriff's Office in The Villages - (352) 689-4600, Extension 4606

The Wildwood Police Department Annex at Brownwood in The Villages - (352) 750-1914

Volunteers at all four offices are ready, willing and able to assist you. To keep up with the latest scams, LIKE 'Seniors vs. Crime Region 4' on Facebook. Hablamos Español. Por favor pregunte por Yolanda. Martes a Viernes: 10:00 A.M. a 2:00 P.M., (352) 689-4606. ■



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Another benefit for POA members is this Discount Partner program.

Most vendors will ask you for your current POA Membership card to receive the offered discount. If you have a favorite business who is currently not offering a POA Discount, tell them about our program. Please say "thanks" to our Discount Partners for their participation. The up-to-date list of Discount Partners can always be found on our website poa4us.org. Click 'Discount Partners' on the left menu.

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Captain Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger was an experienced aviator: a former Air Force F-4 'Phantom' pilot who wrestled military aircraft when engine "flame-outs" happened. Years of training prepared this hero to exhibit unnerving skill when the ultimate situation demanded. With his team of co-pilot and crew, Sully ensured that every passenger would walk (not swim) away from death's door.

Certainly the aircraft on that day was well designed and maintained. But that "bird" did not make the difference: rather, it was the combined knowledge of those professionals strapped within that fuselage. Radiation cancer care truly differs from the portrayal of a treatment machine somehow transformed into a life-saving "craft" whose performance and price tag cause spell-bound viewers to expect something magical to happen: it won't!

Put decisions for care where they count. Let's compare "flight crews" and experience. The Robert Boissoneault **Oncology Institute** (RBOI) has four Villages radiation oncologists whose total expertise approaches 150 years, a nurse practitioner with almost 20 years, three PhD physicists where local competition has none, and 12 physics staff personnel. RBOI continues to hold American College of Radiology accreditation, the most respected recognition awarded a comprehensive cancer center. Since Moffitt's departure, we are now the only radiation facility on The Villages campus with such accreditation...an honor we have attained for over 22 years.

This is your life. Sound medical decisions are only found when you interact with physicians. With that in mind, bring this article to our office, and be scheduled to meet with one of our physicians for a second opinion...without cost.



