



POA Bulletin

POA4US.org

NOVEMBER 2021

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UPCOMING GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

November 16, 2021 – 7 PM

LAUREL MANOR RECREATION CENTER

Speaker: Florida Friendly

Landscape Advocates

December 21, 2021 – 7 PM

LAUREL MANOR RECREATION CENTER

[NOTE LOCATION CHANGE]

Speaker: Lenora Spence

FL Department of Consumer Advocacy

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October Meeting Highlights

CDD 7 Lawyers Move to New Firm

New Discount Partners

VCCDD Asks Sumter County to Support Independent Fire District

In a letter sent prior to the Sumter County Board of Commissioners October 12 meeting, the Village Center Community Development District (VCCDD) Board of Supervisors indicated it has endorsed a Special Independent Fire District as allowed by Special FS 191 Independent Fire District and asked for the Sumter County Board to support it, as well as, the Special District is pursued through the legislative process.

The Sumter County Commissioners, by a vote of 4-1, voted to support the action to create the Special District along with three other actions, including setting aside a financial dispute. *(see related article on page 8.)*

The letter states that if passed by the Legislature and approved by the Governor a Special District will:

- Only be enacted, if approved as provided by FS 191, by the recipients of service by referendum.
- Create an elected Board of Supervisors focused solely on fire control and the provision of EMS and transport.
- Eliminate the friction existing between the County and District relating to budget, funding, and contract interpretations.
- Enhance the coordinative and operational working relationship between the Fire Chiefs.
- Allow the County and District to focus on their individual and respective demographics population basis.
- Remove the financial burden of funding what had been described as your contractual fire service from a fee and ad valorem tax basis.

The special fire district has already garnered the support of the state delegation who represent The Villages and who are expected to take to committee in December. After committee it would go to the full legislature in its next session, paving the way for a referendum on the ballot in the Fall 2022. ■

Mission Statement

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.

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.

Goals 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	Fairness
Objectivity	Respect	

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.

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 POA 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. The POA assumes no liability for any information published, opinions expressed, or delivery to any person or location. The POA does not endorse or recommend the products or services of any advertiser or discount partner. All publication rights are reserved. Publication or reprinting of any material contained herein is by written permission only. The POA reserves the right to remove and/or discontinue any advertisement or advertiser from its POA Bulletin at any time at its sole discretion.

CDD 7's New Lawyers Move to New Firm

In a written communication via email received just one day after its October meeting, CDD 7 and District Manager Richard Baier were informed that the law firm of Hopping, Green & Sams will no longer represent them after November 15. CDD 7's attorney, Michael Eckert, said nothing about the impending change in representation nor did he advise the Board that he would be leaving Hopping, Green & Sams. The letter states:

"As of November 15, 2021, Jonathan Johnson, Katie Buchanan, Mike Eckert, Tucker Mackie, Wes Haber, Lindsay Whelan, Joe Brown, Sarah Sandy, Alyssa Willson and Michele Rigoni (the "Special District Practice Group") will be withdrawing as attorneys from Hopping Green & Sams, P.A. ("HGS") and will be joining Kutak Rock LLP ("Kutak").

"In the coming months, HGS will no longer be providing legal services. Kutak is prepared to continue as the Client's legal counsel with respect to the Client Matters; however, it is the Client's choice as to who should serve as its legal counsel, and whether the Client Matters and all electronic files and active and closed hardcopy files ... should be transferred to Kutak."

CDD 7 continued on page 3

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CDD 7 continued from page 2

“CDD 7 has the option to transfer its files to Kutak and enter into contract with that firm or go a different direction. The CDD 7 Board of Supervisors is not scheduled to meet again until November 18, three days after the November 15 deadline.”

On October 19, a press announcement was made about the Kutak Rock LLP law firm.

“Kutak Rock, one of the nation’s leading law firms, announces its official entrance into the Florida legal market with the opening of an office in Tallahassee. Nine shareholders and one associate from the firm Hopping Green & Sams (HGS) will join Kutak Rock and establish the office in Tallahassee. HGS attorneys have started transitioning their clientele to Kutak Rock and will officially join the firm on November 15, 2021. The group strengthens the firm’s service offerings in the areas of special tax districts, public finance, and real estate transactions, and grows Kutak Rock’s attorney count to 562.”

CDD 7 has been the lone holdout to vote in support of creating a PWAC 2, which would include CDDs 12 and 13, and any CDDs that may be created in the future.

Their lack of support means that CDDs 12 and 13 – and all of the infrastructure that may fall into a new PWAC shared maintenance, such as the new bridges and multi-modal paths – will remain with and be paid for by all of the CDDs in the original PWAC. It was projected that more than \$1.2 Million would have been saved by residents in CDDs 5 – 11 if a new PWAC was formed.

District Manager Richard Baier said at the CDD 7 Board meeting that it is not guaranteed that any CDDs created after CDD 13 would become part of the original PWAC and help create additional revenue. He said it is possible that they could vote not to join PWAC and opt to start a PWAC 2 from that point forward.

If that is the case, all of the new and costly infrastructure will remain the burden of existing residents who are part of the original PWAC. ■



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Type POA of the Villages FL in the search on Facebook and you will find our page. Click LIKE and or FOLLOW, and then, suggest our page to all of your friends and neighbors that live in The Villages! Meetings and relevant information will be posted on a timely basis. *Please continue to send questions or comments via email or call the POA at (352) 418-7372.* ALL content will be monitored by the Administrator and posts containing opinion or debate will be removed. ■



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POA Meeting – October 19, 2021

208 People Reached 112 Engagements

Boost Post



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POA Meeting – August 17, 2021

995 People Reached 291 Engagements

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 FEB. 18, 2022 Dr. Joan R. Cartwright <i>Editor/publisher of Musicwoman Magazine</i> Adjunct professor; executive director of Women in Jazz South Florida, Inc. <i>"Blues Women: The First Civil Rights Workers"</i>	 MAR. 10, 2022 Gilbert King <i>Pulitzer Prize-winning author</i> "Devil in the Grove" (Pulitzer) and "Beneath a Ruthless Sun" <i>"Bedeviling Confluence: Injustice and Willis McCall through the Prism of 'Devil in the Grove' and 'Beneath a Ruthless Sun'"</i>
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Registration required for in-person events or to participate in live Zoom Q&As.

For more information and to register for Beacon Salon Speaker Series events, visit:
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In Case You Missed It...News Highlights from October Meetings

Lady Lake Commission Delays Vote on Request to Rescind Development Order

A request by the Developer to rescind the original development order that was entered into in 1994 that created the Orange Blossom section of The Villages left a majority of Lady Lake Commissioners suspicious, the Mayor angry, and the vote delayed until after a workshop could be held on October 25.

The Original Development Order and 10 subsequent amendments are together referred to as the Tri-County Villages Development of Regional Impact Development Order (or DRI DO).

Town officials are leery of the section of the request that states that the Tri-County Villages Planned Commercial (CP) zoning and Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) will govern future development of the Village Downtown Center and the Planned Unit Development (PUD) and MX-8 zoning for portions of the remainder of the Tri-County Villages development once the DRI Development Order is rescinded.

MX-8 zoning is defined as moderate density single family at a density not to exceed eight dwelling units per acre. It is intended to serve as a transitional zone between multi-family and single-family residential uses.

A public hearing and final vote was scheduled to be taken at the November 1 meeting of the Commission, although it now appears that the ordinance will be considered again on first reading at that meeting.

CDD 3 Board Implements Different Decoration Policy

Last month all Community Development Districts (CDDs) except CDD 3 approved the new Holiday Decorations policy that was published in *The POA Bulletin* and that is on the District website. **CDD 3, however, made some modifications that allow decorations to go up no more than three days prior to Thanksgiving and must come down on or before January 7.**

Nothing has changed with regard to what can be done, or materials used.

Other CDDs may take up the issue of dates at their November meetings.

CDD 4 Looking for More Maintenance at Neglected Properties

CDD 4 Supervisors are exploring ways to take care of unsightly and unsafe conditions at neglected properties. Growing frustrations with mold and deteriorating roofs have prompted supervisors to consider revising its rules to include power washing homes with exterior mold. The cost for power washing is \$150 an hour. Bush trimming and other options are also being considered.

A public hearing will be held on December 10 for public comment. If the Board approves the change, power washing could become available as early as January.

CDD 12 Board of Supervisors Sends Letter to Wildwood Mayor

CDD 12's Board of Supervisors are frustrated that residents are being told to direct their concerns about street parking for the Fenney Putt 'n Play to them, when the streets are owned, and parking violations are enforced by Wildwood's parking ordinance. When it was passed in 2019, the Wildwood Commission said it wasn't likely to start writing parking tickets for violations.

The CDD 12 Board sent a letter to Wildwood's Mayor Ed Wolf advising that it is the City's responsibility to enforce these regulations. ■

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Sumter County Sets Aside Dispute with The Villages Public Safety

Sumter County's Board of Commissioners took action at the October 12 meeting that sets aside the financial dispute with The Villages Public Safety Department (VPSD) and paved the way for an approval of a bid for a Special Dependent Fire District for VPSD.

After months-long and vocal support from residents of The Villages, in September the Commissioners unanimously voted to maintain two separate fire departments and made the first move toward giving ambulance services to each department as well when the contract with American Medical Resources (AMR) expires in October 2022.

The move at the October meeting with a vote of 4-1 was detailed by Sumter County Administrator Bradley Arnold in an Executive Summary:

"Following the overwhelming input at the 9/21/2021 Board meeting from the residents of The Villages® development to have The Villages

Public Safety Department focus on the residential portion of the development and integrate EMS transport to serve the same population, the Board provided direction by vote for two distinct Fire operations and two distinct EMS transport operations. At the same meeting, the Board approved to proceed with the dispute resolution process regarding non-compliance with The Villages Center Community Development District's (VCCDD) Fire Service Delivery Sub Agreement in the return of Sumter County funds at the end of each fiscal year as the audit for each year is completed. On 9/29/21, the VCCDD introduced its plan to the Local Legislative Delegation to submit to the State of Florida for

the first stage of approval, the creation of an independent fire district. Mr. (Richard) Baier stated on 10/1/21 that the legal advertisement for a December special called Local Legislative Delegation meeting to approve the bill had commenced.

Action #1 – Adopt the New Service Area Map for Fire and EMS Transport Operations.

"The next step of implementing the Board's 9/21/21 vote is the required creation of a service area distinction for the service planning of both the VCCDD for its designated service area and the balance by Sumter County. Although the VCCDD service area is greater than the residential portion of The Villages® development, islands were purposely not created, and barriers for travel access assisted in forming the boundary lines. The fire station at C-466 and Mariposa is owned by Sumter County, and through the adoption of

Sumter County continued on page 9



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VERY LIMITED SEATING IN AN EFFORT TO COMPLY WITH SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES.

Sumter County continued from page 8

this map, it is recommended to carve out this portion of the parcel and transfer the ownership by deed to the appropriate District.

“The fire station located on CR 521 is owned by Sumter County but is currently used by VCCDD. This fire station would return to the principal operation by Sumter County to serve the City of Coleman and the industrial and mixed-use areas south of their city limits and west of US 301.”

Action #2 – Support the creation of the Independent Fire District contingent on the map adopted in Action #1

“The Local Legislative Delegation prefers support of the local jurisdictions when advancing a bill through the State House of Representatives.”

Action #3 – Waive the Dispute Resolution

“Allow the VCCDD to retain all Sumter County funds for FY 18/19, FY 19/20, FY 20/21, and FY 21/22 budgeted and disbursed to the VCCDD. As part of the pre-audit activities for FY 19/20, it was noted that no funds were returned from the VCCDD for FY 18/19 as called for in the Fire Service Delivery sub-agreement. As part of the FY 19/20 audit, the Chairman, Finance Director, and I met with the County Auditor and shared the concern that the agreement was not being met; however, we wanted the County Auditor to confirm whether funds should have been returned. It was possible that the VCCDD overspent and pulled from reserves which

Sumter County continued on page 12

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Sumter County continued from page 9

would explain the anomaly. The County Auditor did proceed with the inquiry with the VCCDD Finance Director. The explanation was Sumter County funds were first used, as were those derived from the City of Lady Lake and City of Fruitland Park. These funds were used before the amenity fee revenues. On 10/1/21, the VCCDD attorney, County Attorney, Mr. Baier, and I met to discuss the dispute resolution steps. From this meeting, the disputed issue was narrowed to the VCCDD viewing the contract does not require the amenities revenues to be a part of the calculation. If it were, by the County Attorney's review of the audited financial information, Sumter County would be due \$2,717,196 for the two audited fiscal years and potential additional funds upon the conclusion of the FY 20/21 audit.

"Understanding the position of both parties, the resolution for this would be the next step in the dispute resolution process. This process would be a distraction to the 10/1/22 deadline to have each separate area ready to provide the best service for the customers. The waiving of the conflict in the current contract allows the funds in dispute to remain with the VCCDD so they may proceed with the expenditures necessary for the acquisition of property for future fire stations, acquisition of equipment and vehicles to implement the Fire and EMS transport services in the designed map area of Action #1."

Action # 4 - Terminate the VCCDD Fire Sub-Agreement and Fleet Sub-Agreement effective 9/30/22

"The concept of closest unit response, leasing of fire stations, and no-cost allocation for fleet services for the VCCDD end with the

Sumter County continued on page 13



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Sumter County continued from page 12

implantation phase effective 10/1/22. A new agreement to bridge from 10/1/22 to the effective date of the new independent district will need to be developed concurrently with the planning process for the provision of service according to the new boundary areas adopted in Action #1. Fleet services can still be provided to Sumter County and the VCCDD (or new entity); however, billing for these services would be required since each of the two new service areas will need to extract their funding from Sumter County's General Fund to avoid actual double taxation issues. For a fee-based EMS transport operation, the cost allocation is also a required component of that business model."

The lone vote against the four actions came from Chairman Garry Breeden because he disagreed with setting aside the financial dispute. ■

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Caring Neighbors: Volunteers Helping Neighbors

Caring Neighbors is an organized network of volunteers who proactively respond to the needs of their neighbors with their own Village within The Villages. Their work is focused on those neighbors who are facing life challenges or family crises. Their services include FREE, practical, common sense, non-medical assistance such as: transportation, respite care, friendly home visits, short-term meals, pet care and errand running. Their work is focused on those neighbors who are facing life challenges or family crises.

Anne Bosler founded the first group of Caring Neighbors in the Village of Hadley about five years ago with just two people. Today there are thirty in the Hadley group, and programs in Summerhill, Buttonwood, Fenney area, Sunset Pointe, and Polo Ridge.

She told POA members at the September 29 General Membership meeting that she and her husband are both volunteers and clients of the program.

Anne reminded members that even though we all have needs as we age; we can also help each other. Many neighbors already help their neighbors but at some risk.

Many residents are reluctant or too proud to ask for assistance. Those who do need assistance are often at a loss as to where to get the assistance they need. Many residents are afraid to admit they need help for fear they may be placed in a facility.

Caring Neighbors is a structured program with protocols in place that protect the volunteer and the client neighbor. All volunteers are background checked. Every client is assessed before services are provided. Any special needs or conditions are noted. Every client must sign a release stating no legal action will be taken if something occurs while receiving services. Guidelines are in place for all major services. Caring Neighbors operates under the United Way of Lake & Sumter counties with non-profit status. United way provides brochures, name badges, printed materials, a dedicated phone line and background checks.

Ann described the process:

- Neighbor has a need
- Assessment is scheduled
- Service request is emailed to all volunteers
- Volunteer who can fill the request responds to all and calls the neighbor in need
- Service is provided

She emphasized that volunteers are not expected to or asked to do services over and over again, but many want to and “compete” with each other for some clients.

The goal of Caring Neighbors is to have a program in each Village. If you are interested in adding your Village to this program OR have a neighbor who is in need in an already established program area, please contact Anne Bosler at (352) 674-9022 or via email to **info@villagerslifecareadvocates.org**. If you wish to volunteer with Caring Neighbors, please contact Anne Bosler, as well.

If you do not see your Village listed, perhaps you would be interested in helping to start a group. Guidance and all materials necessary will be provided. Only six people are needed to start a group in a Village. Beginning in November Anne will have monthly meetings to help people get groups started in their Village. She is limiting the meetings to six Villages each month.

Is there a program in Marion County?

Those in Marion County need to go through Marion County United Way. She doesn't have any groups in that area yet and would have to look into it because they operate differently. Ann will do all she can to help programs get started in Villages located in Marion County as well.

Neighbors continued on page 15

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Neighbors continued from page 14

Can Marion County residents volunteer only in Marion?

Any person can volunteer, but volunteers only serve those in their own Village. All the records are kept to the Village being served.

Is client professionally assessed by RN or someone else?

No, but people with medical credentials are encouraged to become assessors because they will pick up on things more than non-professionals. Sometimes circumstances have changed and need to be reassessed. Sometimes services have to be replaced with more professional services. They have resource lists.

What do you do when a client goes down hill and there is no family? How do you get further care for them?

They will try to call the person's emergency contact that was given during the assessment.

Each group decides what services they will provide and discuss in their group what they will do and for whom. Each one is different.

Brochures are unique for their Village, and they have a dedicated phone number.

Since COVID, they have followed COVID protocols. Volunteers are not asked to do anything they are not comfortable with. ■



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Time to Plant a Tree

THE FANATICAL GARDENER

by Anne Lambrecht Fanatical Gardener

Trees are the most important landscape structures in your garden. Trees enclose and shade the landscape and provide nesting places and food for wildlife. November is the perfect time to plant trees. Their roots have time to establish before our chilly weather comes in winter. Then in spring, they grow and thrive.

Planted well for sturdiness is as important as their foliage and flowers. Remember to give them room to grow and not too close to the house! In our community, it is wise to plant smaller specimen trees or dwarf cultivars. Planting a 50-foot sapling now and saying “it’ll be someone else’s problem” is just not a good stewardship of the earth.

Protect your trees, especially from the weed whacker. If the bark gets cut all the way around, the tree’s food supply is cut off and it will die. Protect their roots from anything that will cut, compact, or bury them. Avoid over-watering and over-fertilizing which can force top growth that the roots may not be able to support. Fertilize once you plant and then hold off until spring.

How to plant your tree: You won’t need to amend your soil too much unless it is pure sand or pure clay. Dig a wide, deep hole, keeping the soil. Loosen the tree roots from the pot, mixing the soil it’s in with the soil you dug out of the ground. Set the tree so that its original soil line is even with or barely higher than the soil around it. Fill in the hole around the roots with the original soil/potted mixture. Make a ring of soil (not a dome up the trunk) around the planting site to make watering

easier. Loosely stake for a year but keep an eye on the wrap-around making sure it doesn’t dig into the bark. Cover the planting area with mulch. Water deeply, not frequently.

Here are a few smallish easy-to-find trees with comments:

Bald cypress. Ancient native and deciduous, predates flowering plants. Fast growing in most soil types. Develops “knees”. Has straight trunk and beautiful feathery leaves.

Bottlebrush. Not native. Can be a large shrub or small tree, weeping or straight. Flower is mostly red and looks like a bottle brush attracting many pollinators.

Citrus. Florida’s state flower is the orange blossom. Needs room for air circulation and good drainage. Kumquats are a great little citrus for home gardeners and is the most cold hardy.

Crape myrtle. Lilac of the South. All sizes and flower colors are available. Likes full sun to light shade. Please do not “crape murder” and wait till spring to prune.

Chaste or Vitex tree. Full sun or light shade. Small, rounded umbrella-like specimen plant. Medicinal in the old days. Purple flowers look like small lilacs in late spring and summer. Attractive to pollinators.

Holly. Native. Familiar shape at holidays with glossy green spiny leaves and bright red berries. Need male and female if you want berries. Slow growing in pyramidal shape. Can grow to tree or into a hedge.



Citrus

Magnolia. Native ancient tree. Huge fragrant flowers in spring. Dense evergreen leaves. Leaf litter 365 days. Little Gem is a popular compact long blooming dwarf.

Persimmon. Native but some are from Asia. Wonderful hardy small tree with tasty orange fruits in fall. Need male and female. Harvest fruit before ripe to protect the fruit from hungry wildlife. They will ripen on the countertop.

Red maple. Native. Easy, pretty fast-growing oval shape. Prefers moist conditions. Fall colors. Red-winged seeds that helicopter.

Red buckeye. Native and slow growing. Gets name from white scar on nuts (seeds) making it look like the eye of a deer. Beautiful blooms in spring. Perfect for you Ohioans who think of themselves as Buckeyes.

River birch. Likes wet but tolerates other soils. Zone 9 is furthest south for it. Cool peeling white bark. Cool catkins in spring. Least borer resistant cultivar. Birds eat seeds. Can grow either single or multi-stemmed. ■

Sources: Green Isle Gardens Groveland, FL
407-948-8980 greenislegardens.com

A Natural Farm Howie-in-the-Hills, FL
anaturalfarm.com (352) 536-3112

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SENIORS VS CRIME

Do Not “Click Here For Support”

The next time you get a message, text, or phone call offering to fix a supposed problem with your computer, you might keep this in mind: “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” That’s because there’s a good chance that the call is a tech support scam.

In a case against a company called Click4Support, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) charged the company with fleecing people out of up to thousands of dollars per consumer over computer technical support.

Here’s how it worked, according to the FTC: the company used search engine results and pop-up ads, which seemed to come from well-known tech companies, but did not. Those ads drove people to telemarketing centers. If you called, the Click4Support reps (you would never know you were dealing with Click4Support instead of the reputable company you thought you were contacting) would get remote access to your computer to – in their words – identify and resolve computer issues. Then the reps would make you believe your computer had a virus, spyware, malware, or was otherwise compromised.

But the FTC says those claims were false. In most cases, nothing was wrong with your computer!

Then, according to the FTC, the company sold their tech support “service” to you. That meant anything from a one-time “fix” to a long-term services plan, and cost from \$69 to thousands of dollars.

The FTC estimates that nationwide, these fees added up to more than \$17.9 million for Click4Support. And what did you get for your money?

You got big charges for often unnecessary so-called repairs. Some of these ‘repairs’ even damaged computers, according to the FTC.

Unsolicited phone calls are another common way these scam artists contact you to sell their ‘computer tech support scams’.

If you see a pop-up, an ad, or get an unsolicited call for tech support services, here are some ways to help you keep your money to yourself:

- Don’t give access to your computer to anyone who contacts you.
- Never give your credit card or financial information – or your passwords – to anyone who calls asking for them.
- Hang up on anyone who pressures you to pay for a computer security product or service.
- If you have concerns about your computer’s security, call a local reputable computer repair company using a number you know is really theirs (i.e., that you looked up in the local phone book).
- If you need to check a company out, search its name online with words like “review,” “complaint,” or “scam.”

The only way you can truly avoid these, and similar, very clever scams are by being VERY careful about your personal information, being VERY suspicious, and practicing EXTREME skepticism. And you should do this BEFORE you agree to let them work on your computer remotely or give them your credit card number. Never give personal or financial information to anyone on an unsolicited phone call, text, or email.



Remember, no one will watch out for your interests better than YOU! When in doubt as to what you can do to protect yourself against computer repair scams, contact your nearest Seniors Vs Crime office in The Villages for advice or assistance. You can find office contact information at **seniorsvscrime.com**.

Seniors Vs. Crime also has a Speakers Bureau that will gladly come to your club, church, or group to speak about scams. To schedule a presentation, contact any of the offices. There is never a charge for their services. Seniors Vs. Crime can be reached at:

**The Fruitland Park Police Department Annex
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**The Marion County Sheriff’s Office in The Villages
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