



# POA Bulletin



POA4US.org

APRIL 2023

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## Upcoming POA General Membership Meetings at Laurel Manor Recreation Center

**April 18 • 7 pm**

Speaker: Danielle Rosier  
Audiology & Hearing Loss

**May 16, 2023 • 7 pm**

Speaker: Dr. Joe Kasper  
Proper Nutrition

**June 20, 2023 • 7 pm**

Speaker: Len Hathaway  
Lightning Matters  
+ FREE Lightning System Give-Away!

**July 18, 2023 • 7 pm**

Speaker: Bradley Arnold  
Sumter County Administrator  
Craig Estep, Sumter County  
Commissioner  
2023-24 Sumter County Budget

Donuts & Coffee  
will be available  
at the POA  
General  
Membership  
Meetings



## Is This What a 5-Star Hospital Would Do?



That is the question Chief Clinical Officer for UF/The Villages Hospital, Cheryl Chestnutt, asks her team every day. She came from a 5-star hospital, and she knows what it looks like. She told residents at the POA General Membership meeting in March that having only a 2-star rating weighs heavily on her.

In perhaps the most candid presentation made to the public, Ms. Chestnutt shared strategies for improvement in four key areas: Team updates; Quality outcomes; Care delivery; and Growth.

Casting a vision for "One UFHealth" is at the core of improving team performance and encompasses everything from the internal culture of the team to staff appearance. There have not been clear expectations and behavior standards in the past. Those standards will be rolled out by the end of June in order to embed a culture of excellence and accountability.

Communication has also been lacking so they have held as many as forty Town Hall meetings to lay out expectations. Sideline meetings are now held at regular intervals with team members to find out what is going well, what is not, and asking "what would you do to keep staff?"

Ms. Chestnutt believes "The UFHealth Difference" begins with leadership and starts with making meaningful connections that include eye contact and touch, made more difficult during the height of the pandemic. It is up to leaders to create confidence in the quality of care of the patient and they must "own the moment" in interactions.

Turnover has been a problem historically at The Villages Hospital, and again, Covid added to the challenge. It is starting to come down, but it has been hard to recruit. In 2021, nursing turnover was at nearly 50%. In March 2022 it was 37.4% and February 2023 only 19.7%. Overall turnover at the hospital in February was still at 25.6%.

Ms. Chestnutt reported that there will be 46 international nurses hired by September 2023, noting that they all speak English. Most are coming from the United Kingdom, Dubai and Yemen.

Nursing schools have suffered from declining enrollments. Passing rates reached an all time low and Lake Sumter College was only able to fill 40 of 80 spots available for nursing students. UFHealth/TV is partnering with Lake Sumter College, creating the Designated Education Unit at the hospital where nursing students will work for the final two years of their program.

Until she actually moved to The Villages two months ago, Ms. Chestnutt had not understood that the hospital's reputation was that of an "unsafe" place for treatment. She was taken aback when POA President Cliff Wiener told her it was perceived as a place where people go to die.

**Hospital** continued on page 2

**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.

**Hospital** *continued from page 1*

A number of strategies have been developed to meet the care standards challenges head-on.

- Identify sepsis early and recognize if a patient is presenting with symptoms of sepsis.
- Reduce hospital acquired conditions such as pressure (bed) sores and blood infections.
- Length of stay initiative – patients and staff are waiting too long for authorization for discharge, which further increases wait times in the Emergency Department (ED).
- “All Hands on Deck” initiative to improve the patient experience, including hiring a concierge that will tend to waiting patients and families in the ED.
- Emergency Department throughput.

Ms. Chestnutt acknowledged that January was a hard month in the Emergency Department, with the height of snowbird season starting. There were not enough employees, not because of funding or budgetary issues, but because they have had a hard time filling positions. She has seen a slowing of the number of complaints about the ED, but there is still improvement needed. She requires employees to read what patients say about them so they can understand the impact of their interactions.

There are specific initiatives for the ED:

- Reduce wait times and off-loading from ambulances. Ms. Chestnutt said that working with the Village Public Safety Division (VPSD) has been a substantial improvement. The relationship was actually hostile with the previous ambulance provider. Now they get data every day from VPSD and there has been a 50% improvement in the last month. It is now a “great partnership.”
- She also said they see 80-100 patients a day and 50% of them are admitted. The national average is just 24%.
- Create new patient-centered processes, including hiring the concierge.
- Enhance the design of the ED entrance and patient flow to make it more welcoming.

Several care delivery improvements are in the works as well. A new Heart and Vascular unit is

scheduled to open at the end of March. “Time is muscle” is the phrase used in treating heart issues. The national standard is to get a patient through to the catheter lab in 90 minutes. The average time at UFHealth/The Villages Hospital is just 64 minutes.

UFHealth/The Villages Hospital is also a Gold and Honor Roll unit for strokes, where “Time is brain.” Time for treatment success for strokes is known as the “Golden Hour.”

A new Mobile Stroke Unit is on order that will have a CT machine, lab, and telehealth to a neurologist to determine the type of stroke. UFHealth/Shands in Gainesville will be the first to receive a unit in the Spring/early Summer 2024, with UFHealth/The Villages Hospital the second in the Fall of 2024. The Hospital Foundation has been very generous in helping to raise the \$1.5 million necessary for the unit, which will cost another \$1.5 million to operate. They will be working with VPSD to find the best place to locate the new unit so that it is easily accessible to the areas that, based on the data, have the greatest number of strokes. She said that initially it is most likely to be in the “32162” zip code but over time, that may change. She also noted that this is a service that they cannot bill for so there will be no revenue stream to pay for staffing, equipment and services.

**Q & A**

**What is UFHealth Hospital and how is it connected to Brownwood?**

UFHealth Hospital’s “mother ship” is located at Shands Hospital in Gainesville. UFHealth acquired The Villages Regional Hospital in 2019. The Brownwood Medical Center is owned by The Villages Health and is not affiliated with UFHealth. However, the freestanding Emergency Department on SR 44 in Brownwood is a UFHealth ED.

**What is the clinical definition of sepsis?**

Sepsis is an infection in the blood that can grow and grow until it is out of control. It can be acquired in a variety of ways from other infections in the body.

**Who provides the food service at the hospital?**

They recently transitioned to Morrison’s Cafeteria, which is a food service provider for many facilities.

**Hospital** *continued on page 4*



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**Hospital** *continued from page 2*

**What is the hospital rating?** It is currently a 2-Star rating.

**Are there still plans for a new hospital?**

The plans had been put on hold, then on a permanent hold because of the many issues associated with the rising cost of materials, supply chain issues, and other uncertainties. There has been recent discussion again about a new hospital and they should know something in the next few months.

**What is the hospital’s census and staffing ratios?**

Census is usually around 90%, which is above the average of 84-85%. Staffing ratios have been an issue, not because of budget, but because of difficulties in hiring.

**How many doctors are Board Certified in emergency medicine?**

Ms. Chestnutt will have to get that answer from Team Health, which staffs the ED.

**How much do new-hire nurses get paid?**

If they are just out of school, they start at \$32 per hour. They also use seasonal nurses who are paid a premium and this year had 20 travel nurses (down from 60 last year) who are paid \$130 per hour.

**Will a Wellness Center still be built by Eastport?** It is unclear at this time.

**Of the 50% of patients who are not admitted from the ED, how many of them should have gone to their own doctor or urgent care instead?** They don’t really break it out that way.

**Instead of putting money into redesigning the ED, why not spend that on hiring more nurses?**

Hiring nurses is not a budget issue, it is not being able to find people to hire.

Ms. Chestnutt urged anyone who is interested in coming out of retirement to work or volunteer at the hospital to contact them. They are looking for people.

The POA wants to thank Ms. Chestnutt for a truly honest and straightforward presentation. It is a great start toward rebuilding confidence that UFHealth/The Villages Hospital can become a 5-star and safe facility for healthcare. We look forward to an update in March 2024! ●

**UF Health Central Florida Goals - Fiscal Year 2023**

GOAL	SOURCE OF MEASUREMENT	MEETS	CURRENT PERFORMANCE	AS OF DATE
Reduce ED Median Time of Arrival to Discharge Home	EPIC	TVH 208 Min	● TVH 245 Min	12/31/22
		LH 194 Min	● LH 220 Min	
Reduce ED Median Time From Arrival to Departure for Inpatient Unit	EPIC	TVH 453 Min	● TVH 1548 Min	12/31/22
		LH 409 Min	● LH 943 Min	
Reduce the overall Hospital Acquired C.Diff	NHSN/Vizient	TVH 0.59	● TVH 0.39	12/31/22
		LH 0.79	● LH 0.42	
Improve Compliance with Sepsis Bundle	Quality Abstractors	TVH 70%	● TVH 69.2%	12/31/22
		LH 70%	● LH 64.3%	
Reduce Vizient O/E Length of Stay	Vizient	TVH 1.10	● TVH 1.11	23-Jan
		LH 1.16	● LH 1.22	
Reduce Vizient O/E Mortality Index for Sepsis POA	Vizient	TVH 1.25	● TVH .72	23-Jan
		LH 1.34	● LH 1.25	
Reduce Inpatient Readmission Rate	Vizient	TVH 10.12%	● TVH 9.68%	23-Jan
		LH 9.52%	● LH 8.91%	
Improve Nurse Communication	Press Ganey	TVH 78.5%	● TVH 66.1%	2/28/23
		LH 78.5%	● LH 84.1%	
Improve Medication Communication	Press Ganey	TVH 59.8%	● TVH 43.1%	2/28/23
		LH 59.8%	● LH 62.8%	
Improve Patient Discharge Information	Press Ganey	TVH 86.4%	● TVH 76.8%	2/28/23
		LH 86.4%	● LH 80.2%	

TVH = The Villages Hospital    LH = Leesburg Hospital



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# AAC Looking at Several Projects

At its March regular meeting, the Amenity Authority Committee (AAC) heard an update on progress of the rebuild project of Paradise Recreation Center, a proposal to renovate the former catering space at Hacienda Recreation for amenity uses, and a proposal to consider taking over the maintenance of multi-modal paths north of CR 466.

## Paradise Recreation Center

Project Status updates indicated:

- Completed property survey, utilities survey & locates, grade assessment, concept facility design, and architect's site plan.
- Incorporates resident feedback into concept design and inclusion of desired amenities. Concept takes away no existing amenities and adds several new amenities.
- Optimally utilizes all available space, maintains parking stall numbers for both the residents and church.
- Provides dramatic views and overlook areas above Lake Paradise. Brand new facility with all new amenities
- Concept Design, which is based on existing Regional Recreation Center plans. Adds 10,000 Square Feet to current Paradise Footprint & eliminates multiple elevation floorplans.
- Potentially save \$400-500K by utilizing already approved Regional Recreation Center construction plans (with some modifications to enhance views & expand/optimize space use & layout).
- Adds new amenities including a natural gas fire pit with lake overlook and picnic area, walking trail, and a resort style pool.
- Provides dramatic views and overlook areas above Golfview Lake.
- Preserves all of the historic majestic live oaks.
- Improves grade and functionality of all interior spaces.
- Maximize the views over the lake (fire pit, expanded seating and picnic areas, large plate glass overlook windows in key areas).
- Expands the Mark Twain Library space.
- Maintains the Spanish architecture and historic look and feel of the original Paradise Recreation Center.

The concept plan is not final. Staff will continue to make adjustments to maximize square footage and expansion of usable space. They will likely reposition some rooms and storage areas to increase the opportunity to increase views and overlooks of the trees and lake.

They are also evaluating options to expand exterior amenities on the rear of the facility (expanded porch areas, paver seating areas, etc.).

Staff recommends AAC review over the next several weeks. District Property Management will leave the drawings on display at Paradise and Savannah for residents to review and submit all feedback and recommendations to [bruce.brown@districtgov.org](mailto:bruce.brown@districtgov.org) and [john.rohan@districtgov.org](mailto:john.rohan@districtgov.org). The exterior site plan and floor plans are located on page 6.

AAC continued on page 6

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AAC continued from page 5

**Paradise Recreation Center**



**La Hacienda Recreation Center**

Staff presented a proposal to convert the former La Hacienda Catering Space for other Recreation Amenity purposes to meet the growing requests and needs of residents. They believe this project can easily be designed and completed in 2023 and emphasized it will not impact the Paradise renovation timeline.

The space provides direct access from exterior and is construction ready. They would need to fill, level and install LVT flooring, and install new HVAC & electrical. There will be a new drop ceiling and interior walls. Restrooms will be expanded and will be ADA compliant.

Suggested potential Amenity uses include table tennis and gaming.

Staff will bid out the construction project and present to AAC.

Staff suggests completion in 2023 versus 2027 as part of La Hacienda Recreation Center major renovation. They assured the AAC that space can be preserved during renovation, emphasizing they are not renovating only to demolish 4 years later.

Staff believes this is the Ideal opportunity to use recently available space now and DPM/Recreation will ensure quality finishes to match the quality of the First Responders Recreation Center. They asked the AAC to trust the team that designed and delivered First Responders Recreation Center, and will design and deliver Paradise Recreation Center.

The AAC gave the green light for staff to proceed.

AAC continued on page 7



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AAC continued from page 6

**Multi-Modal Paths**

AAC member, Don Deakin, presented a proposal for the AAC to maintain “Recreation Trails,” aka Multi-Modal Paths (MMP), north of CR 466. He provided this history for the Committee:

“Historically, early maps of The Villages provided by the Developer originally identified all the Multi-Modal Paths as “Recreation Trails” on both sides of CR466. The Recreation Trails north of CR466 had concrete surfaces, a maximum of 12-feet wide, with center line striping. Recreation Trails south of CR466 had asphalt surfaces, an average of 19-feet wide, with 6-inch-wide concrete ribbon edging on each side.

“North of CR466, the Residents’ class-action \$40 million “Settlement Agreement”, which included an “Interlocal Agreement” creating the Amenity Authority Committee, was agreed to by the Developer in favor of the residents under the jurisdiction of the Fifth Judicial Circuit Court in Lake County on December 10, 2007.

“One of the first actions the AAC took was to invest approximately \$8 million to reconstruct the Recreation Trails north of CR466 with asphalt surfaces, an average of 19-feet wide, with 6-inch-

wide concrete ribbon edging on each side, utilizing “Interlocal Agreements” with each of Community Development Districts 1, 2, 3, 4 and other entities north of CR466 within The Villages.

“After the project was completed, the AAC offered to assume responsibility for the on-going maintenance of the Recreation Trails north of CR466 and to re-stripe them as they were when they were concrete, at the AAC’s expense. District 4 accepted the AAC’s offer, but CDDs 1, 2, and 3 declined. The AAC said the offer required all the CDDs to participate, so the offer was withdrawn. (Since then, CDDs 2 and 4 have striped their MMPs and all Districts have added Reflective Pavement Markers/RPMs to their paths.)”

In the current proposal, Mr. Deakin suggests that the proposal would exist through Multi-Modal Path Interlocal Agreements between the AAC and the individual CDDs 1, 2, 3, and 4, and not all CDDs would be required to participate. Ownership of the Multi-Modal paths would remain with each respective CDD.

Mr. Deakin said that there is historical precedent for the AAC providing the maintenance given that it paid for the reconstruction of all of the trails after the lawsuit settlement. Additionally, he believes the Developer calling them “Recreation

Trails” was significant because they provide a transportation mechanism via the cart paths to get to the recreation centers. He maintains that it would benefit each of the districts by allowing them to reduce their maintenance budgets and pass those savings on to the residents if they don’t have to pay for the maintenance of the paths. He believes that the AAC should have had control over the MMPs since the reconstruction.

The proposal states that maintenance would include repair and/or replacement of the MMPs, limited to the options agreed upon by each entity, which include a) Multi-Modal Paths (MMPs); b) Concrete ribbon edging; c) Reflective Pavement Markers (RPMs); d) Striping; and, e) Tunnels.

A MMP Discussion Group meeting was held on March 29, the day prior to the AAC Budget Workshop (after The Bulletin went to press), at which time discussion was expected to occur on this proposal. CDD 3 declined to participate in the meeting.

Neither District staff nor legal counsel have looked at the proposal or provided any budget impact data or legal opinion.

Consensus of the AAC members was that Mr. Deakin would present the proposal concept to CDDs 1, 2 and 4 at their regular meetings on March 10 to see if they were interested in further pursuing the discussion at the MMP meeting on March 29. ●

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# In Case You Missed It... News Highlights from March

## Water Increase Goes Into Effect April 1 – More to Come?

In February, the North Sumter County Utility Dependent District (NSCUDD) Board of Supervisors voted to increase the water rate for Central Sumter Utility (CSU) customers by 10% effective April 1, 2023. Residents will begin to see that increase on their utility bills for April service. CSU serves residential customers in the majority of CDD 9 and all of CDDs 10 and 11.

The proposal by staff, based upon the projections for the next five years was for a 10% increase starting on April 1, 2023, with an additional 10% increase for the next two fiscal years, and then 3% increases for two years. The NSCUDD Board did not pass the subsequent increases at that time.

However, the same proposal for increases was made in the budget workshop in March and will be considered at the May preliminary budget public hearing and vote.

NSCUDD is responsible for three utility territories. In addition to CSU, the North Sumter Utility is the water utility provider for customers in CDDs 5-8 and a small section of CDD 9. It is more than financially solvent with its projected reserve balance holding steady at or slightly above \$55 million for the next five years. Expenditures are under control for that same period.

In December 2019, NSCUDD purchased the Central Sumter Utility (CSU) which provides service to residential CDDs 9-11 and commercial customers in Brownwood. The Budget presentation to the NSCUDD Board emphasizes that “When CSU/SWCA were purchased, both were fully evaluated by an independent engineering firm, which determined that both were in excellent condition. As a condition of the sale, various items were identified and corrected by the seller. This evaluation report was reviewed and accepted by the NSCUDD Board of Supervisors. CSU/SWCA remain in excellent condition.”

In 2020 the Board strategy was to look at the advanced metering system in five years. But it has become apparent that the need is greater to accomplish it sooner rather than later, and the pilot will be completed in this fiscal year. Going forward, it should be completed by FY 2028. That portion of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will cost \$14.687 million and for CSU \$9.048 million.

The total cost of the CIP over the next five fiscal years for NSU is \$41 million and for CSU \$20.5 million.

## Water Matters Event

On Saturday, April 22, 2023, District Property Management will hold its 1st Annual Water Matters Event. Residents will learn more about what The Villages Community Development Districts and others do behind the scenes to responsibly manage water resources and gather valuable information from vendors like Jacobs, UF IFAS, The Villages Water Wisdom and many more.

The event will be from 9 am to 1 pm at Lake Sumter Landing Market Square and will feature educational presentations on water resource conservation and environmentally friendly practices.

Highlights continued on page 11

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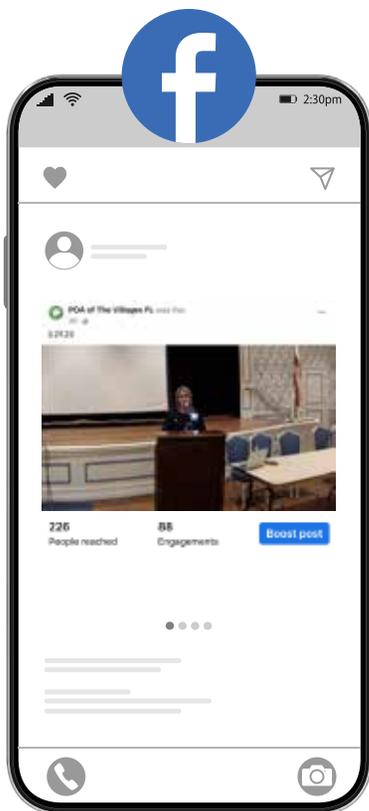
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The POA now livestreams its meetings so residents can either attend in person, watch live from home or at a time more convenient. You will hear all parts of the meeting – announcements, open forum Q & A, and the program. **You will always be connected to your POA!**

**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. 🟢

## Did you know?

The Bulletin is available online – including archived editions. [POA4US.org/bulletin](http://POA4US.org/bulletin)

### Upcoming POA General Membership Meetings at Laurel Manor Recreation Center

**April 18 • 7 pm**

Speaker: Danielle Rosier  
Audiology & Hearing Loss

**May 16, 2023 • 7 pm**

Speaker: Dr. Joe Kasper  
Proper Nutrition

**June 20, 2023 • 7 pm**

Speaker: Len Hathaway  
Lightning Matters  
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**July 18, 2023 • 7 pm**

Speaker: Bradley Arnold  
Sumter County Administrator  
Craig Estep, Sumter County  
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2023-24 Sumter County Budget

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[www.festivalsofspeed.com](http://www.festivalsofspeed.com)

Highlights continued from page 9

### Satellite Office Opening in La Hacienda

A District Customer Service Satellite Office will be opening this spring at 1200 Avienda Central in La Hacienda with hours Monday – Friday from 8 am – 5 pm. Residents will be able to replace Resident ID cards, obtain Gate Access Cards, obtain Guest IDs, purchase Executive Trail Pass, pay Utility/Amenity bills, obtain Bond information and much more. Watch for the specific date of opening.

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# 2023 POA Watch List

Each year the POA identifies a Watch List of issues that may affect the lifestyle, property value, and quality of life for residents of The Villages. The POA does not have a crystal ball, however, and more often than not things occur that no one saw coming. Thankfully, there is a break from elections in 2023 so attention can remain focused on other important issues.

The POA Board of Directors has identified five items to watch in 2023. As these issues are covered in the POA Bulletin, they will be identified with a number for easy reference. Following is a brief description of each issue.



## #1 UF Health The Villages Hospital

Back in the #1 spot is UF Health The Villages Hospital. The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released 2022 quality ratings in November and The Villages Hospital remains a 2-star facility based on a number of factors. Patient survey results gave the hospital only one star.

With Snowbird season beginning to ramp up, complaints are already starting to swirl about wait times in the Emergency Department as well as long off-load times for ambulances transporting patients to the hospital.

The March POA General Membership meeting featured Cheryl Chestnutt, the Chief Clinical Officer at UF Health/The Villages Hospital. The article recapping the meeting starts on page one of this issue.

## HELP WANTED

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Put **“delivery driver position”** in the subject line.



## #2 Personal Property Insurance

Even before Hurricane Ian hit the Gulf Coast of Florida, the personal property insurance industry was in trouble in Florida. Plagued by roofing scams that drove six companies out of business in 2022, Governor Ron DeSantis called two special sessions of the Florida Legislature in June and December. Legislation was passed to help ease the burden on property owners and to tighten the regulations on roofing companies that have driven roofing costs up and insurance companies out of business.

The Florida Office of Insurance Regulation has imposed a 2% surcharge on Property owners in 2023, depending on when their policy renews, so the Florida Insurance Guaranty Association (FIGA) can cover more than 14,000 claims from insolvent companies that need to be satisfied.

Whether the new legislation has helped homeowners remains to be seen. Please share your insurance renewal stories with the POA by sending an email to [TheBulletin@poa4us.org](mailto:TheBulletin@poa4us.org).



## #3 US 441 Construction Project

At the December POA General Membership meeting, officials from the Florida Department of Transportation provided an update on the US 441 construction that has already frustrated motorists for two years and claimed the life of a construction worker. Two other serious accidents have occurred in the construction zone, including two teens who were killed.

The 4.157-mile, \$45.3 million road improvement that began in July 2020 is on track to complete and re-open the entire roadway in early 2024.

*Watch List continued on page 14*

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**Debbie & Lee Schoonover**  
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Amy (321) 303-6469

Watch List continued from page 12



### #4 Anonymous Complaints

Community Development District (CDD) 5 is reporting good results from eliminating the anonymous complaint system in its district, and other CDDs are starting to pay attention. CDD 5 supervisors say there has not been a degradation of aesthetics as a result, signaling that its new system may be working. The POA will watch to see what other CDDs choose to do in the coming year to resolve the age-old debate about anonymous versus requiring the name of the complainant.



### #5 NSCUDD/ Water Usage Spikes

Numerous people came forward to the POA with information about unusual one-time high water usage spikes for which there was no leak or other explanation. Meters were determined to be working properly. In many cases the homeowner was not home for a month or more when the spike occurred, and often the water had been turned off.

The POA asked residents to come forward if they had experienced a similar problem. More than 500 communications were received. Most complained not just of the spike but of poor customer service and lack of willingness to find a solution or explanation.

The POA and residents went to the North Sumter County Utility Dependent District (NSCUDD) meeting in March to present findings and were promised by District staff and the Board that some actions would be taken and new processes developed.

The POA has added this issue to its Watch List for 2023 and will provide updates on progress as it is made. ●

**Pam Powell**

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# POA Urges NSCUDD to Look at Water Usage Spikes



From one end of The Villages to the other and from five years ago to present day, residents went before the North Sumter County Utility Dependent Board (NSCUDD) and shared stories of water usage spikes from 25,000 – 90,000 gallons. One elderly woman was said to have gotten a bill that was \$500 higher and that she was told she had to pay or face late charges.

After being brought up at a POA General Membership meeting earlier this year, POA President Cliff Wiener asked residents who had these types of issues to get in touch with the POA. He reported to the NSCUDD Board that he had received some 500 communications and more are coming. He said he is not challenging whether there is an issue with meters. His concerns are 3-fold:

1. Customer service and the way residents are being addressed on this issue. They are being “blown off” by utility representatives and given no real solutions.
2. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to know that when there is a spike one month that goes back to normal the next, something is wrong.
3. There is a one-time forgiveness program that has only been used small percentage of time and residents are not being told about it.

Mr. Wiener said it is this board's responsibility to correct these mistakes and help the residents.

Interestingly, in the course of the many statements by residents, the Board indicated that NSCUDD staff does not even record complaints, it only processes work orders so how would any sort of pattern of error be detected or tracked?

An article that was in The Villages Daily Sun pointed out the one-time forgiveness program, however it is only granted if there is a leak and the leak has been fixed. It would apparently not apply in circumstances when a cause of the spike cannot or has not been determined.

Assistant District Manager Bruce Brown described the POA's request for information from residents about water usage spikes as “disingenuous” and said it was asking residents to show up and complain about high bills. He said he wrote the District Meter Reading Fact Sheet because it was apparent that residents had many questions about water meters and did not understand how meters are read and other policies about billing.

He also acknowledged that he had no idea what



might be causing these spikes. What he could say was that there is a very specific process for troubleshooting and tracing back what information is coming through the meter. He said the information the POA has provided will be helpful in trying to get to the root of the problem, but it will take time because there are four different utilities. Mr. Brown asked residents to trust them to work on the issue and find answers.

The NSCUDD Board Chair Dominic Berardi said he would work with the District Leadership and Jacobs to look at the policies regarding billing, how discrepancies are handled and customer service issues. ●



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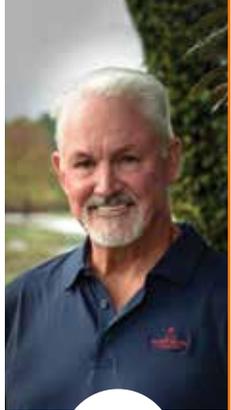
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Water Oak has over 1,300 occupied sites at present, and we are expanding! Our homes are gorgeous and stand toe to toe with any stick-built home. With prestigious manufacturers such as Skyline and Palm Harbor, they are built like a stick-built home but in a factory, not on site. That is a huge cost savings to the consumer. In addition, as a land leased community, you pay a monthly lot rent but will never get a tax assessment, pay HOA fees or bonds. I know what you are going to ask next, but what about appreciation? The homes in Water Oak follow all the real estate trends.

Our lot rent includes but is not limited to the following: private streets (maintained by Water Oak), 24/7 manned gate, lawn mowing, 2 clubhouses, sports complex, a full-service restaurant/bar (open to the public), 2 pools with a 3rd planned, and too many activities to mention in this article.

Our newly renovated, 18-hole Championship Golf Course which is open to the public, has available and affordable tee times! Resident discounted memberships apply.

Don't forget to unwind after a round of golf at the 19th Hole, our full-service bistro restaurant/bar.

Water Oak has so much to offer its residents right here in the community, they rarely leave! Whether you are an active or not-so active senior, we have a plethora of activities to meet all needs. Don't forget, the shopping and activities in the Village Squares are open to the public. One can still enjoy those amenities yet live out of the congested hustle-bustle of The Villages.

Many of our residents have moved out of The Villages and into Water Oak for a smaller, closer-knit community where everybody knows your name. So, although smiling may cause wrinkles, here at Water Oak, there is MUCH to smile about. Dip into one of our two crystal clear heated pools. Take your furry friends to our existing dog park with a second one planned. Need a more active lifestyle? How about a game of pickle ball, tennis, bocce ball, soft ball, horseshoes, kayak, fishing, golf, or sand volleyball to name a few.

We invite you to visit Water Oak Country Club Estates and see for yourself. It's truly a stunning community which likens to a beautiful oasis hidden just off the beaten path.

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In The Villages, there are at least 4 classes each month. The classes are either two days, 9 AM to Noon or one day\* 9 AM - 4 PM. Fee is \$20 for AARP members, \$25 for non-members. Select your class and call the instructor to register. Instructor will give instructions and time to arrive to complete registration.

April 2023 Schedule						
Instructor	Phone #	Day	Date	Day	Date	Location
Don Walker	352-430-0610	Tuesday	4/11/23	Friday	4/14/23	Laurel Manor
Jack Haughn	352-603-1420	Saturday	4/15/23	Saturday	4/22/23	Paradise
Jack Haughn	352-603-1420	Friday	4/21/23	9 am – 4 pm	One Day	Buffalo Crossing
Art Donnelly	631-792-2203	Tuesday	4/25/23	Wednesday	4/26/23	Rohan

**AARP now offers a Free 60–90-minute Smart Driver Technology workshop for those thinking of either leasing, purchasing or just upgrading to a newer vehicle.**

Local presenters would be available to attend organized social / club meetings to share this information. Please contact (352) 430-1833 to arrange a presentation for your Club.

**A free workshop** will be presented at the Sumter County Service Center, 7375 Powell Road on Wednesday at March 29, 2023 at 1:30 – 3:00 PM. Please register at [AARP.org/sdtekinperson](http://AARP.org/sdtekinperson).

## Audio for District Meetings Now Available Online



In what the POA hopes is the first step toward live streaming District Board and Committee meetings, District Government now has audio recordings available on its website. Previously, it was only available at the District office on a CD for \$1.

Now, just go to [DistrictGov.org](http://DistrictGov.org) and click on the desired CDD or Committee and find the date of the meeting under Agendas and Minutes. Scroll down to the meeting schedule where you will find only upcoming meetings. To the right above that is a Filters button. Click that and put in the date of the meeting you are seeking. When that date comes up click on the video icon and it will give you the audio. There is an index to the right from which you can click on the topic of interest.

Agendas for upcoming meetings are posted approximately one week in advance of the meeting. You can also sign up for meeting notifications on the website on the home page.

It is a little clumsy, but a start... ●



**MEDICARE**

## Exciting News! Florida Blue Medicare is hosting events in The Villages® Community

This month we will be offering Medicare classes, plus many other FUN activities!



**Check out what’s planned for April 2023:**

### Wildwood — Florida Blue Medicare

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**PLEASE RSVP:** Monday - Friday 9am - 5 pm

<p>Medicare Education Event April 3, 7 10 AM &amp; 2 PM Get your questions answered by one of our Medicare experts</p>	<p>Medicare Education Event April 6, 12, 21, 28 10 AM Get your questions answered by one of our Medicare experts</p>	<p>New Mover Medicare Education Event April 4, 11, 20, 27 2 PM If you are new to the area, let one of our Medicare experts assist you</p>
<p>Turning 65 Medicare Education Event April 5 10 AM &amp; 2 PM Get your questions answered by one of our Medicare experts</p>	<p>Assisted Living: Everything You Need to Know April 6 2 PM Janice Martin- Author of <i>The Complete Guide to Assisted Living</i></p>	<p>Bingo April 10, 24 10 AM &amp; 2 PM Come learn about Medicare while having fun and win prizes!</p>
<p>New Caregiver Support Group April 11 10:30 AM Jackie Kuhn-Damron Group is open to anyone dealing with all forms of dementia</p>	<p>All Occasion Card Making Class April 12 2 PM Paula Luvs to Stamp <b>Must RSVP by April 10</b> Space is limited</p>	<p>Senior Technology Class April 4, 13, 25 10 AM Bring your Apple or Android device to this 90 minute session</p>
<p>TDJ Travel Presentation April 13 2PM Tony DeNicola will provide information on travel destinations. Don't miss this!</p>	<p>Dancing for Health April 14 10-11 AM &amp; 1-2 PM David Wade Studio of Social &amp; Stage Art</p>	<p>Flawless Face for Mature Skin April 14 3 PM learn how to help your skin age gracefully</p>
<p>Understanding Alzheimer's &amp; Dementia April 20 10 AM Sheri Humayun, Alzheimer's Community Educator for Alzheimer's Association</p>	<p>Flawless Face for Mature Skin April 21 2 PM learn how to help your skin age gracefully</p>	<p>Hurricane Preparedness April 26 10 AM Presented by Sumter County Emergency Management</p>
<p>Sit Less, Move More April 26 2PM Edward Yuiska - Improve your balance - Sneakers, elastic band &amp; tennis ball recommended for class</p>	<p>Cooking Class April 27 10 AM - Noon Healthy Eating Made Simple &amp; Easy</p>	<p>Making Parkinson's Patients Safe During Hospital Visits April 28 2 PM Gary Canner - Parkinson's Foundation Ambassador</p>

A licensed agent will be present at each event if you have any Medicare questions or are interested in our Florida Blue Medicare Advantage Plans.



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To be able to enroll or switch to a Florida Blue Medicare Plan outside of the Annual Election Period (AEP), you must be eligible for a Special Election Period (SEP) or Initial Enrollment Period (IEP). Not sure if you qualify – ask one of our agents at the event. For accommodations of persons with special needs at meetings call 1-352-353-3399 (TTY users should call 1-800-955-8770.) Florida Blue is a PPO plan with a Medicare contract. Florida Blue Medicare is an HMO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Florida Blue or Florida Blue Medicare depends on contract renewal. Health coverage is offered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc., DBA Florida Blue. HMO coverage is offered by Florida Blue Medicare, Inc., DBA Florida Blue Medicare. These companies are affiliates of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc., and Independent Licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. We comply with applicable Federal civil rights laws and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. For more information visit [floridablue.com/ndnotice](http://floridablue.com/ndnotice). ©2022 Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc., DBA Florida Blue. All rights reserved.

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# SHINE Offers Medicare Help

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**Chula Vista Recreation Center** | 3 pm — 5:30 pm | 1st & 3rd Fridays

**Lake Miona Recreation Center** | 9 am — 11:30 am | 2nd & 4th Tuesdays

**Lady Lake Library** | 2:00 pm — 3:30 pm | 2nd & 4th Wednesdays

.....  
“Understanding Medicare,” a group presentation geared toward those turning 65, will be made at 1:00 on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Aviary Recreation Center.

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Use the membership form on page 3 to sign up or come to a membership meeting, held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 7 pm at Laurel Manor Recreation Center.

Check out our full list of Discount Partners available to every member for more savings! ●

NOT TO BE USED WITH ANY OTHER DISCOUNTS / EXPIRES FEBRUARY 28, 2024  
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www.poa4us.org  
Paid Member 2023

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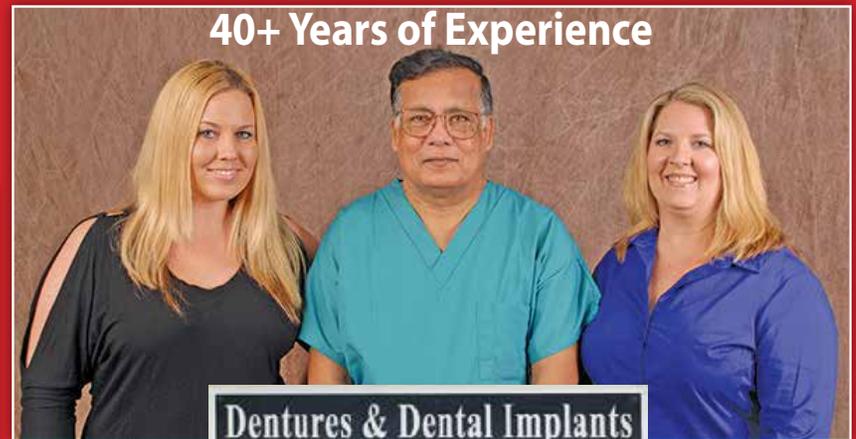


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# The American Community Survey – were you selected?

## SENIORS VS CRIME

Our friends from the Federal Trade Commission are encouraging Americans to cooperate and participate with the survey, despite the fact that it may appear “scammy” to you.

If you get a call, letter, or visit about the American Community Survey (ACS) – when so many scammers are trying to trick you into sharing your personal information – it might make you think twice. But the ACS is a legitimate survey to collect information used to make decisions about how federal funding is spent in your community.

Annually, the U.S. Census Bureau, which is part of the Department of Commerce, randomly selects 3.5 million households around the country to participate in the ACS. Many federal, state, tribal and local leaders use the answers to update their statistics.

**If you get a survey and want to verify that it is legitimate, call your Census Bureau regional office – located in Atlanta. The number there is 1-800-424-6974. Here’s what else to expect:**

If you still have any doubts, please feel free to contact any of our Seniors vs. Crime Offices and we will assist you.

**Seniors vs. Crime can be reached at:**

Marion County Sheriff’s Office in The Villages  
**(352) 753-7775**

Sumter County Sheriff’s Office in The Villages  
**(352) 689-4600, Ext. 4606**

Wildwood Police Annex in Brownwood  
**(352) 753-0727**

Fruitland Park Police Annex in the  
Moyer Recreation Center **(352) 674-1882** ●

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
You will get a letter first. The Census Bureau first sends a letter saying your address was selected for the ACS. It’s to tell you how to complete the survey online.	Reminders will follow. If you don’t complete the survey online, a paper questionnaire will follow in about three weeks. Or, you’ll get an email reminder if you gave an email address.	Survey participants may get a call. If you did the survey online or on paper, and if the Census Bureau needs to clarify information, they might call. But no one will ever ask for your bank or credit card information – <b>THAT IS A SCAM!</b>	In-person interviewers <b>MUST</b> show ID. A Census Bureau representative may visit you at home after normal business hours when it’s more likely you’ll be home, to complete the process in person. Interviewers <b>MUST</b> show a photo ID with the U.S. Department of Commerce seal and an expiration date.

Is participation mandatory? It would appear so. A class action lawsuit filed against the Census Bureau by activists in California and Washington state was dismissed in January of 2023 after a summary judgment was handed down in favor of the Census Bureau, effectively ending the litigation. Plaintiffs contended that the criminal penalties of a fine of \$5,000 for each question not answered were excessive.

However, no one has ever been charged for refusing to participate with the ACS.



### **STOP/START DELIVERY – SIMPLE PROCESS!**

Go to **POA4US.org**. If you are a POA member, sign into your account to change your Bulletin Delivery preference. If you are not a member, create a Guest Account by selecting POA Bulletin Delivery.

# DISCOUNT PARTNERS

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](http://poa4us.org). Click 'Discounts' on the left menu. ●

The Property Owners' Association  
8736 SE 165th Mulberry Lane,  
PMB 111, The Villages, 32162

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No small children please.

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# A Guardian on the Beach

A recent trip has been painted into my memory by Mother Nature’s hand as the sun began its journey, peeking above the ocean. A little bird decided to join us on an early morning stroll. Having flared for a landing ten feet ahead, its legs now delivered a fast cadence to maintain distance. When we would slow, the bird stopped... and waited. Walking faster caused our new friend to scamper, so that a reasonable space was assured. As waves rhythmically came and receded from the shoreline, food was left for our feathered companion whose footprints were temporarily captured in wet sand.

Time passed and we decided to turn back. The little avian stopped ... and stared. Looking over our shoulder, we found the “guardian” trailing us like a caboose again quickly paced at the same comfortable interval.

Although a simple event, the warmth of sharing a moment with another creature gave our walk meaning.

When we interact with each other in a positive way, our physical health is boosted. That is why our medical practice has such an excellent reputation: little things rendered for each other, like one’s guardian, make all the difference during critical moments.

Walk with us...on the beach of life.

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