

Property Owners'

CHAMPIONS OF RESIDENTS' RIGHTS SINCE 1975

BULLETIN

Association of The Villages



Vol. II No. I

JULY 1998

THOUGHTS OF THE PRESIDENT

In a previous message, I explained that my style of running the POA meetings was different than that of previous Presidents. I explained that my purpose was to try to get the members excited and make comments and suggestions. Well, I got the message - our meetings will be run according to 'Roberts Rule'. But, I did not get many suggestions - I am still wide open for suggestions on speakers, items to investigate, subjects to discuss, etc.

I have heard rumbles that the POA is less concerned about Lake County than they are Sumter. Which, of course, is not true. As the result of the efforts of our 1996/1997 president, the late Dorothy Hokr, and the POA, Lake County is running fairly smoothly. But, Sumter County residents continue to have numerous problems.

Dorothy and the POA settled two main issues of discontent for Lake County: 1) For many residents in Lake Units 1 through 8 the date of their maintenance fee was advanced with complete disregard for their deed restrictions. The POA fought long and hard for these residents. Only after we retained an attorney did they back down and made refunds to the residents. 2) Plans to move and build a postal facility on a water retention pond in a residential area between Matthew's and Dustin streets were thwarted mainly because of the efforts of the POA. 3) In addition to the above two items, Dorothy spent countless hours on the phone assisting residents with all types of problems.

However, we may not be aware of specific Lake problems. Please notify the POA of such, and we will do our best to help resolve the problem.

At this time, I regret to announce that our "Ms Take" who has been producing our "Bulletin" since the days of the "Green Book" has resigned because of health reasons. Ms Take is Jean Tuttle, who for the past 11 years has been an active and productive member of

the POA and, health permitting, intends to continue being such a member. Jean has produced the Bulletin almost single-handedly and we will miss her. Thanks Jean for the countless hours you have spent on the Bulletin.

--Joe Gottfried



IT'S BEAUTIFUL PLACE TO LIVE

The Villages is a beautiful place to live. The general overall appearance is extremely attractive - perhaps the most attractive in Florida. We have numerous activities in which to participate and the residents, from all parts of the U.S., are friendly and full of spirit. Yes, the Villages could be the ideal dream of a place to live, but we have to settle for half a dream.

Half a dream - why? Because, the Developer has ignored many parts of his agreement with us and is ripping us off.

There are five CDD's (Community Development Districts) in the Villages. Three are run by the book, Florida Statue #190, and the fourth one is a little gray around the edges. The fifth one is "tough to understand". People are being ripped off - yet they keep asking for more - rip me off - rip me off. I love it.

The rip-off started by buying the recreation department and selling it back to themselves for 24 million dollars. OK, so what! A few months later, sold themselves a swimming pool and an executive golf course (De La Vista) for 11 million dollars more. OK, so what! Then, they hired a company (Fishkind and Associates) to provide a report on additional new facilities to be purchased. These facilities include: 1) El Diablo executive golf course, 2) Alhambra postal facility, 3) Santo Domingo postal facility, 4) Tierra Del Sol recreation center, 5) El Camino RV parking facility, and 6) two water retention lakes.

The Sumter County Tax Office placed a price tag of seven and a half million dollars for the above six items. However, the CDD paid 33 million dollars for the package. (Rip me off...rip me off...I love it.)

This acquisition, in addition to the purchase in 1996, brings the grand total to 67 million dollars. For which we, the residents, are indebted for. To top it all off, one-half of the above six pieces of land is beneficial to the Developer.

Items #2 and #3 are postal facilities. If owned by the Developer, these properties would be taxable and would have to be maintained by the Developer. However, as CDD properties, they are tax free and must be maintained by the CDD.

Regarding Item #6, this item only contains water so why pay taxes when you can sell it to the CDD and be tax free?

Of course, all of this is OK, its a beautiful place to live!

NOW THE HARD PART...YOU, the resident must pay this 67 million dollars back Your \$99.00 monthly maintenance fee brings in roughly 11 million dollars a year. Fishkind and Associates reports that only five and a half million is required for maintenance. So, the other five and a half million is used to pay the 67 million dollar bond issue for 24 years (provided they don't decide to buy additional facilities for X million dollars more in the interim).

But, that's OK, its a beautiful place to live!

Only in America can this be done. Right?



Famous Quote of Frank Topping
"IT'S A BEAUTIFUL PLACE TO LIVE"



CDD MEETING REPORTS

VCCDD - Villages Community Center District Development (Central Governing CDD)

A few months ago, I was told that the extra money generated by the increase in fees on your water bill, "the Premium rate" for using OVER the 12,000 gallons of water in Lake and Sumter CDD#1 and the 10,000 gallon allocation for Sumter CDD#2 would be used only for the education of the residents to conserve water. It would not be used for every day operation.

So at the last VCDD meeting, I asked the following questions:

How much money was in this special account? Their answer, "Did not know at the time but would find out".

What is the money is being used for? Answer: "New rules, could be used for improvements or education

Are the books open to residents inquiring about their personal billing and others? Answer: Yes

I stated that I had received information that a Village resident was bragging that he had been given a special rate for his swimming pool. Answer: No way

The next order of business was the working up of the new budget for 1998 and 1999.

I asked the Board to open their minds and rethink the issue of the Executive Golf cart fee and take it out of the budget. This item was originally put into place in 1990 because of "so-called" shortage of funds. However, currently the VCCDD is taking in 11 million dollars a year in maintenance fees and according to their own consultant, Fishkind and Associates, only 5 1/2 million dollars is required to maintain the recreational facilities. I feel, that the executive golf cart fee should be removed from the budget and residents allowed to play golf free for life, as their advertisement states.

CDD#1 - SUMTER COUNTY

1) Passed the new operating procedures for running the meetings. (see details of this new procedure in the following article.)

2) Discussion on the 'stop sign' on Morse Blvd and San Marino Drive. No action taken.

3) Discussion on the turf condition on Morse Blvd. Passed a motion to approve \$150,000 for repairs. ◇◇◇◇◇

NEW SET OF RULES GOVERNING CCD#1 MEETINGS

Stand up and be heard! New set of rules for running CDD#1 meetings. Forget Roberts Rules of Order, this is Florida and they do what they want to.

Roberts Rules of Order are as follows:

- 1) Have the item that is to be discussed on the agenda.
- 2) Discuss said item
- 3) Have a motion made and seconded.
- 4) Open the floor to discussion/close forum to public.
- 5) Board discussion
- 6) Vote is taken.

The Board of Supervisors of CDD#1 will eliminate item 4) and will not have "OPEN TO THE PUBLIC COMMENTS" as part of the voting process.

This what the new rules actually mean:

We, the Board will talk about a subject, vote on that subject, WITHOUT comments from the audience. Your attendance at these meetings is for your information ONLY. Your voice WILL NOT BE HEARD. If you do not like what we vote upon, exercise your American duty, VOTE us out of office at election time. Just because every other board or club or organization follows Roberts Rules of Order, we do not have to do so.

So, in the month of June, the chairman of the Board, Paul McDowell will come to the meeting with an "iron hand". The Board does not need or want your voice. They know what is best for you and freely spend your money for you and not necessarily in your best interests.

NOW, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THESE RULES??



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NO EXTRA MONEY!!!

VCCDD (Central District) Board Member, Ron Hess says there is no surplus in the budget - Pete Wahl, Manager of the District says executive trail fees are one of the excellent means of revenue.

Let's look at this another way. The \$99/month maintenance fee this year will total 12 million dollars. The budget for operation of the VCCDD is 5-1/2 million dollars. Doesn't this leave 6-1/2 million dollars that the Board has to spend. Isn't this called a SURPLUS?

Don't cry POOR!!! You have no extra money!!! Where does the 6-1/2 million dollars go??



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SOMEONE IS LISTENING

Thank you, Benny Strickland, Sumter County Commissioner for meeting with approximately 30 Village residents and explaining the Golf Course situation to us. We requested that the Developer build at least 4 executive golf courses in CDD#3 and asked the Commissioners to withhold permission for CDD#3 until the Developer agreed. Mr. Strickland explained that in an agreement made in 1992 between the county and the developer, for the first 12,000 houses built in Sumter County, the number of golf course built is at the discretion of the Developer. Therefore, the Sumter County Commissioners could not help us. THE AGREEMENT IS WRITTEN IN STONE.

Currently, CDD#1 has 3,500 houses, CDD#2 has 3,000 houses, CDD#3 has 2,800 houses, and, CDD#4 (next year) ?, and CDD#5 has ? houses. So, it will be a good 5 or 6 years before we can request the Commissioners' help in obtaining more golf courses.



SURVEY

In an attempt to get the pulse and attitude of the Village residents, we are asking you to complete the following Survey. Names do not have to be signed. When completed the survey may be mailed to POA, P.O. Box 1657, Lady Lake, FL, 32159, or dropped off in the POA Box at Paradise Center.

- 1) Are you concerned and care about what the Developer and CDDs do?
Yes _____ No _____
- 2) Do you think the Recreation Dept. is worth 67 million dollars?
Yes _____ No _____
- 3) Do you think you were ripped off on the last VCCDD purchase of the El Diablo golf course - 2 postal stations - RV parking lot - 2 lakes - with a combined total value of 7-1-1/2 million dollars but the Developer was paid 33 million for them?
Yes _____ No _____
- 4) Would you like more Executive Golf Courses, tennis courts, swimming pools, more rec facilities, meeting rooms, etc.?
Yes _____ No _____
- 5) Are you a registered voter?
Lake Co. _____ Sumter Co. _____
- 6) Do you understand what a CDD (Community Development District) does?
Yes _____ No _____
- 7) Do you understand the differences between the five CDDs?
Yes _____ No _____
- 8) Do you like what the Developer is doing - building a lot of houses but no new recreation facilities?
Yes _____ No _____
- 9) Are you a POA member?
Yes _____ No _____
- 10) Do you like the POA Bulletin's articles regarding the CDDs?
Yes _____ No _____
- 11) Would you support legal action?
Yes _____ No _____
- 12) Would you be willing to picket?
Yes _____ No _____
- 13) Please sign below if you would like to help the POA

Name _____
Address _____
Tel Nbr _____

**PROMISE THEM EVERYTHING
GIVE THEM NOTHING**

Back in 1995 I was confused regarding the umbrella clause in the settlement agreed to by the Villages and the POA about "free" golf. I wrote to Mark Morse for clarification. Below is Mr. Morse's reply.

May 15, 1995
Win and Jan Shook
1808 Doral Circle
Lady Lake, FL 32159



Dear Win and Jan,
Thank you for your follow-up letter of May 7th. I apologize for my delayed response as I have been out of town until today. I was obviously confused as to your question in your previous letter, I hope I can help clear this up.

I will not be able to grant free golf cart use on the pay-to-play (Championship) courses. Throughout time this has not been our intention. There will be a fee for the use of carts on Championship Courses. Either a time by time fee or an annual fee to purchase these privileges.

The use of your cart on the Executive Courses will be free as long as you own your home. I might point out that this privilege expands every time a new Executive Course is added.

I hope this helps clear-up the confusion. Should you have any further questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
Mark G. Morse
Director of Operations

Please note the highlighted paragraph. This is completely untrue. I can only play the Executive Courses on the original side FREE. I must pay the same cart fee as everyone else to play all the Executive Golf Courses. Another promise they didn't keep.

-Win Shook

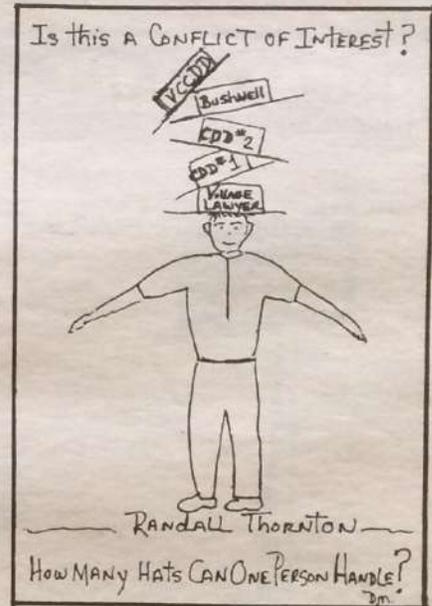
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SEATS FOR TOTS

Tom Swain, Sumter Co. Tax Collector, has discovered that many impoverished families in the area are unable to purchase good safe car seats for their small children. He is collecting funds to help these folks and is asking people who drop into the county annex building to leave a couple of dollars for this purpose. Perhaps your donation will save the life of a beautiful child.



WHERE IS YOUR ALLEGIANCE?

Randall Thornton, attorney for the CDDs and the Sumter County Commissioners, requested the CDD Boards approval that he and his firm continue to represent Sumter County CDD Boards.

He stated that in his opinion, there is no conflict of interest regardless of the fact that he represents the Villages' VCCDD, CDD#1, CDD#2 in addition to the Sumter County Commissioners. He asked the Boards for comments - NO COMMENTS WERE MADE. THEREFORE, RANDALL THORNTON WILL CONTINUE TO REPRESENT THE SUMTER COUNTY CDD BOARDS.

- Joe Gottfried

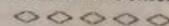


BIG PRIZE WINNER

At the June 17th POA membership meeting, we had a BIG jackpot winner of the door prize drawing. The first 5 names drawn (Don Bobb, Eleanor Sparks, John O'Neil, Mary Russek, Joe Hoffman) were not present. The 6th drawing was Justin & Pat Witham and they won the jackpot - \$50 cash, gift certificates, afghan, etc.

POA has additional prizes worth \$\$\$\$ donated by area businesses. Until we have exhausted our supply, at each meeting we will have several door prizes. Names will be drawn from our 1998 roster of paid members. You only have to be present to win.

See you at the meeting, July 15, 7:00 PM at the Paradise Recreation Center.



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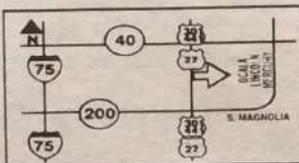
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P.O.A. MEMBERSHIP FORM
Completion of this form constitutes acknowledgement of the P.O.A. as your representative.

NAME(S) _____

STREET _____

VILLAGE or VILLA _____

COUNTY _____ PHONE _____
NEW _____ DATE _____

- POA OFFICERS/DIRECTORS**
- Joe Gottfried - Pres 750-5469
 - "Win" Shook - V.P. 753-2928
 - Carol Kope- Sec 750-0394
 - Alta Gray- Treas 750-0620
 - Russell Day 750-3108
 - Joyce Gottfried - 750-1141
 - Don Lathom 753-5429
 - Paul Luge 750-4419
 - Dick Moulton 753-2591
 - Sadie Woollard 753-0615
 - Ralph Yohn 750-1413

BUSHNELL IS FAR WAY 

The people in Bushnell say,
"The Villages are good for Sumter County:
1) They pay top dollar for their homes which means more money in county taxes.
2) They have no children, so there is no drain on our school system.
3) They take care of their own street problems.
4) They have their own recreation areas. The county gives them practically nothing and the county receives all that nice tax money.
So why should we fight for the residents? Let's go with the Developer. He is the one building the houses! Let's give the Developer whatever he wants!"

However, Bushnell, remember that election day is coming. When it is time, the residents will remember. The Sumter County voters will remember!!



CDD MEETINGS

By law, all Community Development District Meetings are open to the public.

Lake and Sumter County residents are urged to attend the VCCDD (Central District CDD - which administers how all maintenance fees are spent). Sumter County residents should attend meetings of the district in which they live. All CDDs make decisions which affect residents. Meeting schedule is as follows:

- VCCDD** (Village Center CDD) - 9:00 AM last Friday of month - in office of the Admin. P.Wahl - 2nd floor above Citizens' Trust Bank
- CDD#1** (Sumter Co.) - 10:00 AM - last Friday of month - Sumter County Annex Building on CR#466
- CDD#2** (Sumter Co.) - 9:00 AM - last Friday of month - Sumter County Annex Building on CR#466
- CDD#3** (Sumter Co.) - no residents - no scheduled meetings at present

P.O.A. MEETINGS
Board of Directors- 7:00 PM - 1st Tuesday
Charlie Chapman Rm - Rec Center
(all POA members welcomed)
General Meeting- 7:00 PM - 3rd Wednesday
Paradise Recreation Center
Refreshments Served
(ALL RESIDENTS WELCOMED)