

Property Owners'

Association of The Villages

CHAMPIONS OF RESIDENTS' RIGHTS SINCE 1975

BULLETIN



Vol. II No. IV

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October 1999

PRESIDENTS THOUGHTS

Well, on September 24th, the VCCDD raised the maintenance/amenity fee to \$104 a month. New home owners will not pay the \$104/mo fee until their home is three years old.

Do you know where the money is going? If you live in Sumter County CDD#2 or CDD#3, you are being penalized because you live under the "Little Sumter Water and Sewer Company" which is not part of the VCCDD.

The water and sewer facilities that are under the VCCDD are the homes in Lake County and Sumter County CDD#1. Half of the maintenance/amenity fee increase is going to the VCCDD water and sewer department and the other half is going to the Recreation Department. New home owners in CDD#2 and #3 and all other new home owners are subsidizing the VCCDD Water/Sewer Dept. You will all be paying \$2.50 of the fee increase to the VCCDD water/sewer dept. and you are not involved with this department at all.

Because no one attends the meetings, no one knows what is going on until their rulings actually take place.

What can we do? The most important thing we can do is to attend the VCCDD meetings and find out what the Board is planning and object if you disagree.

- Joe Gottfried

WARD 3 DON'T FORGET TO VOTE TUESDAY NOVEMBER 2

REMEMBER THIS IS A PRIVILEGE
THAT MANY PEOPLES OF THE WORLD
DO NOT HAVE
THIS IS THE BEST WAY WE HAVE
OF MAKING OUR VOICES HEARD
GET OUT AND VOTE

Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Others stay a while, leave footprints on our hearts and we are never quite the same.

- Anonymous



INCREASED "MAINTENANCE FEE"

Our current "maintenance" fee is \$99/mo. It is going up to \$104/mo. Sumter County residents pay an additional \$225 yearly maintenance fee. Pete Wahl says that the fee has not been increased since 1992. This is commendable. According to their own auditors, to maintain the recreational facilities and common grounds, a \$67/mo fee would be sufficient.

Pete Wahl explains that the increase is needed because the cost of everything from labor to materials has gone up. This sounds very logical, doesn't it? But, it is not logical! Pete does not mention the fact the a major portion of our fee is used to pay the huge bond debt that the VCCDD has incurred (over \$200 million - not including interest) at this point. And who has benefitted the most from these transactions?

Our maintenance fee, contractually, can not be used for anything other than maintaining the recreational facilities and common grounds. Now "maintenance" in any dictionary from Webster to legal means "keeping the place up". The last time we legally tried to straighten this out, the judge dismissed the case.

Residents, these are some of the conditions that the POA continually tries to correct. Our petition addresses many of these issues. If you have not signed it, and agree with us, please sign the petition and return to the POA. We need everyone's help to correct a lot of wrongs in the Villages. -Carol Kope



GOD WAS GOOD TO US

Yes, he certainly was. He spared us from the hurricane "Floyd". He saved us from "Harvey" (we have many areas in the Villages that flood during a regular heavy rain). Thank you, God.

I never watch VNN, but sometime Tuesday afternoon I turned it on to see what the Villages was saying about "Floyd". All the major channels were giving updates and issuing warnings. VNN was promoting the Villages - telling how wonderful the Villages is. They had great coverage of the political bash for George W. (news four days old). Not a single mention of "Floyd". During the hour, they ran a message on the bottom of the screen to the effect that all Villages activities were canceled. At the end of the hour - a full screen telling of the closing of Village facilities. (I didn't bother to check VNN about Harvey - I assume coverage was the same as for Floyd.)

On Wednesday morning I tuned in to VNN again. Pete Wahl was being interviewed about "Floyd". This segment was repeated over, over, and over again - for how long I don't know. He indicated that he was very pleased regarding the safety procedures for the Villages. The Security guards were out roving the area - he implemented part of his roving medical plan and they assisted a few people - a couple of people were transported to the school shelter, etc.

Why didn't VNN devote at least 5 minutes to the hurricane. We have thousands of elderly residents who live in older mobile and manufactured homes. Why didn't they announce that the new school in Lady Lake would be a shelter? Why didn't they provide telephone numbers for them to call for help or merely for assurance? Can you imagine how helpless an elderly, physically weak and handicapped Senior (possibly living alone) felt with "Floyd" bearing down on him?

Do you think that the Villages has very much concern for the residents?

- Carol Kope

POA ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Election of Officers for the year 2000 will be held at our November meeting. Only current paid members will be allowed to vote. If you haven't paid your 1999 dues, please do so, now, so you can vote for new officers in November.

OPINIONS EVERYONE HAS ONE

It seems that every time I bump into someone who is not a member of the POA, or is an employee of the Villages, they all have the same story. The POA paper is negative.

Well, I can honestly say that other than the funnies in any newspaper, they are all negative. A newspaper or newsletter are just what they are named. NEWS, I am sorry that 90% of the news is always bad, but isn't that life. It would be a wonderful world if when you woke up in morning, opened your paper and it was blank other than the advertizing and the funnies. No Crime, No Accidents, No deaths, No VCCDD, Wow! We could turn our paper into a large greeting card.

Without *negative* news how would we know when someone is taking advantage of us? How would we find out that Amenity fees are being raised? Or taxes being raised?

Even good news is found to be negative. It all depends on how you handle it.

Have a happy day better yet have a happy life.

-- Charlotte Poss --



Believe It Or Not

By Tom Poss

By now everyone must be aware of new regulations that came down from Pete's Place of the 50-mile radius restriction for use of Village Recreational Facilities by guests.

Every opportunity that my wife and I have, we spend swimming at the Paradise Pool, we enjoy seeing the children at play. The **Monitors**, who work at the pools should get hazardous pay for the abuse that they have to take for doing their job. The monitors have informed me that if they do not enforce the rules they will be fired.

Examples of what I have personally seen: A woman and her husband came to the pool with a visitor's pass. She had at least seven children with her. She was attempting to bring guests in on a guest pass. When the Monitor told her she could not do that, all hell broke loose. The verbal abuse that the woman gave to the Monitor was something you would not want your children to hear. A second example: a Monitor corrected two young adults four times within a half an hour. Again there was verbal abuse, and the mother was so mad that I was sure she would strike the Monitor. These are just a few examples. There are many more examples. No one from the Villages staff defends or back-up the Monitors.

If the recreation department does what they did last year, shortly there will be an announcement stating that there will not be Monitors at the pools for the winter months. Everyone knows that this is when anyone can come in anyway - rules or no rules.

I strongly urge that anyone who disagrees with the regulations, please do not take it out on the Monitors. Call the district administrator, Mr. Pete Wahl, office #352-753-4508 or home #352-360-0982.

I would like to hear your views, please write or phone 750-5640.

Believe it or Not by Tom Poss

HARDEE'S

For three weeks Hardee's had been advertising on TV their spicy chicken sandwich and "how good it is". My mouth watered each time I saw the commercial. I've got to try it - and the price is right, 99 cents.

One day I was out with friends and we decided to have lunch. So we stopped at the Villages' Hardee's. I should have known better!

The lady in front of me had some coupons from a Hardee's flyer. The counter girl said, "sorry the coupons are not good at this Hardee's". So, she left, I felt sorry for her. I was next in line. I said, two chicken sandwiches that you advertize on TV. She looked me in the eyes and said, "not in this Hardee's - we are not a participating dealer".

So, I had to go to Leesburg to get my chicken sandwich for 99 cents.

- Joe Gottfried

PROGRESS UPDATE

For the information of the thousands of residents who signed the POA petition to state legislators requesting changes to State Statute #190 (laws governing the creation and running of Community Development Districts), we wish to inform you that the POA is now collating and compiling accompanying documentation to send to Gov. Bush and the state legislators. We are extremely pleased with the number of signatures we obtained. However, if you haven't signed the petition, it's still not too late. Contact any POA officer.

We also want to let you know, that the POA is in contact with several state departments regarding many of the activities of our VCCDD. We definitely believe that we have, at last, captured the interest of certain state officials. We will keep you informed.

PERSISTENCE

Success seems to be largely a matter of hanging on after others have let go.

- William Feather

Does it seem strange to you that the POA is constantly encouraging all residents to attend the CDD meetings of the area they live in, and to definitely attend the VCCDD meetings. Whereas the VHA never does so? But, then the VHA's emphasis is that these quasi-governments know what is best for us. They maintain that we are just children and, therefore, should not question or even criticize the actions of these "mighty" groups.

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SWEET STUFF ??

Many of us Villagers are diabetic to some degree, or avoid the use of sugar for other reasons. Several months ago, my E-mail was flooded with articles about the dangers of using the substance called ASPARTAME as a substitute for sugar.

Aspartame is the sweetener used in 'NutraSweet', 'Equal', and other sugar substitutes.

Other, later, E-mail articles denied the danger, and I gave no more thought to the subject. We have been using 'NutraSweet', but, **no more!**

Today, in my Doctor's office, I was given a copy of a paper which was given at the World Environmental Conference which described the health problems associated with the use of Aspartame. I choose to believe this warning, and will no longer use Aspartame.

I will bring copies of this article to the next P.O.A. meeting for those who wish to investigate further.

Win Shook, V.P.

PRINTING EXPENSES

Did anyone notice on the front page of the VHA "Villages Voice", Sept. issue, on the date line, the statement, "Published monthly to keep our members informed and paid for by membership dues"?

If this newsletter is paid for by membership dues, how come their July 1999 Treasurer's report does not show any printing expenses?

TIERRA DEL SOL POOL

Went for a swim at the Tierra Del Sol swimming pool the other night. Wow, was I surprised at how dirty the place is. Green mold on the pool walls - lounge chairs broken - chair arms filthy (I was scared to touch them) - cement floor surrounding pool black with dirt - filthy pool bottom. When I got home, I called the Health Department to investigate how bad this place is getting (why call Pete Wahl, he doesn't have the money to clean up the area).

- Joe Gottfried

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DAV ANNOUNCEMENT

Tom Ritter, Adjutant, Lady Lake DAV Post #150, has asked us to make the following announcement:

The National Commander of the American Legion, Butch Miller, is asking all Veterans to impress upon their elected representatives in Congress the need for a PRESERVED PROPERLY FUNDED V.A. Contact the following legislatures and let them know that the V.A. needs such a fund to meet the growing health care needs of all the Veterans:

Hon. Clifford B. Stearns
100 S. 11th St. Suite 102
Leesburg, FL 34748

Hon. Bob Graham
U.S. Senate
524 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

HOW TO SPEND OUR MONEY??

The Sumter CDD#1 Board is always so anxious to spend our money. Now they want to construct a circle at Morse Blvd and San Marino Drive. Carl Bell and Frank Topping think this is a terrific idea. Why not? says Pete Wahl. Attorney Randall Thornton says it is OK.

So, they spend, spend - it's only money and tax payers' money. They can't give us back any. They must spend it!

- Joe Gottfried

UP UP AND AWAY

Whether or not you call it amenity fee or maintenance fee, it is going to go up. One of the reasons is that according to the VCCDD budget for year ending Sept. 30, 2000, is the payment of \$4,832,406. on the debt service interest, on total bond indebtedness of over two million dollars. Other reasons are that they foolishly spend money like paying the developer inflated prices for property, \$59,000 to remove and replace a tree in the Town Square, etc.

If you allowed this to happen in your business, your next step would be filing a chapter eleven. You have just had a lesson in business, see what you can do with someone else's money. This is our money, but remember, **WE, who live in the Villages, do not have the right to vote, only the right to pay.**

- Tom Poss

The meetings of all Community Development Districts are, by law, open to the public. Residents are encouraged to attend the meetings of the district in which they live and the Village Community Center Development District. Decisions are made in these meetings which affect residents.



NEXT POA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

WEDNESDAY - OCTOBER 20 -
7:00 PM - Paradise Rec Center

Hurricane "Floyd" caused the cancellation of our September meeting, as well as all of the activities in the Villages. Barring any new natural disaster, our next meeting will be October 20. See you there.

At this meeting, we will present the proposed POA slate of officers for the year 2000 and we will still accept nominations for officers from the floor. Election of POA officers will be held at our November meeting.

TAXES

Residents might as well include the yearly maintenance/amenity fee of \$1,260 into your county tax bill. Sumter residents might also want to add their non-valorem assessments for additional maintenance and payments on bond issues.

There goes the "Life Style Of A Millionaire On A Retirement Budget" (or did you forget that huge billboard ad?)

SCHEDULED CDD MEETINGS

All CDD Meetings are held in the room adjacent to Pete Wahl's office on the 2nd floor of the Citizens First Bank Building

VCCDD - Villages Community Center

Development District - last Friday of the month at 9:00 AM

CDD#1 - Meets on the last Friday of the month at 11:00 AM

CDD#2 - Meets on the first Friday of the month at 9:30 AM

CDD#3 - Meets on the first Friday of the month at 9:00 AM

P.O.A. MEMBERSHIP FORM
 Annual Dues - \$6 per Household
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 VILLAGE or VILLA _____

COUNTY _____ PHONE _____
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 Win Shook Vice-Pres. 753-2928
 Carol Kope Secretary 750-0394
 Joyce Gottfried Treasurer 750-1141

Board Directors:

Dick Moulton 753-2591
 Charlotte Poss 750-5640
 Tom Poss 750-5640
 Frank Renner 750-0306
 Sadie Woollard 753-0615
 Ralph Yohn 750-1413
 Advertising Dept. 750-1141
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POA Editorial Staff

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P.O.A. MEETINGS

Board of Directors - 7:00 PM
 1st Tuesday of the Month
 Charlie Chaplin Rm - Paradise Center
 (all POA members welcomed)

General Meeting - 7:00 PM
 3rd Wednesday of the Month
 Paradise Recreation Center
 Refreshments Served
 (ALL RESIDENTS WELCOMED)

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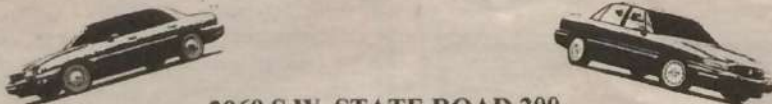
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