

The POA BULLETIN

The Property Owners' Association of The Villages

Issue 34.06

Champion of Residents' Rights Since 1975

June 2008

CLICK ON THE ARTICLE NAME BELOW

[POA Sends Hospital Issues to the Regulatory and Certification Agencies](#)

[Latest Tabulation of Hospital Complaints](#)

[Hospital Problems Four Years Ago](#)

[The Next POA Meeting Is On Tuesday, June 17](#)

[Some Suggestions for Solving the ER Problems](#)

[Recycling: Where Does the Money Go?](#)

[Cheers and Jeers](#)

[Village Greens: Upcoming Tours](#)

[Letter to the Editor: Keep One Sumter](#)

[Should Golf Winnings Be Paid In Cash?](#)

[Ronald Reagan A Father](#)

[Accountability Is A Sweet Thing](#)

[Home Warranty Backpedaling](#)

[Who Is Not Qualified?](#)

[Positive vs. Negative Is in The Eye of the Beholder](#)

[Good Repair Firms For Vinyl Siding](#)

[Letter to the Editor: Shoddy Workmanship](#)

[From the POA Website Forum: OBG Restaurant](#)

[Lightning Tips For Villagers](#)

[Letter to the Editor: Is North Better?](#)

[Letter to the Editor: Quality Issues for Homes in The Villages](#)

[Letter to the Editor: Is There Good to Say?](#)

[Shame on Hess and Home Warranty](#)

[From the POA Website Forum: Oh, Give Me a Home Where the Buffalo Roam](#)

[Letter to the Editor: No Buffalo = Ho Hum](#)

[Letter to the Editor: Don't Need a Tunnel?](#)

[Letter to the Editor: Horse Racing in Sumter County?](#)

[Archived Bulletins](#)

[Return To Main POA Page](#)

POA Sends Hospital Issues to the Regulatory and Certification Agencies

The POA tried to meet with Tim Menton, SVP for Administration of The Villages Regional Hospital (TVRH), and his new boss, Lee Huntley, CEO of the Central Florida Health Alliance, the parent of the Leesburg Regional Medical Center (LRMC) and TVRH.

Both Mr. Menton and Mr. Huntley refused to meet with members of the POA Hospital Committee and rebuffed our attempts to discuss with them the hospital problems and the information we gathered in the past month.

Mr. Menton was especially critical of recent Bulletin articles and the POA and insisted that we request his prior approval for any future hospital articles published in the Bulletin. We tried to explain our obligation of independence to our community to publish important information about issues in The Villages, but Mr. Menton would not listen.

Mr. Menton and Mr. Huntley asked that the POA send its information to them for review. Mr. Menton was vague about how this highly confidential information would be used, if at all. We felt he would merely pigeon-hole the information in his offices and we would end up with the same attitude of complacency that has allowed the festering hospital problems to exist for these many years. Thus, we could not comply with the request to forward the information to them.

We asked to be included as community representatives in the Community Volunteer Advisory Group that was mentioned in Mr. Huntley's column ad that appeared in the Daily Sun three times. We think that an open discussion in the community, of the problems and solutions for the hospital, is a good idea. Mr. Menton specifically refused to allow any POA member in the advisory group. We think this community advisory group may be stacked with hand-picked hospital sympathizers rather than the independent community involvement group that it should be.

Faced with this stonewalling response, we decided to take the matter to the federal and state agencies responsible for certification and regulation of hospitals.

We have presented our findings to The Joint Commission For Hospital Accreditation, the federal regulatory agency in a suburb of Chicago, and The

Florida Agency for Health Care Administration, the Florida regulatory agency located in Tallahassee.

In each case, we presented a summary of our findings and asked that the agency immediately initiate an investigation of TVRH to determine the facts and whether patient care, health, and safety are meeting accepted standards of care.

Our presentation to each agency included summaries that disguised the identity of the patients involved. For a thorough investigation, these agencies may have to verify information provided to the POA by these patients. In that event, the POA will contact the patients involved requesting permission for a confidential follow-up by the agencies.

We stated in previous Bulletins that we wanted to solve these hospital problems within our community. Unfortunately, the negative response of the hospital administration required us to involve the federal and state regulatory agencies. We regret we had to go beyond a community-wide solution, but the actions of TVRH left us no choice.

[Top](#)

Latest Tabulation of Hospital Complaints

In the previous issue of the POA Bulletin, we listed the preliminary results of a tabulation of the many stories we have received via email and regular mail by Villagers with experiences with the emergency room (ER) in TVRH. We had a tabulation of 103 letters in that story.

We continue to receive stories from residents and have received about 130 letters thus far. A total of 125 were tabulated as of press time for this issue. The following is an update of the tabulation to incorporate the latest letters and stories.

Of the 125 stories that addressed some aspect of care in the ER, 110 (88%) were negative about the services received in the ER; 15 (12%) were positive.

Of the 110 negative cases, the medical professionals assisting the POA in this tabulation judged that 31 cases (28%) were serious, meaning that there was a deficiency in the quality of care provided in the ER by TVRH according to accepted medical standards.

Of the 110 negative cases, a total of 73 cases identified the length of time spent waiting for assistance, either initially from a triage nurse or to be seen by a doctor. Of these 73 cases, a total of 53 (73%) identified a wait time of four hours or more to be initially seen.

Of the 110 negative cases, 90 mentioned one or more specific reasons for their negative rating. For these 90 patients, the percentage mentioning the

following as among their complaints were:

- 29% Incorrect or inappropriate care
- 21% Unprofessional/rude staff
- 21% Bad care
- 20% Filed complaint with hospital
- 19% Left without receiving care
- 13% Staff lost records or test results
- 12% Questionable diagnosis
- 11% Never saw a doctor

In addition, we judged that at least four out of the 90 patients may have been injured by care, or lack of care, given by hospital personnel.

After later reviewing their problems with their personal physicians, eleven patients discovered that the ER doctors had mis-diagnosed their problem.

Problems in communicating with the physician, because the physician did not speak understandable English, were reported in five cases.

It should be emphasized that the problems identified go beyond the issues of long wait times. The more serious issues relate to the quality of care that in some cases is below the accepted standards of care that are expected from a certified medical institution.

We should further note that many of these stories submitted to us are anecdotal and often lack essential details. We believe that the regulatory agencies may want to follow up with some of the cases to verify details. We will contact, as needed, each person submitting a story or experience to us to arrange for appropriate confidentiality.

The POA Hospital Committee is comprised of two directors of the POA and three medical professionals with advanced medical degrees and extensive experience.

[Top](#)

Hospital Problems Four Years Ago

The previous issue of the POA Bulletin mentioned a story written years ago that also addressed some of the same hospital problems as we are seeing today. We have now located that story in the February, 2004, issue of the POA Bulletin. This article is available on the POA website (www.poa4us.org) in the Archived Bulletin section. The first few paragraphs of that story are:

"There is something drastically wrong with the Villages Hospital.

There are just too many stories of inattentive staff, long waits, ignored patients, overcrowding, bureaucratic bungling, questionable triage, and

generally unsatisfactory service. Stories about malpractice lawsuits in the near future would not be surprising.

Yes, there are also stories of good service, etc. However, the bad stories seem to overwhelm the good stories.

So, what's wrong? And, why can't the hospital management company brought in to run the operation fix the problems?"

It is sad, but the same story could be written today -- four years later.

What has happened in the intervening four years? Apparently not much to solve the problems because they are still here.

The POA doesn't want to discover four years from now that the same stories could also be written again.

We think that TVRH and LRMC have a moral obligation to do whatever is necessary to solve the current ER operating problems.

If they need more resources, they have to let us know and make the case.

If they need better staff and training, they have to say so.

If they need to reorganize their facilities, they have to spell that out and do it.

If they have to better coordinate with other community healthcare resources, then they have to make that happen.

And, they have to involve the community so that we understand the situation.

And, no more lame excuses, and no more finger-pointing elsewhere, and no more obfuscation, and no more evasive language, and no more smoke screens from TVRH or LRMC management.

We need straight answers and an honest effort from the TVRH and LRMC management to address these problems now. People's lives are hanging in the balance - we cannot accept another four years of complacency, excuses, and poor service.

[Top](#)

The Next POA Meeting Is On Tuesday, June 17

The next POA membership meeting will be on Tuesday, June 17, in the Laurel Manor Recreation Center at 7:00 p.m.

Please note that we are back to the Laurel Manor Recreation Center after one meeting in the Paradise Center. We are back to our regular schedule on the

third Tuesday in Laurel Manor.

John Rohan, Recreation Director and Asst. District Manager of The Villages, will speak on the Recreation Program and Facilities in The Villages.

Please join us for this important meeting and coffee and donuts afterward. And, the discussion and opportunity to meet fellow Villagers add up to a thought-provoking and interesting evening. Non-members of the POA are always welcome.

[Top](#)

Some Suggestions for Solving the ER Problems

In investigating the written complaints about our hospital's emergency room, we've learned a lot about health care delivery systems - what we have and what we should have. Based on the information we have to date, we'd like to propose a few solutions.

1) The Villages clearly needs more and better Urgent Care facilities. We propose that some of these facilities be open and staffed 24 hours a day with information given on how and when to access them.

2) We propose that TVRH Emergency Room staff a minimum of two physicians during the day and three physicians during especially busy days or nights. Emergency room patients are being injured by inadequate staffing - this needs to stop.

3) All health care facilities serving Villages residents should have computer facilities enabling them to "talk" to all other health care facilities. Lab results, diagnostic tests, diagnosis and treatments can be sent to the next health care provider. Much time is now wasted by overworked ER staff having to re-interview patients and re-run tests that already exist with another health care provider.

4) We recommend that The Villages Regional Hospital Emergency Room invest in one of a number of professional discharge planning software packages that are on the market today. Many emergency room patients with pain and trauma are not good at listening to discharge instructions - written instructions would be a good supplement.

[Top](#)

Recycling: Where Does the Money Go?

The current recycling program is up and running throughout The Villages. But, we have never received an accounting of how the money is being used.

For example, at \$1.47 per month, with an estimated 40,000 homes in The Villages participating, the additional revenue for our trash collection service is approximately \$700,000 per year.

Where does this \$700,000 go?

We know that the trash services incur additional expenses for the recycling trucks that go around for an extra day a week to pick up the recycling bags. The cost for these trucks, fuel, and crews appears to be the only extra expense for the trash service.

On the other hand, dumping fees are probably less because we are talking about less household trash tonnage because of the absence of the recyclables. There is probably a savings here because less household garbage needs to be dumped in the landfill.

We are sure that the trash service doesn't have to pay somebody to take the recyclables. So, what other expenses are there?

The question is whether the additional expenses of the recycling truck, fuel, and crew cost the entire \$700,000 in additional annual revenues?

We bet it doesn't. Somebody may be pocketing a few bucks here.

Now, what about revenues?

We can't believe that the trash service doesn't receive some sort of payment for the recyclable materials.

In Lake County, for example, the county is recognizing a substantial income from its recycling program.

The Leesburg Daily Commercial recently published a story entitled: Profiting From Papers: Lake County Learning How To Turn Trash into Treasure with Recycling Program.

The article explains how Lake County took over recycling and forecast revenues from the sale of recyclables to be \$500,000 in the first year and more than \$750,000 starting in the second year. Its first month net income from the operation was \$78,951.

County Commissioner Jennifer Hill said: "We're making money."

Daryl Smith, director of environmental services for Lake County, said the program will save space in the landfill as well as create additional cash flow for businesses which participate in the program.

"We think the revenue will be good," said Smith. **"You save on disposal**

costs and make some money recycling. It's kind of a double whammy."

Even here in The Villages, local churches recognize what they consider substantial revenues from their newspaper recycling bins. And, the Lions program for aluminum cans is active and healthy

So, exactly what is the trash service here in The Villages recognizing from its sale of our recyclables?

We bet the number is substantial. And, the residents should be told who is making what in the program.

Thus, the annual figure of approximately \$700,000 that we pay for the privilege of recycling may or may not be needed.

And, the revenues from our recyclables could be substantial and the money may be making somebody rich.

Why not return the profit to the residents in the form of lower monthly trash bills?

We ask the developer, who developed this trash recycling program, to publish an accounting for the program that will show revenues, expenses, and any related profit, and also identify the recipients of the \$700,000 and any revenues received from the sale of the recyclable materials. This information should cover at least estimated 2008 and forecast 2009.

We also ask the VHA, which has a good talking relationship with the developer, to lend its weight to this request. This is a good community issue that can benefit with support and follow-up by the VHA.

[Top](#)

Cheers and Jeers

Cheers - Thanks to VNN, The Villages TV station, for showing the Mark Morse VHA presentation. That was a valuable public service. In that same spirit, we wish that VNN would broadcast the monthly meetings of the VCCDD and the SLCDD.

Cheers - To all the residents who went to the Mark Morse presentation or took the time to watch it on VNN. That was impressive community involvement. Thanks to the VHA and Mark Morse for the event.

Cheers - To Mark Morse for acknowledging in his VHA presentation that he does read the POA Bulletin. Mark, thanks for telling us that you are a reader. Please let us know if you would like an autographed copy of the Bulletin. We'll even personally deliver it..

Jeers - To the developer for banning the buffalo. Wouldn't you think that a way could be found to provide a better fence in restricted access areas where we could still feed them critters? If not, we suggest replacing the buffalo with goats.

Jeers - To the developer, the VCCDD, and the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD, or Swift-mud) for sticking residents with the much higher "water conservation rate" on our monthly water utility bills. This means that residents are bearing the cost and inconvenience of water restrictions required by the excessive drains on the underground aquifer caused by nonstop residential development in Sumter County by developers.

Jeers - To the VHA for not offering to join the POA to address the hospital issue. Also, Jeers to the VHA president, Roger Kass, for his conflict of interests by working for the developer while also praising him.

Cheers - To the recreation division for its recent Luau Night Thank You event for Villages Volunteers. That was great fun. Thanks also to John Rohan for his impromptu Hula demonstration -- he was a great sport to shake it all around like that.

Cheers - To the five residents who volunteered to serve as the initial appointed supervisors on the newly-formed Amenity Authority Committee (AAC). These supervisors will serve until the elected supervisors come on board after the November elections. Thanks for your dedication and your contribution to our community.

[Top](#)

Village Greens: Upcoming Tours

Waste Management, Inc. has invited The Village Greens to tour their Recycling Facility near Orlando on June 10th. This is the facility where The Villages' recycling trash is processed.

The tour is FREE to the first 40 Villagers who sign-up! Waste Management will provide a bus and a box lunch from Too Jay's. The bus will pickup at Publix on Highway 466 at 11:30a.m on June 10th and will return late in the afternoon.

Those touring should wear closed-toe shoes and will be required to wear goggles and cover-ups (supplied).

This should be a very interesting and educational trip and will clarify for us all just how the recyclable garbage is separated and sent off to different vendors.

If you are interested in coming on this trip, please contact Sue Michalson 259-1426 to see if any spots are still available.

The Village Greens June meeting is an especially exciting one.

One of our board members, Bob Pine, has completely turned his home into a solar energy home.

He has the first fully solar home in The Villages. You are invited to tour his beautiful home on the day of our meeting, June 25th, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Then come to our meeting at Laurel Manor at 6:30 for a presentation by Bob and the company who installed his system.

Bob's address is, 2617 Sag Harbor Way.

For more information contact:
Sue Michalson, 259-1426

[Top](#)

Letter to the Editor: Keep One Sumter

Passing One Sumter was one of the most beneficial voters actions in years. It returned the county to it's original roots wherein all county residents got to vote for all the county commissioners. The result is evident. Commissioner cooperation exists again and each district has its votes magnified five fold for the good of the county as a whole. Taxes have been reduced, self serving projects were reduced, canals dredged, wasteful items eliminated, and everyone benefited.

The county school board has always selected their board and superintendent this way, at large.

All five county commissioners prefer One Sumter at large voting. They ought to know.

The voters preferred at large voting.

Why the fuss?

If it ain't broke don't fix it. Keep One Sumter.

The progress has been significant.

Ronald E Durham

[Top](#)

Should Golf Winnings Be Paid In Cash?

Several letters to the editor have come to us regarding the golf winnings policy. Most of these object to the policy of awarding credit vouchers rather than cash. Most of the letters criticize the policy due to the high cost of merchandise in the country club pro shops.

The POA researched the issue, and learned the following on the USGA internet web site:

In general, the USGA says amateurs should not play for cash prizes of any amount in large, organized events [more than a few foursomes] where playing for the money is not optional, there are no prizes other than cash, or the fact that cash prizes will be awarded is advertised.

In view of the above, the USGA urges groups not to award cash prizes. By awarding merchandise or gift certificates redeemable for merchandise instead of cash, this would ensure that the amateur status of the players in the group would not even be brought into question.

The USGA allows amateurs to accept prize vouchers for other than cash (i.e., merchandise) for no more than \$750 retail. The USGA seems to hold the line that amateurs cannot accept cash prizes of any value.

Any decision on this issue in The Villages will be made by Ken Creeley. If you and many others beat the drums on this issue with him, you might get some accommodation. It is going to take a groundswell of comments from concerned golfers here to make the point and campaign for change.

At the very least, the POA would recommend that credit vouchers be accepted throughout The Villages at businesses owned by the developer, and that discounts be given for the use of the credits at the developer-owned pro shops.

But, there are problems with that credit slip idea also. Merchandise in the golf pro shops is way overpriced. And, golfers in the executive course scrambles often don't play the championship courses.

So, here is a recommended solution to these problems:

- When the credit slips are used to purchase merchandise in the golf pro shops, allow a substantial discount of, say, 20%-25% on the purchase.
- Continue to accept credit slips for championship course green fees, but also on the executive courses for equipment rental (carts, etc), trail fees, and guest greens fees.
- Allow the credit slips to be used at any developer-owned businesses in The Villages.
- Also, some residents may be willing to waive amateur status and accept cash payments, so why not accommodate them?
- As a final point, we ask that the golf division follow up with the USGA and get clarification about the amateur policy and whether the really minor payments of our men's and women's day awards could qualify for an exemption from the

rule about cash awards. The awards are so minor that they should not cause a problem.

[Top](#)

Ronald Reagan A Father

Patti Davis, daughter of former president Ronald Reagan, wrote the following about her father in the July 16, 2003, issue of Newsweek. This has been condensed for space requirements here.

Sometimes I think we need to look no farther than the pattern of footprints stretched out behind us to understand the lives we've lived.

We can follow the first tentative steps of our infancy through the long, defiant strides of adolescence and young adulthood -- the running away years, the years of putting distance between ourselves and our families, of burning up time -- to the more solid footprints, set down as we grow older.

These are the tracks we leave on the earth. If we look closely we can also see our parents' footprints, often close to us, as they guide and lead us, at other times far behind, as they wait for us to turn and remember them.

We slow down, finally, to look longer and more carefully at our parents. My father, who strode confidently onto the stage of history ... was always polite - achingly so - and even in the depths of his illness, still (was)... I didn't stop to linger on the sweetness of that quality, or to learn from it.

There are people who would say that my father's footprints are larger and deeper than those of other parents because his political legacy gives them weight, creating indelible marks in the halls of history.... I see his footprints pressed into the wet sand of the beach as he walked toward the sea to catch steep waves and ride them back to shore. His stride was as smooth and certain as it was when he walked into the White House, and onto the stage of history. I see a small girl on that beach as well, pressing her feet into the shapes that her father's feet have left to see how much bigger his footprints are.

I have gotten lost in those footprints during my life; I have fought hard and bloody battles to pull myself away. These are the tracks I have left on the earth.

But now I look for my father's tracks on every beach, every trail. Because they mark the way home.

Accountability Is A Sweet Thing

A recent Daily Sun article summarized Mark Morse's remarks at the last VHA meeting when he supposedly stated "...accountability is a sweet thing." We agree with Mr. Morse and would add "accountability is the right thing."

Now we ask whether Mr. Morse is being accountable when he:

(1) takes money from residents for vinyl siding homes and delivers to them homes that have loose panels, incorrect overlaps, staples through the vinyl, bellies, warps and waves, etc., all of which affect the value of residents' homes;

(2) states on the one hand that he tries to enhance The Villages lifestyle and property values and tells Villagers to "stay engaged" while on the other hand, he criticizes Villagers who are looking out for each other and says they are "stirring the pot" and that some of them have a personal vendetta against him;

(3) tells an audience that vinyl siding turns brittle after 3 years when, in fact, most manufacturers warrant the vinyl itself well beyond that time frame;

(4) tells an audience that The Villages "build homes that meet or exceed all building codes" when the Florida code requires that vinyl siding be installed "in accordance with manufacturers' installation instructions;" yet, such instructions have not been followed in many cases by The Villages;

(5) brands one of the Vinyl Siding Committee members a "troublemaker" and likens the entire vinyl siding problem to that of the buffalo, for which he claims no responsibility. According to him, the buffalo problem is the result of "critters" that can't be controlled and cause too many claims, and the vinyl siding problem is the result of troublemakers and personal vendettas against him.

(6) Mr. Morse, please, no more excuses or finger-pointing elsewhere. Just do the sweet thing and be accountable, without further delay, to Villagers for their vinyl siding problems. It's the right thing to do.

We thought we were finally starting to get some cooperation with regard to vinyl siding repairs. Our committee members, overwhelmed by the volume of homeowner requests, were starting to advise homeowners to call Home Warranty first, to give them the opportunity to fix the original siding installations. A few of the installation companies were actually doing some nice work.

But now it looks like our budding confidence was undeserved. Instead of making progress, now it seems Home Warranty and the contractors are backpedaling. We have heard they are refusing to do repairs, and telling homeowners they have a letter from a manufacturer authorizing them to do less than the standard nailing patterns previously recommended.

We've heard that they're telling residents their homes will look worse following repairs-anything to convince homeowners NOT to have their houses fixed. And this tactic is very persuasive with elderly homeowners-now they're afraid to have any repairs done!

No wonder residents are overwhelmed and confused. Perhaps Home Warranty doesn't understand that a properly done repair will not look worse, but a shoddy repair probably will. If your house looks worse after repairs are completed, then the repairs haven't been done right! Seems simple enough, doesn't it?

The Vinyl Siding Committee

[Top](#)

Who Is Not Qualified?

Some residents contacting Home Warranty for siding repairs have been told that the POA Siding Committee members who have made observations about siding flaws on Villages homes are "not qualified." Not qualified for what? For seeing the obvious? For seeing what all the architects, engineers, project managers, contractors, siders and inspectors have failed to see, or ignored, if they did see it? Are these Home Warranty personnel the same ones who previously told homeowners that there was nothing wrong, and it's just a "troublemaker" from the POA making these comments?

Siding Installation Manuals are available in English and Spanish. Anyone who can read could easily compare the installation manual to the actual installations done on our homes. In fact, there are so many diagrams in the manual, that you don't even have to be able to read to follow the basic installation techniques.

These remarks by Villages personnel are nothing more than further evasion of responsibility. What a despicable effort to undermine the growing surge of dissatisfaction among homeowners who have paid for something they did not receive.

As we have pointed out many times in these pages, it does not matter who sees or doesn't see a problem-it's still a problem and it still needs to be fixed.

And, as for qualifications, our Vinyl Siding Committee members have combined experience of more than 125 years. In fact, one of our members taught construction for 30 years before retiring to The Villages. We are not claiming to be inspectors. We are retired members of the construction industry. But we certainly can make observations and share our knowledge and experience with our neighbors.

Our observations show many instances of shoddy workmanship and installations done with no regard for the installation manual. If the installers are "qualified," why do they keep making the same "mistakes?" For years and years and years. When the mistakes are pointed out, why do they make excuses and have to do repairs over and over, forcing homeowners to call Home Warranty again and again?

Not only is qualification an issue here, so is integrity!

Certification is a piece of paper that is meaningless unless one applies the rules and instructions. Those installers who are "qualified," yet choose not to follow the installation manual and refuse to make the proper repairs, should have their certification withdrawn. And if certified workers were doing the job correctly in the first place, there would be few flaws that anyone could find, "qualified" or not.

And speaking of credentials, we'd still like to know about those of Home Warranty's Dennis Stradinger and Robert Locke. What exactly are their professionals qualifications and training? What real world experience do they have? If they have been properly trained, how can they possibly not see the installation problems? If they're untrained or inexperienced, why do they hold the positions they're in? Worst of all, suppose they are indeed seeing the problems, yet deny they exist.

Like the "troublemaker" label, using the "unqualified" label reflects badly on those who have the qualifications and are trying to help fellow Villagers. If the siders, project managers, and inspectors had been doing their jobs, we wouldn't be in this mess right now. Don't blame it on a "troublemaker," blame it on yourselves. You should have done the job properly to begin with, instead of foisting shoddy work on unsuspecting homeowners. If it "costs too much to fix," that's still no excuse for a bad fix or for not fixing the workmanship problems at all.

The POA Vinyl Siding Committee

[Top](#)

Positive vs. Negative Is in The Eye of the Beholder

For the numerous residents who have had their siding repaired because of our volunteer's efforts, we're a positive organization. For those who don't need or want repairs, we may seem to be negative, harping on the same issue all this time. But if we saved you a lot of money and our efforts resulted in improvements to your property, we're pretty sure you would consider us to be positive. It's all a matter of your perspective.

When the POA sees a problem in the community, and we speak out about it in an effort to make improvements, that's POSITIVE. Whether it's the siding or the hospital, we want change for the better, to enhance our lifestyle and protect our property value, just like the VHA. We don't need to sugar-coat issues to feel positive—we try to address the issues so corrections and changes can be made.

Some people may feel that discussing problems is negative. We don't. We think confronting problems and working toward solutions is POSITIVE, and beneficial for all residents, whether you feel like it concerns your immediate lifestyle or not.

Take, for example, our Siding Committee volunteers. Retirees, like most of you, who came here to enjoy our "golden years." Instead, we are spending our time helping our neighbors. This is what community spirit is all about and our members are proud to contribute their knowledge and experience for a better community.

In his recent VHA address, Mark Morse mentioned The Villages old "tried and true" siding installation techniques. However, just because vinyl siding has held up during hurricanes and a major tornado, it does not follow that the installation job was done properly and that no repairs would ever be needed. Obviously, The Villages recognizes this because their old "tried and true" techniques have been changed in the last year and a half to more closely comply with the manufacturer's instruction manual and the Florida State Building Code. And more workers are being trained to do a better job. In the past, we were told by one builder, they would hire anyone with a heartbeat. How does that make you feel about the quality of construction on your home? Would you want that policy to continue, or is it better to have workers who are trained? Isn't this a POSITIVE change?

Instead of scoffing at the POA and The Bulletin in a negative way during his presentation to the VHA, Mr. Morse should have been thanking the individuals who have been instrumental in bringing about those changes. If no one ever commented about the old, makeshift techniques, if no one discussed the problems, changes and improvements on new construction would never have been made. Surely this is POSITIVE for Villagers!

But it didn't take just a remark or a suggestion. It took months and months of persistence through many obstacles to convince The Villages that these changes are correct and necessary. Although never admitting it, they have acknowledged this by making the changes. But if persistent attention had not been directed to the problems by the POA, The Bulletin, and the Vinyl Siding Committee, there would have been no changes in the methods used on new construction.

As well as monitoring the continuation of proper techniques on new installations, what remains is to deal with the existing vinyl-sided homes, most of which are still in need of repairs to bring the installations up to the standards

that have been described in manufacturers' installation manuals for years. We're not asking for any "new technology" to be used. Just the same installation manual for manufacturer's parts and installation techniques that has been around as long as we can remember. We need to act to "protect the lifestyle and real estate values" of the community, as Mr. Morse and the VHA have put it. And we hope The Villages' response to our constructive comments and observations is to act POSITIVELY and "take the high road" by making repairs requested by homeowners regardless of who discovers the flaws.

The POA Vinyl Siding Committee

[Top](#)

Good Repair Firms For Vinyl Siding

Below is the contact information for the two siding installers which we think have done good vinyl siding repair jobs in the past for Villagers:

New Look Exteriors
Steve Justice
9860 SE 145th Place
Summerfield, FL
352-288-3040

Brix & Stix
Terry Poortenga, Vice President
P.O. Box 384
Oxford, FL 34484
352-330-1817, 352-516-0505 cell
www.BrixandStixFraming.com

[Top](#)

Letter to the Editor: Shoddy Workmanship

Thank you for publishing the information about other Emergency Rooms and Urgent Care Centers. The information is helpful.

My wife and I appreciate the effort that you and other POA members have put into finding solutions to the many problems that exist in The Villages. I could not understand why Mr. Gary Morse still allows construction companies to build poor quality homes. Such shoddy work spoils the image of The Villages and also lowers our home values. It is too bad that he continues to allow the standard of excellence for The Villages to fall.

I lived in the southwestern part of the state before moving here. The problems existed in all of the developments that were being built in that area. Until this state legislature passes laws that favor the buyer/homeowner instead of the developer, shoddy construction is going to be a way of life. Until developers are held accountable, legally and eventually financially, they will not change their practices. The only way to capture their attention is to "hit them where it hurts" i.e. in the pocketbook.

Again thank you for all that you do to help the homeowners in The Villages.

Paul Powers

[Top](#)

From the POA Website Forum: OBG Restaurant

Apr 26: The good news is that the OBG Country Club Restaurant is going to get a new face lift. HURRAY.... Chip, the manager, in conversation said that he had renewed his lease. HURRAY.... He would paint the walls, get new chairs or paint the old, fix the chain cushions, and get new carpet and new wall paper. HURRAY... This is the best news. I wish Chip the best of everything. Keep up the best food and best place in town. This is GOOD NEWS!! HURRAY FOR CHIP and OBG COUNTRY CLUB RESTAURANT...

[Top](#)

Lightning Tips For Villagers

The authors are members of the Ad Hoc Study Group on Lightning. Len Hathaway is a retired fire protection consultant, Bob Freeman, a retired electrical engineer, and John Wright, a retired civil engineer.

As The Villages continues to grow we probably have many new residents that do not realize that Florida is the lightning capital of the country. Meteorologists tell us that the reason for this is our geography. We are on a peninsular with the Atlantic Ocean on the east and the Gulf of Mexico on the west. As a result, daytime heating often generates sea breezes that move inland from each coast during the day. When the air masses collide thunder and lightning can be the result.

Florida leads the nation when it comes to fatalities and injuries due to lightning. Play it safe - when a storm is brewing it is time to get off the golf course, out of the pool, or other unprotected area, and get to shelter. This includes golf carts which are not effective shelters from lightning.

Once you are at home or safely in a substantial building it is wise to avoid plumbing and electrical equipment, corded telephones and windows until the storm passes.

This is also an opportune time to highlight the subject of lightning protection systems. Included in the definition "lightning protection systems" are roof-mounted lightning rods connected to a system of conductors to ground, bonding and grounding between other systems such as electric, telephone, cable, and gas, surge protection on your electric system, and plug-in devices for highly sensitive electronic equipment like televisions, computers, and other appliances. This addresses the hazards of direct lightning and indirect lightning.

Lightning rods have been used successfully for over 200 years. You may have observed that the developer has been proactive and installed lightning protection systems on many of the public and commercial buildings and pumping stations around The Villages. Further, since the turn of the 21st Century, lightning protection systems have been the subject of comprehensive studies by three independent panels of experts. All confirmed the effectiveness of lightning protection systems with one major caveat. And that is for a lightning protection system to be effective it must be designed, installed, and maintained according to the national standard known as the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)-780, Standard for the Installation of Lightning Protection Systems, 2008 edition.

But how do you know if a prospective installer will provide a standard-compliant system? The savvy buyer will select an installer who has undergone the scrutiny of an independent third party. For over 100 years that third party is Underwriters Laboratories (UL). You can find the name of these firms that specialize in lightning protection systems at www.ul.com/lightning and then select "Related Links" and then "Find Listed Installer" When the screen opens up click on "Refine Your Search" and select "Florida" from the menu of states. Here are the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the 25 firms currently listed. Ten of these firms are located within 50 miles of The Villages.

As a savvy buyer you should be aware that some prospective installers may come to your door and tell you that they use UL "approved" components. That is good but you should insist on an installer that is currently UL "listed" as described above.

The most common cause of lightning-induced damage occurs when an

electrical surge enters your home via electric, telephone, and cable lines. One way to reduce the risk of lightning-induced surge damage is to install voltage surge protection (commonly referred to as "whole-house" surge suppression or surge arresting) on the main electric service panel or at the electric meter as specified by the national standard, NFPA-780. To meet this requirement you may need to contract with a licensed electrician or your local electric utility that can validate that they are installing a UL "listed" device. Surge protection is designed to protect major appliances such as stoves, refrigerators, garbage disposals, dishwashers, heating & air-conditioning systems, washers, dryers.

Next, you will also need to consider protection for sensitive electronic equipment like televisions, sound systems, garage door openers, irrigation controllers, microwave ovens, and particularly computers with Underwriters Laboratories "listed" plug-in surge protectors. If you have no protection it is a wise to disconnect the power and telephone/cable to a computer during a thunderstorm.

The lightning standard (NFPA-780) also embraces the concept of "bonding and grounding." This includes all metal roof vents, hot water heater, furnace, chimney, vent fans, and any additional metal objects on the roof. "Bonding and grounding" is also needed for homes with a corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) gas manifold in the attic. The entire lightning protection system should also be connected to the existing ground wires adjacent to your exterior utility service entrances. Proper "bonding and grounding," as just described, is important to keep all equipment at the same ground potential during voltage transient conditions. This reduces the possibility of electrical arcing and damage to electrical equipment.

If anyone tells you that they can install a lightning protection system in two to four hours for \$500 to \$1,200, it should raise a red flag in the mind of the savvy buyer. For a Designer Home (2500 to 3000 sq under roof) the cost of a standard-compliant system by a UL "listed" installer is estimated at \$2,200 to \$2,700, probably less for Villas and Ranches and more for Premier Homes. These estimates do not include the cost of the voltage surge protection or plug in devices.

[Top](#)

Letter to the Editor: Is North Better?

I am compelled to respond to letter writer Garvin Bailey, who believes the POA Bulletin should be renamed because of all the complaining. I can understand Mr. Bailey's thoughts, but ask that he consider where "we" (those of us that live south of 466) are coming from. I will bet my last dollar, Mr. Bailey is fortunate enough to live north of 466, where the difference is night and day.

We looked at resale homes **north** of 466, and I am very sorry we did not purchase one. The size of lots, placement/street layout, quality of the building

and trades inside could not be any more opposite, compared to **south** of 466. This is especially true of homes built/sold in late 2005 through 2006.

Never mind the homes were crammed on tiny lots with only the county required distance between them. They were built super quickly because of demand, and it showed.

I recall seeing signs that read: CABINET INSTALLERS NEEDED, NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY. No doubt my cabinets were installed by one who responded.

And the same goes for the rest of the house. Nothing is straight. Walls, floors, windows, bathroom fixtures, and just about every light switch is crooked. I don't even want to think about the troublesome GE appliances or Trane air conditioners that repeatedly malfunction. Mine was not working at closing, and that model was already discontinued. Had to wait 3 weeks for replacement, then that one went out and was replaced again within 4 months. Guess we know why they were "discontinued."

Back to those tiny lots. My home, and others on my street, were built with no door off the lanai. The houses are so crammed, the steps required for exit would be in the county required setback/minimum. In addition to close proximity, evidently they did not use much insulation, as I can hear my west side neighbor flushing the toilet.

I could say more, especially regarding the warranty (or lack of it) department, but am sure you don't want to hear it. Again, be very thankful you live where you do. Should you decide to leave, selling your home should not be a problem. I have told my friends and family to definitely buy on your side, and not to consider the new area. We bought "the sizzle" of The Villages, and am very happy. Just wish we lived closer to you.

Liza Adkinson

[Top](#)

Letter to the Editor: Quality Issues for Homes in The Villages

We are members of the POA and appreciate everything you folks do for the homeowners of The Villages. The following is a letter that was emailed as follows:

Dear Mark Morse, VHA Officers, Directors, Boards, Etc.

As members and homeowners we are very disturbed by some of the comments Mark Morse made at the May general meeting. This concerns the siding problems which are true and real, not unfounded criticism as he stated. He should feel disappointed and also embarrassed that homeowners have found their homes are not the quality built structures they were stated to be.

It is not true that most of us have damaged our siding by making alterations. The homeowners did not frame the house or install the siding. Our house happens to be one of the many that had to have siding removed and replaced because the few nails that were used were put 3 and 3½ feet apart, installed by a company that has been removed from working here. The outside plywood on the gable ends of the house had to be replaced also because it was bulging and installed wrong.

The nails in our drywall are not 16" on center. Our inside door casings were chipped and gouged when installed and just painted over. Kitchen cabinets have hammer marks, dents, scrapes, some puttied over to cover up.

We have walls that are not straight. Our garage floor concrete was finished so poorly the builder told us he did not like the way it looked so he painted over it. He had to chip away large pieces of overflow concrete on our foundation and it looks terrible.

These things we did not notice so clearly when choosing our house since we only had an hour window to make the decision. We also did not have time to move in and inspect every nook and cranny within 30 days and register a complaint. You begin to notice these things later when you start thoroughly cleaning. Our carpets required re-stretching also with a many excuses as to why they were like this. Well, we know why, they were not installed properly in the first place.

You know these tactics make a lot of money for your builders, contractors and installers because we as homeowners have to find someone reliable to fix all of this so we can sell our house and upgrade to a new one.

I have learned that your father was very different from you and your brother. Yes, he cared and would not be happy with a lot of the happenings since his passing. A portion of complete honesty and integrity has been lost for the almighty dollar.

Bill and Jane Reeses

[Top](#)

**Letter to the Editor:
Is There Good to Say?**

I've been reading the POA Bulletin and trying to figure out what the POA really does. A strong voice is needed to make sure "The Right Thing" is done when establishing a community. I wonder if looking at the glass ALWAYS half empty really accomplishes as much as POA sets out to do.

I believe in people taking responsibility for their actions and for living up to commitments. It seems to me the Morse family, "THE DEVELOPER," envisioned a retirement community where we all could enjoy these precious years. Overall I think he has done that. Has he made mistakes, sure, but on the whole what a GREAT place to live.

I applaud POA for standing up for Villagers and being the oversight watchdog to try and make sure things are done right and fair. But sometimes we can get carried away looking for what is wrong. In your May paper there wasn't a whole lot of good things said in your survey comments. Yet I believe there is a lot of good things to say.

I bought my home here not expecting a custom built house, but a track home that I ordered. After all they were building at a rate of 200+/month and these weren't custom builders for the most part - and we all knew this going in! Were there problems, yes, did they get fixed, yes, did I have to push, yes!

I came to the Villages hopefully buying my last home, but I came to enjoy the lifestyle. Where can you live and pay less than \$150/month to have access to over 20 swimming pools, 22 rec centers, 30+ golf courses, two town squares with live entertainment, over 500 clubs to join, manicured landscaping with fresh flowers every 6 months, restaurants, shops galore, fishing and some of the nicest people I've ever met.

How does this compare to faulty siding, and Hospital issues? Should it be fixed -- you bet! If you think hospitals are bad here, go to anywhere in south Florida to compare.

Again I say keep up the watch, but try to keep it all in perspective, and maybe print more articles on what's good here.

Pete Capo

Editor's Note: Your comments are well taken. But, what would you do if you just paid \$200,000 for your vinyl sided home and found that there were major workmanship defects in the vinyl installation job, and the developer told you to just accept it because you have this great life style to enjoy? If the Warranty Dept. told you to buzz off, you could always contract an independent siding contractor to fix the sloppy vinyl job, and it could cost you up to \$10,000.

Was developer was right when he told us that people don't have a problem unless we tell them they have a problem? Does he think it is better not to know? The POA believes you want to and should know.

[Top](#)

Shame on Hess and Home Warranty

In mid April, one of our Siding Committee members visited the home of an elderly widow in the Rio Grande area. He found the usual assortment of defects in the siding installation-loose panels, incorrect overlaps, staples through the vinyl, etc., etc. When the homeowner contacted Home Warranty, they sent the builder, Mr. Hess, to look at the problems. He told the homeowner that nothing was wrong and refused to make any repairs.

The POA Siding Committee then had two members look at the house again, and they concurred with their original opinion: it was indeed a sloppy, careless installation, done without regard for basic siding installation rules.

The widow told us that several years ago, at the time of her husband's death, nine siding panels had fallen down in heavy winds. When she contacted Home Warranty at that time, they gave her the brush off, and she had to have the panels reinstalled on her own, in the midst of her grief at losing her husband. This lady was in tears just recounting the story.

Shame on you both, Contractor Hess and Villages Home Warranty.

The POA Vinyl Siding Committee

[Top](#)

From the POA Website Forum: **Oh, Give Me a Home Where the Buffalo Roam**

May 15: I read in the Daily Sun this morning about the sad news that the Buffalo's are going to be move away from the public due to three injuries. Last week I saw a couple people with a bag of carrots in hand approaching the fence. The buffalo were running so fast toward them, I didn't think they where going to stop. Some people just don't understand, you are not to feed the animals. Then, when you are bitten, you want to sue. There are always people who make it bad for everyone else. I call those people selfish. What we had as a beautiful sight to view, will be gone. Give me a home where the Buffalo's roam!!!

[Top](#)

**Letter to the Editor:
No Buffalo = Ho Hum**

I am incensed that The Villages "authority" has decided to remove the Buffalo. Their reasoning makes no sense. Why do zoos have no problem keeping people a safe distance from animals. With a little initiative and some of that "Village Know How," the brilliant Villages architects could figure how to keep the buffalo where The Villages Residents could enjoy them. The Villages Authority have taken away New Years Eve midnight celebration on The Square - now The Buffalo. Next it will be the Happy Hour on The Square -- then what? The Villages will then become a Ho Hum community just like any other place.

Anna L Puett

[Top](#)

**Letter to the Editor:
Don't Need a Tunnel?**

[About the lack of a tunnel for the new shopping centers], people cross highway 441/27 on motorized wheelchairs. People should be allowed to simply cross Rolling Acres Rd. in a golf cart!? Don Lloyd

[Top](#)

**Letter to the Editor:
Horse Racing in Sumter County?**

It has been brought to our attention that the Sumter County Zoning Board

[heard] a petition on May 19, 2008, to approve a land use proposal for a public horse racing track and poker facility in Sumter County. In addition, a similar ballot question will appear on a special election to be held on June 17, 2008, to approve said issue.

The POA should immediately alert the community of this deleterious land use proposal in Sumter County. There are a lot of reasons why this proposal should be rejected. Our community does not need these activities and the community impacts associated with this land use proposal.

Tom and Dot Bannar

[Top](#)

For a full copy of the POA Bulletin via mail, please send a check for \$1.50 per issue or \$9.00 for a 6 month subscription to:

**The POA
PO BOX 1657
Lady Lake, FL 32158-1657**

Contact Information : POB 1657, Lady Lake, FL 32158
Phone: (352) 259-0999

SEND E-MAIL TO POA BULLETIN AT: poa4us@gmail.com

[Archived Bulletins](#)

[Return To Main POA Page](#)