

The POA BULLETIN

The Property Owners' Association of The Villages

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Champion of Residents' Rights Since 1975

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Positive Comments About The Hospital

In the course of our investigation of the Villages Hospital's Emergency Room, we have received over 150 letters: 133 of these cite problems, but over 20 are positive about the writer's experience with the hospital.

Please note that most of the positive stories cited the writer's experience with the hospital wards after being admitted. Our investigation is focusing on the Emergency Room and the problems reported there.

These positive comments are nevertheless worthwhile. Summarized below are some of the recent positive letters and stories:

"...I was truly amazed at the care, concern and compassion shown...."

"...my experience there was outstanding. ...welcomed by a friendly nurse.... All the nurses, assistants, staff, and volunteers were extremely courteous."

"...my satisfaction and gratitude for the care I received ... two health care individuals who went the 'extra mile' to assist me during my recent hospital stay.... I received excellent care."

"I have always received good care there in the ER and in the hospital itself."

"...nursing personnel go far beyond what is expected as good nursing practices. It can only be referred to as outstanding. ...same professional, caring concerns they have for each patient."

"Everything top notch."

"I was treated with respect and professionalism by all who attended me. All of The Villages Hospital staff treated me with kindness, courtesy and a high degree of professionalism. My questions were answered fully and every need was attended to promptly. Thank you to all of the physicians and staff who so

competently cared for me."

"...received exemplary care from ... the staff...."

"In a matter of minutes I was attended to by competent staff personnel. My care was very professional in all respects... I have nothing but praise."

"I was treated very, very well..."

"I am truly grateful to the staff at TVRH for all they did for me and am thankful that we have such a quality medical facility right here in our own backyard in the Villages."

"I had a wonderful experience in the hospital."

"...the best hospital experience"

"Thanks to the good job TVRH"

"... we were very satisfied with our experience there."

"... had excellent care. ...We were seen in a timely manner and everyone was kind and professional."

"... my treatment was prompt and thorough."

"Without exception every person I came across ... were courteous and helpful"

"... impressed with the quick response to a 'real emergency' ... excellent care"

"... immediately attended to and received the most professional care"

The POA recognizes that there are dedicated staff and caring personnel working at TVRH. It has been reported that the hospital has had over 50,000 visits to the Emergency Room in the short life of TVRH. The majority of patients have received satisfactory care.

That being said, there is no reason for the negative stories reported to us - or for us to accept the possibility that we might be one of the negative stories in the future.

To summarize the negative stories we have received in the over 130 letters and emails, we note the following summary of complaints about TVRH's ER from residents:

- inattentive care
- mis-diagnosis
- rude staff
- lost tests and paperwork
- poor communication in English
- overworked staff
- poor training
- questionable triage
- understaffed departments

- lack of on-call specialists
- poor nutritional support
- inadequate facilities, etc.

Remember that the stories we have received are real, the people are real, and the problems cited are real.

When a patient comes to the ER with a complaint that sounds like a heart attack or a stroke, the patient needs to be seen immediately. Stroke patients, especially, have a 2-3 hour window in which life-saving drugs need to be considered for administration. If the window is missed, the drugs may be ineffective and the well-being and recovery of the patient may be severely jeopardized. Heart attack patients have an even shorter time period for life-saving medical care. Sadly, there are too many unreasonable delays reported in the stories we received that cannot be accepted for these really serious cases.

So, learn to protect yourself by asking questions. And, make up your own mind about which hospital to go to and how you would address these negative issues. Also, read with a bit of reservation the hospital claims to be an outstanding medical facility.

We have forwarded the more notable complaint stories to the two certification agencies that routinely review hospitals for proper licenses, certifications, policies, programs, and procedures. These two agency reviews found no reason to revoke the certification for TVRH. It was judged that TVRH is in compliance with the appropriate regulations and requirements.

However, these two reviews did not address issues of malpractice or unsatisfactory medical care. Thus, we have forwarded our information to the agencies that do address these issues.

These other agencies to which we have forwarded information have not yet reviewed the hospital for the matters we reported to them. We expect a review, but it may be some time before we hear the results.

If TVRH is to justify its claim to be a premier health care facility, then it must focus on eliminating the problems identified.

Let's get these issues out in the open and discuss them as a community. If there are problems in the hospital, then let's discuss them as a community and find a solution.

One of the obvious problems that cries for a solution is the problem of coordinating the urgent care centers in this community. We have more of these now compared to a year ago. Some are open late, but none is open all night when many emergencies happen. We need at least one center open all night.

Then we need a better community information program to inform residents when to go to urgent care as opposed to the ER.

Why can't this be done?

It would be constructive if LRMC and TVRH would focus on these problems rather than voicing indignation at our questions about their sovereignty. Let's focus on solving problems and operating issues rather than denying that problems exist.

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Important Sept 17 Meeting

The POA needs a new generation of leadership for the future.

To better address what is involved and the time requirements to be a POA officer or director, we have arranged for a basic information meeting to be held on Wednesday, September 17, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., in Laurel Manor. In this meeting we will discuss what is involved in service to your POA.

The POA has been fortunate in the past to have dedicated and committed people serving. We hope that the many people who have complimented us for our efforts on many issues recently will come forward to take over the various officer and director positions in the organization.

We would urge anyone who values the work of the POA to consider coming forward to be part of the future leadership team. This meeting is a good way to learn more.

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Medical Malpractice Complaints

In the previous issue of the POA Bulletin, we listed the address and phone number of the Florida Department of Health's agency to which complaints about doctors and other medical professionals should be directed. These are complaints about whether a doctor or other medical professional has given you good medical care. If not, then you should consider filing a complaint.

We have learned that the Department of Health Complaint Process requires that you fill out the department's three-page form in order for the complaint process to begin. The POA originally thought it could start the process on behalf of the residents submitting their stories to us. Unfortunately, the Department of Health requires each person with a grievance to fill out the complaint form themselves.

So, you can print out the three page form, with a page of instructions, at this listed internet website address:

This form covers at least the following areas:

- Quality of care
- Inappropriate prescribing
- Excessive test or treatment
- Mis-diagnosis of condition
- Sexual contact with patient
- Failure to release patient records
- Substance abuse
- Insurance fraud
- Impairment/medical condition
- Advertising violation
- Mis-filled prescription
- Patient abandonment/neglect
- Unlicensed
- Other Problem (Please Specify)

The POA urges residents with any complaint about service at TVRH to file a formal complaint. If you don't do it, then the problems will just continue. By filing a complaint, the medical staff in the ER (as well as other departments of the hospital) will be on notice that substandard care is unacceptable.

As an interesting aside, we were talking with one of the compliance investigators when those agencies started their reviews. The investigator told us that in the past five years no formal complaint with the compliance agency had ever been filed against TVRH. We were astonished at this comment given the many stories we had received about the negative experiences of many residents in TVRH's ER. But, nobody had ever filed a complaint. Perhaps it is because the hospital has never been held to a strict quality standard that we have these many problems now.

So, the message is clear: please file a complaint if you have had any bad experiences with TVRH.

If you want copies of the complaint form please go online or call or email the POA and we will bring those forms to you. And we can help in the process of completing the forms. Just let us know ... we can help.

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The Hospital Screwed Up! Now What?

ASK WHAT HAPPENED. In an ideal world, you'd get a prompt explanation. The reality, though, is that open discussion of a medical mistake, along with an apology, remains uncommon. Still, some hospitals -- like Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore -- are working toward more openness.

GET A COPY OF YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS. It's your right to see your file - but you may not get your complete records, says Bruce G. Fagel, MD, an ER physician turned medical-malpractice lawyer in Beverly Hills, California. In a birth-injury case, for instance, one of the most crucial documents is the fetal-monitoring strip, but it won't be in your file unless you ask for it.

START KEEPING YOUR OWN NOTES. Write down everything, including dates, procedures, medications, and the names of health-care staffers who cared for you. If you opt to sue, your own record may be an effective tool against the usually vague notations in most patient's charts. "Doctors are constantly told what kinds of things not to put in medical records," Fagel says.

SPEAK TO A HIGHER-UP. If you don't get a satisfactory answer from the physician, talk to someone at a higher level. Also, ask to speak with an ombudsman and a patient advocate.

FILE A COMPLAINT. If you're still not satisfied, complain to your state or local health department, as well as to the Federal Hospital Joint Commission at the internet address: (www.jointcommission.org/GeneralPublic/Complaint). Patients who've experienced an error usually want to make sure the same mistake never happens to anyone else; lodging a complaint is one of the best ways to do that.

CONSULT A LAWYER. If you don't get an acceptable answer from the hospital, you may want to consult a lawyer. If you decide to sue, a good medical-malpractice attorney can help you navigate the Byzantine world of state and local laws.

Editor's Note: This was reprinted from Health Magazine, July/Aug '08, written by Lorie Parchv

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Trauma, Stroke, Cardiac Event -- Where Will I Get The Best Care?

A reporter for USA Today, Robert Davis, raised the question in a recent article about where to get the best emergency care.

There are many variables to consider when making this choice. Diagnosis? Severity? Distance to facilities? Even the weather. The diagnosis will come from the medical professionals. They will even advise you where to go, but if you know ahead of time what choices are available, you can contribute to this decision.

If you are unstable, have uncontrollable bleeding, heart beat or blood pressure,

the paramedics will, understandably, be required to take you to the nearest facility accepting patients. This is required by law. Then you may be stabilized. When a later decision is made to transfer, you can be involved.

The Villages Regional Hospital is a community hospital, a hospital available to the community for most general purposes (but no pediatrics or maternity at TVRH). TVRH has a Level II trauma rating which means it will accept trauma for stabilization and any intervention it can handle, but it does not have the level of specialists or 24 hour availability that a Level I trauma center has.

It does not have certification as a stroke center. It will take stroke patients for stabilization only who can later be transferred to an accredited stroke center. It will take cardiac patients, again for stabilization, but, while it is not an accredited cardiac center, it can intervene medically and diagnostically, just not surgically. Patients needing surgery will be transferred to another hospital.

Mr. Davis notes in his USA Today article that hospitals that treat 50 or less patients per year in critical trauma, heart or stroke cases have a less desirable outcome than those that treat 100 or more patients per year who need the same treatment. The more regularly experienced hospitals, of course, are the ones to choose.

Also consider that in a large city there are many hospitals in a small area. Your choice to add maybe 5 to 15 minutes to your transport time may be less critical. In the area of the Villages, the hospitals are more spread out. The closest cardiac centers, LRMC and Munroe, are 20 or more minutes away for some people by road. The closest Level I trauma center is in Orlando which would usually necessitate an air lift. You'll need to consider a local hospital more seriously here than in a city where there might be a more specialized one on the next block.

Knowing the level of care available to you from the various nearby hospitals, you will feel more secure in the advice of your paramedics regarding transport. This is a good thing. And remember, don't underestimate the importance of being stabilized nearby. There are wonderful, specialized hospitals in central Florida, but the best hospital in the world won't help you if you don't get there alive.

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Where To File Hospital Complaints

Please continue to send to the POA your stories about your experiences with the Emergency Room at The Villages hospital. We have thus far received over 150 stories or complaints describing the experiences and/or issues of Villagers with the ER. Thanks to all those who have chosen to tell us their stories.

We are still accepting stories, so please send us yours. These stories, all 150

of them, are a worthwhile assessment of the services of TVRH's ER. Please, tell us your story and help us address this issue.

The more stories we gather, the more comprehensive will be the review that we will be able to make. And, we may just make a difference in the quality of services provided by the hospital. We will protect your identity. We will ask you specifically for permission, if later needed, to share your detailed story with any of these investigating and review committees.

Based on many of the comments received, we can see that most people are unclear on the way to file a complaint. So, here is the listing of who, what, and where:

- For comments about The Villages Regional Hospital, contact:
Mr. Tim Menton
Administrator of TVRH
1451 El Camino Real
The Villages, FL 34748
Phone: 352-751-8000
tmenton@cfhalliance.org

- For comments on LRMC or to Mr. Menton's boss, contact:
Mr. Lee Huntley
CEO, Central Fla. Hospital Alliance
600 E. Dixie Highway
Leesburg, FL 34748
Phone: 352-323-5762
lhuntley@leesburgregional.com

- For comments about procedures, policies, staff, medical care in general, contact the state agency:
Holly Hunter, Secretary
Florida Agency For Healthcare Adm.
1717 Mahan Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32308
Phone: 1-888-419-3456
<http://ahca.myflorida.com>

- For comments about procedures, policies, staff, medical care in general, contact federal agency:
Mark Chassin, MD, President
The Joint Commission
One Renaissance Blvd.
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181
Phone: 630-792-5000
www.jointcommission.org

- For comments about the actions of specific doctors and nurses, go to:
Dr. Ana M. Viamonte Ros, Secretary
The Florida Department of Health
2585 Merchants Row Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399
Phone: 850-245-4444
<http://www.doh.state.fl.us>

If you do decide to file a complaint with any of these locations, please also

copy the POA on any correspondence so that we may coordinate our activities on these matters.

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From The POA Website Forum: Does The POA Owe TVRH an Apology?

Aug 13: Now that TVRH has been exonerated by the two watchdogs that the POA "sicked" on them, when can they expect an apology in the POA bulletin? You might also point out that the majority of complaints were from POA members who by their very nature are habitual whiners and complainers who are against anything that bears The Villages name. I will be surprised if the apology occurs anytime soon.

Aug 14: Don't hold your breath for an apology to appear in the POA newsletter. They will continue to solicit more horror stories. Some of those stories are probably true and I feel sorry for those individuals. However, in any enterprise "you can't please everybody all of the time." And it does seem to be a small percentage.

Editor's Note: The complaints were from Village residents, not necessarily from POA members. And, we object to the ignorant characterization that POA members are "habitual whiners and complainers."

The majority of hospital complaints were from residents like you and me who had a bad experience with the hospital ER. Things like this happen. The POA requested their stories in an effort to publicize the problems. Hopefully, shining the full light of day on something that the hospital has hidden from our view for all these years will be helpful in solving these problems.

The certification agencies did a review of the hospital operations and found nothing that would justify canceling the certifications. That just means that the hospital has all proper licenses and certifications, that the staff is properly licensed to provide medical care in Florida, that proper training programs are in effect for such issues as infection control, and that proper procedures are in effect for the vast variety of ER operations.

We can see now that the issues we were most concerned about related to the quality of the medical judgments and care provided by doctors and other staff. The complaints for these issues, we have learned, are best directed to the Florida Department of Health which has a personnel investigation unit that investigates charges of malpractice. We have taken our information to that agency and have met with its staff to discuss how best to proceed. This could be a six month or longer investigation, so we may not hear much for some time. But, we are cooperating with the department and trust that its investigation will focus on the problems we presented to it.

But, we should point out that our efforts seem to have had some positive effect already on hospital and ER operations. We understand that new procedures are in place and the need to ensure the best operating performance has been emphasized.

The hospital knows that we have provided to our residents the addresses, phone numbers, and procedures for filing complaints. Another article in this issue spells out the formal complaint procedure to the Florida Department of Health for filing a complaint about doctors and other staff.

The hospital knows that the POA and any residents using the hospital are watching it to see that we receive nothing but the best medical care that we know the hospital is capable of providing. We will not accept the complacency and the horror stories of the past.

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Letter to the Editor: Education for Doctors on When to Use the ER?

Recent POA Bulletins did stress the fact that too many people use Emergency Room attention, when all of us, living here on a permanent basis, should have a primary care physician. I agree totally.

In July, after a couple of nights with severe leg cramps, I called my primary care physician of four years asking for help. After explaining the reason for my call ... and some initial suggestions on what to do ... I was told by the person calling back: "Doctor says to go to the Emergency Room."

Perhaps some doctors should be taught what the "Emergency Room" is for.

Ruth Franklin

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Letter to the Editor: TVRH On-Call Urologist

Below is a letter sent to the Daily Sun with a copy to the POA Bulletin:

This is regarding an article sent to you [The Daily Sun] on July 8, 2008.

What a disappointment this paper [The Daily Sun] turned out to be. I was under the impression that a newspaper was to print the positive and negative articles that are sent to them. I guess that is not so. Shame on you!

Our article dealt with an "on call Urologist" at the Village Hospital. Our purpose was to stop this individual from causing anyone else harm, but I guess The Daily Sun lives in a "fantasy world" where nothing is wrong with the Villages. I guess you are so controlled by the builder who in turn controls the hospital that nothing bad will ever be said about the Villages. That is sad.

Here's hoping you never get sick and need a Urologist, especially one from [that practice].

Theresa Conti

Editor's Note: Consider filing a formal complaint as described in this Bulletin.

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Vinyl Siding: Response to Reader

While the POA, and the Vinyl Siding Committee welcome input and participation from all Villages residents, with respect to the Letter-to-the-Editor from David Ham in last month's Bulletin, we find it necessary to respond to some of Mr. Ham's remarks by making the following points:

First, Mr. Ham likens the POA to a dog with "the rat in its teeth" with regard to the vinyl siding issue. We would like to point out that without the persistence of this committee and the POA to improve homeowners' awareness of the siding issue, Mr. Ham would not have known there was any problem with his siding because there would not have been any "activity" in the area for his neighbors to remark upon when he returned to The Villages in April. Blissfully unaware of any problems, neither Mr. Ham nor his neighbors would have had the opportunity to have any repairs made by the Home Warranty Department.

We seriously doubt the siding problems would ever have been voluntarily acknowledged or would ever have been voluntarily repaired by the developer.

Second, we have always acknowledged that the response time to calls made

to Home Warranty is prompt. After we have identified the specific problems on homes we have observed, we have always advised the homeowners to call Home Warranty.

What we are concerned about is the quality and completeness of repairs that are made. We will continue to stress the importance of having independent observations made by a knowledgeable person or an outside inspector in order to compare the actual siding installation, as well as any repairs, with the manufacturer's installation instructions.

We would be glad to have one of our members check the work on Mr. Ham's home, if he wishes, to confirm that the repairs are complete and conform to manufacturer's instructions.

Third, while we are happy that Mr. Ham received courteous and prompt attention, and repairs were made to his satisfaction, this is not always the case. As time goes on, we are hearing of more refusals to do repairs by Home Warranty, especially in the last few months. We have noted that the end of April was a turning point in Home Warranty's attitude and their willingness to make corrections, as well as the extent of repairs that are now being authorized.

Ever since Mark Morse's mid-May address to the VHA in which he declared that siding gets brittle after three years, there has been backpedaling on the extent of repairs being authorized. We wonder where Mr. Morse gets his information about siding. The vinyl is formulated specifically not to get brittle. Anyone can check this out with the manufacturer.

We know of more than one instance in which homeowners are being denied repairs and referred to arbitration. Just because your home has now been repaired, Mr. Ham, does not mean they are all being fixed. And, Mr. Ham, do you feel it is each homeowner's responsibility to pay for repairs, sometimes having the entire home re-sided, which could easily cost \$10,000 - \$12,000, all because the original installation was poorly done? Do you feel it was your own responsibility as a homeowner to pay for the repairs made on your home? If so, why did you call Home Warranty and request repairs? Or perhaps you agree, it is The Villages' responsibility to make things right.

Fourth, we certainly hope that there are more than a few capable siding crews at work here in The Villages, and, we believe it is due to our perseverance, for nearly two years now, that there has been improvement. However, we report what we see, and we have only mentioned the names of several siding companies that in the course of our observations have consistently done better quality siding installations. We still recommend that homeowners have the repairs checked independently before signing off on any repairs that are made.

Lastly, with regard to compassion, Mr. Ham doesn't seem to feel that we have enough compassion for the developer. Indeed, we do have compassion, but ours is for the homeowners who have already paid the developer handsomely and deserve to have the properly constructed home they thought they were getting. We do not feel that the residents should be penalized with out-of-pocket costs or have to accept poor quality workmanship because the developer has made repeated "mistakes" and did not provide adequate quality control in making their product.

In his letter, Mr. Ham refers to a figure of \$50 million for "fixings." Indeed, there was a recent settlement with the developer of approximately \$50 million concerning amenity fee and service issues, but that had nothing to do with the vinyl siding issue. Regardless of the cost, it is up to the developer to provide

what we already paid for - properly constructed homes.

Mr. Ham, you want the POA to have more compassion for the efforts of the developer, but what about compassion for the residents of The Villages - senior citizens, for the most part, who have often put their life savings into their homes and do not have unlimited resources to make repairs on something that should have been done right the first time.

The POA Vinyl Siding Committee

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The Vinyl Siding Committee Needs Your Help

The POA Vinyl Siding Committee needs to have a full-scale inspection, evaluation, and report done of the vinyl siding problems in The Villages by a qualified building inspector who could serve as an objective expert witness.

The cost for all of this could be in the range of several thousand dollars. For this expense, we are asking any homeowners who have benefited through the efforts of our Vinyl Siding Committee to consider donating to a special fund which would pay this expense.

We are asking that homeowners who can afford to do so to please contribute either \$50 or \$100, or more if you can, to this fund. The POA will match donations up to \$1,250 on a dollar for dollar basis. Just send your donations to The POA Legal Action Fund, Vinyl Siding, at POBox 1657, Lady Lake, FL 32158.

Please rest assured that we need your help to pay for this inspection, and anything you can contribute to this cause will be greatly appreciated. Remember that our Vinyl Siding Committee members gave generously of their time and effort to help residents identify their vinyl siding problems. Now, we need you to help us pay for this expert witness and the inspection report. Thank you again.

The POA Vinyl Siding Committee

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Vinyl Siding Repair Firms

We have found that the following companies have done acceptable if not good work for residents in the repair of their vinyl siding problems, etc. We cannot guarantee their work; but we have heard from residents that they are pleased with their work.

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

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

Scott Smith Roofing
2105 NE 19th Avenue
Ocala, FL 34470
352-867-0044, 877-296-0898

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Letter to the Editor: Vinyl Repair

I am so grateful to be living here in The Villages where there is so much available for me here and especially for so many good people.

When I had my home built more than 7 years ago, my home was about the 6th house built on my street and not too many other homes in my village. Being a widow, new to this area, and [having an] illness, I had a lot to learn and take care of. I did my best to take care of the things and repairs inside the house. However, since I have had other people tend to the outside of my home and landscape and it was something my late husband always did, I wasn't accustomed to knowing what problems to look for. But, I did see buckling in the vinyl siding and gaps, loose fitting siding, and a piece of vinyl siding had fallen off from wind, I guess. I had several illnesses during the first 7 years here and since my Home Warranty years had passed, I became very concerned and didn't know where to turn. I did read many articles concerning vinyl siding problems in other homes. I had contacted the Ameripro Inspection Corporation for an inspection. Many problems were found.

I want to say thank you to the POA for speaking up for The Villages residents concerning the vinyl siding issue. I believe that because of your effort it has helped me to get the help I needed.

I also want to express my deep appreciation and a big thank you to a certain Chief Inspector at the Sumter County Building Department who came out to my home to inspect the vinyl siding. He was so helpful in taking care of all that was needed to get the work done right. I am grateful for your help.

I also want to say a big thank you to Dean Carter, Project Manager Certified Building Contractor and Brix & Stix Construction. Mr. Carter had inspected the vinyl siding with me. He was here when Brix & Stix arrived early in the morning to do the work; he checked on the job during the work and he was here when the work was completed.

I want to say a big thank you to Terry, Joe and the entire crew of Brix & Stix. They were here early in the morning and worked straight through to completion of the work. They did an excellent job repairing the vinyl siding of the entire house and even replacing an entire section with new vinyl siding. I am very pleased with their quality of work and how great they worked together to get the job done properly. It was great to see a crew work so well together with excellent quality work. I also appreciated that they even cleaned the vinyl where needed and cleaned up any nails and material from their work.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to all of you who have helped me with this vinyl siding issue.

Pat Martin

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Letter to the Editor: Did The POA Handle It Wrong?

I am writing in response to the article "Positive vs. Negative is in the Eye of the Beholder" that appeared in the June edition of the POA Bulletin. I have read with interest that article and other articles and letters to the editor detailing Villagers interactions regarding construction defects and warranty issues.

As a licensed Florida design professional and developer for many years, I wanted to interject a few thoughts into the issue. In my professional experience, I have found that the type of approach used by the parties in resolving a problem (i.e. a construction defect), determines whether it's a positive or negative interaction.

Since construction defects are in fact a daily occurrence in the life of a developer/builder (as construction is often imperfect), developers are well-

versed in handling these matters. As such, there should never be a problem in requesting that a developer/builder remedy construction defects. Normal, reputable developers (as our developer is) will expeditiously remedy these construction defects with some prompting and/or follow-up from a homeowner. However, to achieve a positive end result, a homeowner does not normally have to take a negative or confrontational approach.

As long as homeowners are armed with the specific factual information about the defect, we can normally achieve our desired result without resorting to negative tactics. Casting dispersions on the developer/builder while asking him to remedy construction defects is a negative approach. This may serve to compromise Villagers in the long run, even if the aggrieved individual homeowner achieves his goal of getting his defect fixed.

The long-term effects of waging a public negative campaign against a developer are noteworthy in our case because our developer, who we depend upon, has proven to be mostly thoughtful in creating this wonderful first-class multifaceted age restricted community, which is no small task.

As homeowners we receive a comprehensive one year (not 30 day) warranty from the developer with certain aspects of our home receiving additional coverage for 2-10 years. The first 30 days of the one year warranty are generally for punch list items. In addition, the Florida Statute governing construction defects is protective of homeowners in rectifying construction defects, and is structured to avoid litigation. Combining the protective benefits of our State construction defect statute with the warranty protections offered by the developer should encourage the use of a positive approach, in all but extreme circumstances.

If we are able to consistently utilize a positive approach, we may reach our personal goal of having our construction defects remedied, while enjoying a positive long term enduring relationship with our developer.

Neither my wife nor I have any relationship with, nor do we know our developer. We are simply Villagers who care deeply about our community's future. Please do not consider this letter as a slur regarding your efforts to date. We are convinced that you do care deeply as a watchdog for our community.

Joe and Marlene Borda

Editor's Note: In our initial approach to the developer, before any articles were written in the Bulletin, we were branded as "troublemakers" and the developer said that residents didn't have a vinyl siding problem unless we told them they had a problem. It is hard to be reserved and nice in dealing with this kind of mentality. It would have been nice if the developer investigated the problem, realized it was due to sloppy workmanship on the part of his subcontractors, and then offered to stand behind his product and make all the needed repairs. But, he chose to stonewall and deny and denigrate the POA. So, Mr. Borda, how could we have handled this differently?

What Are Those Blue Reflectors?

Have you ever wondered what those five inch square blue reflectors are that are glued to our streets in various locations?

Those blue reflectors are put there by The Villages Fire department to help firemen quickly locate fire hydrants at nighttime. Notice that the reflectors are located close to fire hydrants and reflect blue light when a flashlight is aimed at them, even at night time from blocks away.

The problem is that the reflectors sometimes are missing. Some have speculated that snowplows scrape off the reflectors. Sometimes reflectors just come loose with age and dislodge. Sometimes the ducks eat them.

So, a missing blue reflector needs to be replaced as a safety priority.

Call The Villages Fire Department at 205-8280 to report the missing reflector. Someone will come out and install a replacement. Afterwards, be sure to watch out for the snowplows. And, make sure that you don't need another replacement anytime soon or have a fire in the meantime.

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Michael Douglas, Actor, Son, and Father

In the September 17, 2007, Newsweek Magazine, Michael Douglas talked about his wife and his 90 year-old father Kirk Douglas. Michael said: "I love being home. That feeling is based on a good marriage and having the time to spend with the kids. Age gives you experience to nurture a relationship.

"Not long ago, my father gave me some great advice. He loves giving advice now. He said, 'When it's all over, all you really have is your wife. You can dote on your kids all you want, but they're going to grow up and leave you someday. Then it will be just the two of you.'"

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Bulletin Delivery

We need your help on delivery of the Bulletin.

During some times of the year, especially the summer months, the Bulletin is sometimes delivered to unoccupied houses. The homeowner may be away for vacation, or may be a snowbird. And, the Bulletin may lie on the driveway for some time. We ask if neighbors could pick up the Bulletin when these situations occur, or at other times during inclement weather, and either discard the Bulletin or hold it for return of the homeowner. This will be a big help to us. We greatly appreciate your help during these times. Thank you.

Those who know they will be away for any length of time can contact us at the email address: delivery@poa4us.org and advise us to put you on our "No-Throw" list. Just include your name and address and village or villa and the time period for which you do not want the Bulletin delivered. We'll do our best to not throw the Bulletin on your driveway as you request.

Thanks to all for your help.

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Duties of the POA President

In the previous issue of the Bulletin we discussed the role of the POA Directors and the duties and time commitment involved. In this issue we are presenting below a summary of the primary duties of the POA President:

- Provide Leadership to the Organization; Inspire the Troops; Assume Overall Responsibility,
- Identify Objectives for the Organization,
- Identify and work the Key Issues to be Championed,
- Work closely with the POA Board of Directors,
- Identify and Solicit Prospective Officers, Board Members, and Committee Heads,
- Conduct Meetings (General and Board),
- Bulletin: Set Editorial Policy, Write Significant Articles as Needed,
- Oversee Legal Activities: Articles of Incorporation, By-laws, legal status, insurance,
- Monitor activities of the various CDD Governments, the Developer, and the VHA,
- Manage the POA phone number, email address, website forum, and correspondence to the POA,
- Keep the main files,

- Manage expenses and revenue,
- Manage special projects as needed.

We have often said that the time requirements for serving as an officer or director of the POA are probably a lot less than you would think. And, the rewards are truly gratifying.

There are no specific requirements or qualifications necessary. The only thing we would hope an individual has is a desire to promote the work of the POA and to serve your fellow residents.

The only exceptions for officers would be for the treasurer to have a financial background and be comfortable keeping the financial records of the POA, and for the secretary to have and be familiar with a computer word processor.

More information will be provided in the September 17 meeting mentioned elsewhere in this issue. If you value the work of the POA, please try to attend.

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What Are All of Those Acronyms Anyway?

The POA Bulletin often uses a variety of abbreviation and acronyms in the pages of the Bulletin and in conducting its monthly meetings. Here is a summary of the key terms with definitions:

CDD - This stands for Community Development District, which is a form of special purpose government in Florida. CDDs are somewhat similar to other forms of government such as towns, municipalities, and cities. In The Villages, there are ten residential CDDs and two central CDDs which administer the functions of The Villages. Please read the Bulletin article entitled: "CDDs - The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly" in the CDD section of the POA website for additional information. The Florida law that created CDDs in 1980 and continues to regulate them is Chapter 190. CDDs are very popular in Florida where over 600 have now been formed.

VCCDD - This stand for the Village Center Community Development District. This is the primary form of government for administration of The Villages area north of highway 466. The VCCDD is a CDD and is often referred to as a central CDD. The actual geographic boundaries of the VCCDD are roughly the downtown area around the Spanish Springs town square and encompasses the area bounded by Avenida Central and Highway 441/27 with an extension for the area of the Target shopping center in Rolling Acres.

There are no residents in the VCCDD. Because of this, the developer of The Villages, being the primary landowner in this area, elects or appoints all five supervisors.

The VCDDD administration area includes CDDs #1-3, in Sumter County, CDD

#4 in Marion County, and also the areas of The Villages in Lake County on either side of highway 441/27. The district administrator of the VCCDD is Ms. Janet Tutt.

SLCDD - This stands for the Sumter Landing Community Development District. This is the primary form of government for administration of all The Villages area south of highway 466. The SLCDD is also a central CDD and basically encompasses the downtown commercial area of the Sumter Landing Square. Because there are no residents (and never will be) within the boundaries of the SLCDD, the developer will always elect or appoint the supervisors of the SLCDD. The SLCDD administers CDDs #5-10 in Sumter County. Ms. Janet Tutt is also the district administrator of the SLCDD.

Chapter 190 - This is the Florida statute (law) passed in 1980 that authorizes and continues to regulate Community Development Districts (CDDs). See the direct link to and the comments about Chapter 190 on the POA website in the CDD section. Be prepared for a long read -- Chapter 190 is over 40 page long. But, it is required reading if you want to understand our government and how it functions.

The Villages - The residential community where we live is referred to as The Villages. The developer of The Villages is the corporation of the Morse family known as The Villages of Lake-Sumter, Inc. (VLS), which we often also call The Villages. Thus the confusion in how we often refer to either our community or the developer of our community.

The Developer - We often refer to Mr. Gary Morse as the developer of The Villages. Mr. Morse is the son of the founder of The Villages, Mr. Harold Schwartz, and continues to serve as the chief executive officer of The Villages of Lake-Sumter, Inc. His son, Mr. Mark Morse, is taking on more and more of the daily executive functions from Gary and could be named CEO in coming years as Gary Morse retires from day to day activities.

The POA - The POA (The Property Owners' Association of The Villages, Inc.) is the original property owners' association in The Villages, founded in 1975. The POA is an independent organization with no ties to the developer of The Villages which might compromise its ability to speak out for Residents' Rights and the best interests of all Villagers.

The VHA - The VHA (Villages Homeowners' Association) is the bigger of the two property owners' associations in The Villages, founded in 1991 with the encouragement and support of the developer of The Villages. The VHA is closely aligned with the developer and it is unlikely the VHA will ever take an independent position different from that of the developer on any Residents' Rights issue. Thus, the VHA will often neglect or compromise the positions and interests of its membership and all Villagers.

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**Letter to the Editor:
Disclosure Reform**

In searching the internet I have found correspondence where, for the past five years, homeowners have sent letters and sent surveys to the [Florida] Legislators stating that there needs to be a complete disclosure regarding the CDD, giving the full bond amount, maturity and the purpose for which the funds are to be used. It is inconceivable to me that the Florida lawmakers have demonstrated such a flagrant disregard for the best interest of their constituents, electing to let the homebuilders take advantage of the home buyers by keeping the truth of the matter from them. This makes our lawmakers as guilty as the developers who are selling houses by not disclosing the true story of what the buyer is actually responsible for in the Community Development District. Thus, is it that the lawmakers are taking money under the desk, beside it, or anyway they can get it in their hands to appease these shady developers? It is quite apparent that they have a complete disregard for those of us who have been taken in because the whole truth wasn't disclosed to us during the process of purchasing a home.

Since learning that we got it royally stuck to us, I have searched the internet, seeking information about this thing called a CDD [that] the Florida Legislature gave the Homebuilders in order to steal from the homebuyers.

From what I've read, I have surmised that there are probably only a minute number of purchasers in CDD subdivisions that actually had a clue to what they were getting into. It is for certain that if [the developer of our subdivision] had been honest with my wife and me, we most definitely would not have purchased [in our subdivision]. The builders know this about prospective home buyers moving here from out of state, and by putting out the big lobby bucks to the legislature, assures that the lawmakers will not pass any act requiring a full, honest and truthful disclosure statement to the home buyers.

To reiterate: they, too, are as guilty as the developers, lacking in integrity, and good honest business ethics. We have the Federal Consumer Truth in Lending Law, and the Federal Real Estate Settlement Procedure Act to protect the buying public, but the Florida Legislature could care less about protecting their constituents against builders who don't give full disclosures to the home buyers in a subdivisions that have a Community Development District. Shame on them.

Bob Moore

Editor's Note: The POA has championed for several years a bill in the Florida Legislature to strengthen the disclosure requirements in Chapter 190, the Florida law that authorizes and regulates Community Development Districts (CDDs). See the listing of the bill on the POA Website. We haven't been successful thus far because of the entrenched opposition of construction and development lobbyists in the state legislature. But, we will keep trying.

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The Patron Program

We noticed that the Lifelong Learning Center is still using its Patron Program. This program involves paying \$75 each year for a two person household to the Lifelong Learning Center in exchange for favorable pricing for events sponsored by the Center.

The problem with this is that the favorable pricing is extended to patrons who are rich enough to give what amounts to a bribe to the Center in order to get special treatment.

Furthermore, this special treatment is extended to residents of The Villages for events in our facilities that all of us are paying for through our Amenity fees.

Some of the upcoming events include Ulysses S. Grant and Benjamin Franklin impersonators who will give talks at the Paradise Center. For Grant, patron will pay \$3.00 per ticket; non-patron residents will have to pay \$8.00 per ticket. For Franklin, patron members will pay \$8.00 for tickets; non-patron residents will have to pay \$13.00 per ticket.

Is this fair?

We already pay for the Paradise Center through our Amenity Fees. Then when the Lifelong Center sponsors an event there, it charges residents an extra \$5.00 if we have not paid that bribe to the Center to become a patron member to get special privileges.

There are all sorts of classes, events, speeches, and training programs, etc., in many Villages facilities that are priced higher to non-patron residents just because these residents haven't paid the \$75.00 bribe to the Lifelong Learning Center.

The critical issue here is that we residents pay Amenity fees for the facilities being used; then we have to pay more because we haven't paid a \$75.00 bribe to the Center.

We think that if any organization rents any of our facilities for an event where an admission or a usage fee is charged residents, then all residents should be charged the same and special privileges should not be given to anybody who can afford a \$75.00 bribe for special treatment.

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Developer Builds Cheaper Homes

In Mark Morse's presentation to the VHA a few months ago, he mentioned that the developer is able to build houses today in The Villages for \$8,000 less than in 2005.

This begs the question as to where the economies come from.

We suspect the savings are in areas like vinyl siding installation, concrete work, dry walling, structural framing, cabinet installation, appliances, etc.

Maybe these savings are the root cause of the sloppy workmanship problems we have been seeing for the new areas south of highway 466.

Yep, saving \$8,000 on house construction sure is nice - for the developer. Too bad for the rest of us.

Just keep telling yourself: the developer builds quality houses ... the developer builds quality houses ... the developer builds quality houses....

PS: Tell that to the vinyl siding homeowners.

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Letter to the Editor: Support For Moderation

I am sending a dues check. I thoroughly enjoyed the August issue. The information on your accomplishments was good. You actually printed some positive articles.

Although we definitely need someone to keep an eye on the improper actions of the developer, overall they are much better than other areas.

Frankly, I have enjoyed the last seven years living here.

Moderation will keep my support.

Joyce Prather

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Our Monthly Column: Gardening in the Villages

FAIRY RINGS by Anne Lambrecht Master Gardener

At midnight, during the full moon of the hot, humid summer, if you step into a Fairy Ring, you can join in the Fairy Dance. The mushrooms around the ring are actually where the fairies rest. Once you enter the ring, it is possible you will never come back.

Shakespeare knew about fairy rings. Prospero exclaims in *The Tempest* (Act V, Scene 1): "you demi-puppets that by moonshine do the green sour ringlets make."

I like these fairy rings. A favorite of mine is on a little hill near our postal station. They show up this time each year when it rains a lot and is hot and humid. The ring gets bigger each year and can be hundreds of feet across and centuries old.

History - Centuries ago, people didn't have good explanations for fairy rings - apart from the standard one about the fairies dancing around and leaving a circle in the grass.

Other people blamed love-crazed hedgehogs chasing each other around. An odd variation on this, rather popular in the 1700s, laid the blame on underground moles running in their circular tunnels. Their feces, rich in nitrogen, would make grass grow luxuriantly.

Henry More, in 1653, said that he wasn't sure whether these "fairy rings were made by witches, or by those little puppet sprites which they call elves or fairies".

Dr. Robert Plot did a bit more scientific work, which he wrote up in 1686 in his *Natural History of Staffordshire*. He dug up the earth and compared the dirt inside a fairy ring, and on the boundary of a fairy ring, to the surrounding dirt. He did think that witches or elves could possibly have been a cause, but he preferred the explanations of strikes by hollow tubes of lightning or even an infection by a fungus.

In 1790, Erasmus Darwin also thought that fairy rings could possibly be the product of natural lightning strikes. But it was William Withering, a doctor from Shropshire, who came up with the answer in 1792. By the way, he was the guy who gave the Western World its very first heart drug, Digitalis, from the plant called the Golden Fox Glove. William Withering dug into the soil of many fairy rings, and consistently found a white mass, which he recognized to be the underground root-like bodies of mushrooms.

What is so interesting about a Fairy Ring is what's going on under the ground - and it's not about dancing with fairies. Think that a mushroom is like a fruit, say an apple. The apple is just a part of the larger organism: the tree, leaves, roots,

etc. The mushroom is the fruit of a really huge and hungry underground fungus organism called mycelium, a tangle of tubelike threads, which spread horizontally in all directions - like spokes radiating from the hub of a wheel. That's what gives rise to the circular pattern. The part of the fungus you see, the mushrooms, springs up at the edge of the circle.

There are about 60 different species of mushrooms that make fairy rings.

There are three different types of fairy rings, classified by how they look. You can't actually see the first type of fairy ring until the fruiting bodies pop up, and make a temporary circle of mushrooms. In the second type of fairy ring, there is a rather vigorous growth of the grass. The third type of fairy ring shows bare or damaged patches of grass. Plants have seeds, but in the fungus world, the equivalent of a seed is a spore. When a spore lands on suitable ground, which is normally richly fertilized, it will grow and turn into this cottonwool-like mass of mycelium. These fungal threads are the actual body of the fungus. As it grows outwards, the outer edge is always alive, while the inner central part eventually dies.

The fungus eats differently from us. We humans eat with our mouths, and then we digest or break down the food with chemicals inside our gut. But fungi do it the other way round. First, they dump their digestive chemicals into the ground around them, to break down the food. Then they suck up this pre-digested food. But sometimes, they don't eat all of the digested food, and the bits left over can then stimulate the grass to grow - to give the fairy ring with the luxuriant growth.

Conditions for Growth - Although the biology of the fairy ring fungi is not well understood, certain generalizations can be made. Fairy ring symptoms are usually more noticeable in nitrogen-deficient turf, simply because more nitrogen is available to the turfgrass plant in areas where the fairy ring fungus is decomposing organic matter.

Fairy ring is more commonly observed under heavy thatch. Fairy ring has been observed on all soil types, but is more common on sand-based putting surfaces. Nevertheless, fairy ring can also occur on older putting surfaces, especially under heavy thatch or where severe layering is an issue. Greens topdressed with fine sand are also prone to fairy rings.

Remedy - Fairy rings on home lawns seldom cause extensive damage; however, homeowners often consider the mushrooms to be unsightly or express concerns about ingestion by children or pets. Removal of mushrooms by hand or by mowing is recommended where pets or children may be exposed, because fairy ring fungi as well as mushrooms in lawns are poisonous. Masking symptoms with small amounts of nitrogen or iron may be effective in some cases.

To make a soup from the ring 'shrooms is not recommended. Never eat mushroom that you find around the yard or in the woods.

I wish I had a fairy ring in my yard. I could invite my husband to make a merry dance at midnight, under the full moon on a hot and humid summer's night.

Cited: Great Moments in Science Dr. Karl Kruszelnicki Pty Ltd May 17, 2001
And <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/LH046> by M. L. Elliott and G. W. Simone.

Letter to the Editor: Ode to the Buffalo

I live in a home where the Buffalo once roamed

But no longer are there to be seen;
Oh, where, oh, where did our Buffalo go?
(not one resident had any say-so)
And the cattle just don't make the scene!

The empty fields (of Buffalo)
Call to us daily as we pass them by,
So full of weeds and grass (we could make hay)
We're upset by what meets our eye;

Oh the loss of our beloved Buffalo....
Is deeply felt by all today!

Villages' owners! hear our plea!
Our Buffaloes and babies we still want to see;
Put up fences and signs or maybe a wall,
Just don't let a few stupid people spoil it for all!

The Charter School's mascot plus other symbols abound...
All over the Villages they still can be found;
Must we give up our icons without a fight or a vote??
Why were our wishes neglected and denied input??

Your overreaction and their removal so quick
Caught us all by surprise! It was such a low trick!
There is still time to change for a change we must make,
Then we'll gladly forgive your upsetting mistake;

Therefore to the Morses we respectfully say:
Let's soon have a "Bring Back our Buffalo " Day!!

G. R. Gibson

Letter to the Editor: Oak Forest Drive

Upon reading the letter in the Daily Sun regarding the Oak Forest decision, we felt we needed to clarify some of the reasons the residents felt something needed to be done to relieve traffic on our street.

We are sure that most of you who signed the petitions flying around the Villages are not aware that during the fall and winter season, there are 3400 vehicles per day which pass through Oak Forest and about 2700 in the summer months. During one hour last winter, there were approximately 384 vehicles. What used to be a quiet and safe street when we purchased our homes has become a speedway, with little concern for our residents. There have been accidents and many near ones just entering and leaving our driveways.

One neighbor was hit in the head by the side mirror of a passing vehicle. He was on the curb walking his dog at the time. Another neighbor was hit by a golf cart when turning into his drive. While one resident was being taken to the hospital, with three emergency vehicles in front of their home and someone in the street stopping traffic, cars swerved around and continued to drive ahead.

Some residents have been yelled at and sworn at for having a parked car in front of their own homes. At meetings regarding our street, we have been jeered at and called stupid for even living on Oak Forest. Never in a million years would we have believed that people in the Villages could be so unkind.

The Oak Forest discussion has traveled all over the country, even someone in Arkansas overheard a conversation at hotel restaurant regarding our street. One of the local churches was even passing a petition regarding this issue. A church!

Setting the record straight, it was not the recommendation of the residents on Oak Forest to put up the "No Thru Traffic" signs. We asked the county to help us. The county had an outside source do a survey. You may read the "Final Report for the Speed and Cut Through Analysis of Oak Forest Drive, The Villages District Three Sumter County on line.

Let us stop the blame game and arguing over our rights. Whatever the decision is on Oak Forest, it will never be a win-win situation. We will all be inconvenienced in some way. It would be wonderful if some of you would choose to drive 1/4 of a block further to Buena Vista which would take about two more minutes of your time. This would help us out greatly and would be much appreciated.

It is our sincere hope and prayer that we can work together to keep this Florida's Friendliest Home Town.

Bob and Judy Hendrychs

From the POA Website Forum: Water Restrictions

Jul 25: I do not understand the reason for watering restrictions in [Sumter] county and in The Villages in particular. Why, if we are short of water, are we allowing Niagara Water to move into our county and pump 500,000 gallons of water per day to be bottled and shipped out of the county? As they drill their own wells, I would guess that they will take the water for free. Funny as we have to pay for it. This seems to me to be a no-brainer seeing there is a shortage of water. DON'T APPROVE IT. Yet the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) did approve it, and so did the Sumter county commissioners. Great leadership all around. Secondly, we in The Villages water our lawns with recycled sewer water, not underground water. So how does our watering or not watering have any effect on the water shortage. Do we have less sewer water to work with? I get tired of hearing "we did it because we can" which is what the SWFWMD is putting out to people that question them and their policies. SWFWMD is appointed by the governor with the idea of looking out for the people of Florida for now and the future. If we don't have enough water now what will happen in the not to distant future when the population of Florida continues to expand? Seems like they have the attitude "At the expense of the many, few will profit." Maybe the 12 current members of the governing board should be replaced. Maybe the board should be expanded to have representatives from all 16 counties that the district covers.

Aug 3: If we are so short of water, why is the Villages developer still allowed to build houses? Why do we see apartments after apartments being built? As long as I see this building continue, with no concern about the shortage of water, I will water my lawn whenever I feel like it.

Aug 3: Just like fuel, eventually water will be a supply and demand issue with ever rising prices. So if you have unlimited assets, "water your lawn whenever you feel like it." Building apartments won't stop as long as there is a need for housing and those that can fund a development continue to do so. Incidentally, I believe major cities such as Tampa and others also draw water from the St. Johns river aquifer. Tell them to build more desalination facilities as they sit on a big pool called the gulf of Mexico. Personally, 1 - 2 days per week is fine (no days with the recent rains) and I derive a lot of satisfaction in giving less of my money to a water authority.

From the POA Website Forum: Who Pays Rental Fees?

Aug 1: Recently saw a ad by Kiwanis Club Lady Lake for bingo at the Paradise Center every Sunday: "Public Welcome." I expect that they pay to rent this building? There will be a lot of wear and tear on this building and who is going to pay for this? The public should not be using recreation centers that our amenities fees help support.

Aug 3: Paradise, like all the other recreation centers belong to us. The public should not be allowed to use the halls unless they pay a fee. If residents want to have a family affair or a anniversary party, we are charged a healthy fee. Outside square dancers also use our recreation center halls. Do they pay a fee to dance here? The Swing and Ballroom dancers also invite outsiders. In my opinion I think the Village residents should come first when it comes to dances, show tickets to the Savannah Center. Wear and tear on these buildings cost us.

Editor's Note: Any outside organization pays a fee to rent these facilities from the central districts. Organizations running for-profit activities also pay a fee which helps to pay the recreation centers' expenses.

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Letter to the Editor: Recycling in The Villages

Thank you for the great job of keeping us all informed as to what is really going on in The Villages.

With regards to my letter in July concerning the recycling program in our area, the matter has been resolved. After we contacted the Waste Management group, we received several calls from them. They assured us that we were receiving recycling and told me that we only needed one truck and they pick up all of the regular trash and recycle and pull out the recycle bags at the station. Again I told them that I did not see how this could be done after it is crushed in the back of the truck. We asked them to please send us the information in writing. We never received the written information. We do have two trucks now, one for the regular trash and then later the truck comes for recycling.

Judy Reeves

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Business Week on Recycling

In a Business Week article dated August 4, the comment is made that "recyclers can make vast profits from combing through ordinary rubbish, processing it, and then reselling it to other companies. ...trash is becoming a financial asset."

But, if you are a resident of The Villages, then don't worry about the profit, even though someone (other than you) is realizing the profit.

Congratulations to the developer of The Villages for his keen business insight and his ability to turn retirees and their garbage into gold.

We have asked the developer for an accounting to show who is making all that profit on our garbage. But if he chooses to stonewall and not respond, then no matter, for the developer can do no wrong.

So, residents, don't ask - just accept that the developer has your best interests in mind (at least that what he tells us).

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O'Toole Defeats Pruitt

The primaries are over, and we now have a Republican candidate for the Florida House of Representatives, District 42, Marlene O'Toole.

Ms. O'Toole is the hand-picked candidate of the Villages' developer, following in the footsteps of Hugh Gibson who represented the residents of District 42 in name only.

Mr. Gibson was the developer's man in Tallahassee for the last eight years and is being replaced due to term limits (eight years is enough).

While we had high hopes a few months ago that Will Pruitt, a man who represented all citizens of the district, would be able to overcome the developer's irresponsible slanted-news machine, such was not the case.

The last two months of the campaign were one personal attack after another by the Daily Sun. Since the other area news outlets had to stick to news stories, there was no viable way to refute the half truths, lies and innuendos printed in the Daily Sun.

Apparently sensing how well Mr. Pruitt's messages of personal experience, specific plans for economic growth, a proposed bill to deny taxpayer services to non-citizens and approval of off shore drilling if coupled with refinery capacity in Florida, were being received, the Daily Sun launched an all-out attack that was accepted without question by a substantial portion of the Villages.

We congratulate Ms. O'Toole on her selection. We just wish she would have run on the issues rather than hide behind her wealthy, newspaper-owner benefactor. We will now wait to see if Ms. O'Toole will actually do anything to "fight the developers and special interests to protect our water," "end illegal immigration," or "restore job growth and cut gas prices" that she promised in her campaign literature.

Our experience to date indicates that developer-picked representatives sit quietly in the back row of the legislature and wait for the call from Mr. Morse.

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