

The POA Bulletin

Free Copy

The Property Owners' Association of The Villages



Issue 35.01

Champions of Residents' Rights Since 1975

January, 2009

POA's Review of its 2008 Activities

2008 was an eventful year for the POA and The Villages. The Bulletin covered many of these worthwhile and interesting stories. Here's a re-cap of what your POA has been working on for the year:

The Lawsuit Settlement - POA people were involved with the class-action lawsuit with the developer that resulted in a \$43 million settlement. The funds will be paid into the amenity funds of the VCCDD north of Hwy 466 over the next dozen or so years. The money can be used to bolster the renewal and replacement reserves for the physical facilities, pay off the Paradise Center renovation bond, address the widening of the recreation trails, etc. This was a big win for residents and we acknowledge the developer's good intentions in agreeing to the settlement. The Amenity Authority Committee (AAC) was created by this Lawsuit Settlement and will decide how the funds are used.

The Hospital ER - The Bulletin published stories almost every month of 2008 about the serious problems in the emergency room (ER) in the Villages Regional Hospital (TVRH). As of the end of the year, TVRH is working to address the negative marks given it by the main federal certification agency

(the Joint Commission) in four areas: Heart Attack Care, Heart Failure Care, Use of Antibiotics in Pneumonia, and the Treatment of Venous Thromboembolisms. The hospital has reacted to Bulletin stories by selecting a new director of the ER, hiring more nursing staff, adding more ER beds, and focusing on solving many of the problems identified by the POA. We also are printing in every issue directions about how to formally complain about poor medical care in the hospital. We are continuing our efforts on this project.

Vinyl Siding - The POA Vinyl Siding Committee has inspected well over 1,000 homes in its effort to detail the sloppy procedures used by The Villages in installing vinyl siding. Hundreds and hundreds of homes have had their vinyl siding repaired by The Villages Warranty department or private subcontractors. Although the developer never acknowledged his responsibility for the sloppy and inferior work, at least some of the more serious repair work has been done. Even owners of homes out-of-warranty have been informed about the problems and many had repairs done. We are continuing our efforts on a negotiated solution with the developer and will report to our readership if and when we can identify further developments.

The Amenity Authority Committee - We finally secured decision-making authority for residents, elected by residents, for the

we decide for ourselves on all amenity issues in the VCCDD administrative area. This was another benefit for residents coming from of the Lawsuit Settlement with the developer. The Bulletin went to special lengths to explain the concept of the AAC and also had a Candidate's Night where all those running for the AAC had a chance to introduce themselves and explain their position to the POA membership.

(Continued on page 2)

VHA President Got It Wrong Again

As a Letter to the Editor pointed out last month, Roger Kass (President of the VHA) has the sole mission of public relations for the developer. Most of us understand that and agree that there is no need to belabor that point. Still, when Mr. Kass, in supporting businesses owned by his employer (the developer), uses the VHA newspaper to disparage the newly elected AAC, even before they have their first meeting, we can't sit quietly.

In the VHA Voice that was delivered with The Daily Sun on Friday December 12th, Mr. Kass launches into a tirade about the impact of the AAC's August decision to increase the fees charged for room rentals at the recreation centers. His concern is for the impact on the Entertainment Department and the Life-long Learning College and how this will translate into higher ticket prices and course

(Continued on page 3)

January 20, 2009

THE NEXT POA
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Third Tuesday of the Month - 7:00 p.m.
This Month Back to Laurel Manor Rec Ctr.

Representatives will Speak from the new
Freedom Pointe Retirement Facility and
from a local Urgent Care Medical Facility

Coffee and Donuts
FOR ALL AFTER THE MEETING
ALL RESIDENTS WELCOME - COME AND JOIN US

← Notice: Back to Laurel Manor
Recreation Center

VCCDD area north of hwy. 466. This has been a stated objective for the POA for decades. The POA use to comment in years past about residents being disenfranchised by "Taxation Without Representation." Now,

It's Time to Renew your POA
Membership for 2009.

Use the Form at the Top
Right-Hand Corner
of Page 15.

If You are Not Yet a Member
of the POA, this is
a Good Time to Join.

Year-End Review

(Continued from page 1)

Recycling - The Bulletin printed numerous stories and letters exploring the issues involved with this recycling program. We think we have helped with resident understanding of the program. We pointed out that the developer seems to be charging us about \$700,000 a year for the privilege of recycling, and we do not think that is right. We think residents should be participating in the profits from the program. We are following up on this.

Buffalo - Well, they are gone, sorry to say. In many stories we called for the developer to explain his actions further and perhaps to find a solution that would safely bring the Buffalo back. However, he just ignored us and the voices of many residents who were upset about the loss of the Buffalo.

Sloppy Workmanship - We printed stories in several issues about sloppy workmanship in new construction in various areas south of Hwy. 466. This is another serious problem that should be an acknowledged responsibility of our developer. We plan follow-up on this for 2009.

Disclosure Reform - We had some activity on this reform bill that we are pushing for passage by the Florida Legislature. However, we think the chances for passage are slim. The problems are: (1) we literally are neophytes when it comes to working with the legislature; (2) we can't afford the cost of hiring a lobbyist; (3) the developer and con-

struction lobbies are against us. You can see the entire bill displayed on the POA Website.

VHA - We wrote several times about the VHA and its allegiance with the developer. Most prominently, the president of the VHA, Mr. Roger Kass, works for the developer and depends on the goodwill of the developer for a paycheck. That is a conflict of interest to most anyone; however, the role of the VHA is to support the developer, so maybe the VHA is just doing what Mr. Morse tells it to do. We think we have sharpened the focus on the differences between the POA and the VHA. Hopefully, residents understand our different roles. Basically, the POA is an independent organization that has no ties to the developer that would compromise our ability to speak out for Residents’ Rights. The VHA is supported by the developer and it is unlikely that the VHA will ever take a Residents’ Rights position that is contrary to the will or the interests of the developer.

Blue Reflectors - We ran several stories during the year alerting residents about the blue reflectors in residential streets that identify the location of fire hydrants. These need to be replaced when damaged or missing.

Wind Mitigation Inspections - We provided information, explained the details, and emphasized the need for residents to get these free inspections that could produce a significant savings on home insurance. Through most of the year, this was a no-charge program of the State of Florida.

Acronyms - We observed that many residents were not familiar with some of the acronyms that we use routinely in speech and in the pages of the Bulletin. These include: VCCDD, SLCDD, AAC, RAC, CDD#s, etc. See the story we printed in the September, 2008, Bulletin explaining these. We will reprint the story periodically in the future.

POA Survey - This is a Villages-wide Survey that we conducted for the fourth time and published results in February, 2008. We think it is representative of what Villagers think about a whole host of subjects. And, we are working on the fifth version for the near future.

The POA Board of Directors - We have often called for volunteers to join the POA Board of Directors to help with the work of your organization. We are happy to say that the response was quick and gratifying. We are blessed with one of the best and biggest boards that we have had in a long time. Thanks to all who have come forward to help

(Continued on page 3)

POA Mission Statement

The Property Owners’ Association of The Villages is an independent organization devoted to our home ownership experience.

The Vision/Objective of the POA is to make The Villages an even better place in which to live, where Residents’ Rights are respected, and local government is responsive to the needs and interests of residents.

Specific POA attention is focused on housing, community, neighborhood, and government issues. Special emphasis is directed at the Amenity Authority Committee (AAC), our Community Development Districts (CDDs), and the Florida Chapter 190 law that regulates CDD operations here.

The POA serves Villagers through programs of education, research, analysis, representation, advocacy, and legislative action.

The POA also functions as a “watchdog” organization overseeing the actions of the developer and our local governments.

The POA has no ties or obligations to the developer of The Villages that might compromise the POA position or its advocacy of Residents’ Rights.

The POA, founded in 1975, is the original homeowners’ organization in The Villages. Membership is open to all residents. □

The Villages Residents’ Bill of Rights

RESIDENTS’ RIGHTS are to:

1. Be treated in a respectful, fair, and responsive manner by the developer and our local government officials.
2. Elect the supervisors and the top administrative officer in our central districts.
3. Approve major purchases of common property.
4. Approve any debt obligations assumed by residents.
5. Have a local government that is free from conflicts-of-interest.
6. Be charged honest monthly fees that are used only for the stated purposes.
7. Receive full disclosure when purchasing a home here in The Villages.
8. Receive an objective market appraisal for major purchases of common property.
9. Receive objective, unbiased, and unslanted news reporting from the local news sources in The Villages.
10. Be consulted beforehand by the developer and local governments on major changes in, or additions to, our community. □

The Next POA Meeting Is on Tues, Jan 20

The next POA General Membership Meeting will be on Tuesday, January 20, in the Laurel Manor Recreation Center at 7:00 p.m. We are back to our regular meeting room in the Laurel Manor Rec Center.

A speaker from the new Freedom Pointe Continuing Care Retirement Community will tell us about the various accommodations and progress of the construction. Also scheduled is a speaker from a local Urgent Care Medical Facility.

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

Year-End Review

(Continued from page 2)

on the board, on committees, and with the many tasks of your POA.

Membership - We passed the 5,000 membership mark during the year and stand at about 5,400 members at year-end. It is encouraging to see this many residents joining the POA. We think that residents identify with the message of the POA regarding Residents' Rights. Furthermore, they are willing to come forward to join and support the organization. Thanks to all.

The Future - We plan to continue our work focusing on informing residents about what is going on in The Villages. And, we relish our role as a watchdog of the developer and local governments. We do all of this under the banner of Residents' Rights (see the right-hand column on page 2 of all Bulletins). We have no ties to the developer that would compromise our ability to speak out on Residents' Rights issues. That's what we do, and we do it for all of us, the residents of The Villages. □

VHA President Got It Wrong Again

(Continued from page 1)

fees. He sees a need to remind AAC members to act in the best interests of residents and to not have any hidden agendas. He indicates that AAC members don't think through their decisions and reminds them, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." He suggests that readers should blame the newly elected AAC members for rising prices and reduced services.

What planet does Mr. Kass live on? All

reductions in services have taken place under an amenity system controlled by a developer "elected" board (VCCDD) as were any increases in prices prior to June 2008.

The AAC is elected by residents and therefore answerable to residents unlike the previous board.

Having said that, let's examine the process that caused the recent AAC approved "increases" to recreation center room rates.

First of all, room rates at rec centers had not been increased since 2005, yet ticket prices for the developer's Entertainment Department events have increased each year as the developer endeavored to maintain his profit margin on these events in the light of cost of living increases for performers, production companies, Entertainment Department employees, etc. The Amenity Division has also experienced these cost of living increases for the services it must purchase (electricity, water, janitorial services, maintenance personnel, replacement costs, etc.). If the rental rate of rooms were never to be increased to cover these increased costs, a growing portion of resident amenity fees would be needed to subsidize these profit making events (and no, the Amenity Division does not receive any portion of the profits).

Board members, in monthly meetings beginning in February 2008 with the RAC and then the appointed AAC in June, worked with the staff to come up with a policy that would in some ways reduce room rental expense to residents while recouping a portion of the cost increases experienced by the district.

To that end, meeting in public sessions, the RAC/AAC came up with a series of room rental rates in August 2008 that increased the non-catered event rate by about 4% and eliminated the higher catered event rate (it should be noted that the Consumer Price Index increased by approximately 10% over the three year period 2005-8).

Also, the rental rate for small card rooms was eliminated. So for example, a large room that previously rented for \$50/hour for non-catered and \$75/hour for catered events will now rent for \$52/hour for any event. A medium room that previously rented for \$35 and \$50 will now rent for \$37/hour for any event and the Scarlet O'Hara Theater which previously rented for \$110 and \$135/hour will now rent for \$115/hour for both catered and non-catered events. It should be pointed out that while there are higher "non-resident" rates for rental of our facilities, almost no one

is considered a "non-resident" including the developer.

So, the profit-making events put on by The Villages of Lake-Sumter Entertainment Department at The Savannah Center pay the same small fee for the room as the charity fund-raisers put on by residents (and still Mr. Kass cries for developer subsidies).

When it comes to the Villages Lifelong Learning College, Mr. Kass is really off base. The College does not pay room rental rates no matter what they are. The College pays a fee of \$3.10 per student if the class will be held in a rec center room, irrespective of how many days the class meets. This is a very modest fee that has not changed and can in no way be blamed for any increases in course costs.

Mr. Kass is a paid instructor at the College, and, according to his VHA newspaper, 50% of the course cost is paid to the instructors while only 7% for rooms. If he feels course costs are too high, he should volunteer to trim the big ticket item.

Mr. Kass needs to do his homework before attacking the AAC and questioning their ability to think things through and suggesting they have hidden agendas.

All RAC and now AAC discussion takes place in open, public, advertised meetings and these rental rates were worked on in monthly public forums for more than six months.

Perhaps Mr. Kass should have attended at least one of these meetings before spreading such misinformation.

Can we please fast forward to March 2009 and let Don Hahnfeldt take over the VHA Presidency? He at least attended an AAC meeting and just might be inclined to do a reality check and connect with his membership's interests rather than the developer's. □

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POA Elections

The Property Owners Association has re-elected Joe Gorman as President and chosen seven others to serve on the 2009 Board of Directors. By position, the new board is:

President: Joe Gorman, who joined the POA board in 2001, was elected to an unprecedented eighth term as president. After retiring as the head of a corporate mergers and acquisitions department for a Fortune 100 medical products company, Gorman moved to the Village of Santo Domingo in 1998. Joe is a Chicago native.

Vice President: R. Elaine Dreidame, was the lead plaintiff in the class action lawsuit that resulted in the creation of the resident-controlled Amenity Authority Committee to manage the recreation budget. Now a resident of the Village of Chatham, she moved to The Villages in 1999 after a career as a college professor, coach, and athletics administrator in Dayton, OH. After serving on the POA board in 2005-2006, she resigned to pursue the Lawsuit Settlement with the developer, then rejoined the Board in late 2008.

Treasurer: Bill Garner, who served on the POA board from 2003-2006, then moved to the POA Outsource Legal Action Team for the class action suit. A native of southern Illinois, Garner spent most of his career overseas for the federal government as a computer software manager. He moved to The Villages in 1994 and lives in Rio Grande.

Director: Frank Carr is remaining on the board as director after serving as POA treasurer since 2005. A native of Staten Island, NY, Carr moved to the Village of Piedmont in 2003, after a 33-year career with UBS in accounting, budget, financial analysis and financial systems.

Director: Myron Henry, a former mathematics professor and college administrator is just joining the board. A native of Indiana, he served at colleges in Montana, Michigan, Virginia, Ohio and Mississippi before moving to the Village of Hadley in mid-2008.

Director: Dick London, who is just joining the board, is a former planning official on Long Island (NY) and an officer in horsemen's associations. He moved to The Villages from Smithtown, NY, in 2006.

Director: Dennis Petrucelli, a former human resources director and claims manager joined the board in November, 2008. A native of Auburn, NY, he moved to the Village of Bonnybrook from Eden Prairie, MN in 2006.

"It is an honor to serve my fellow Villagers as President of the POA" Gorman said. "And, it is a privilege to serve along with the highly qualified individuals just elected to the POA Board of Directors by the POA membership. Hopefully, we can continue making contributions to the wonderful lifestyle that we all enjoy in The Villages."

Bunny Swift was also elected in November as a Director, but had to withdraw soon afterwards for personal reasons.

In the December meeting of the POA Board, **Ken Copp** was elected to the Board by the newly elected Directors. Ken hails from Michigan where he held business analyst positions for the American Red Cross and Steelcase Corp. Previously, his career included 21 years in the U.S. Navy. Ken moved to the village of Duval within the past year.

The POA Board still needs a Secretary. This officer position is responsible for taking minutes in the Board and the General meetings, typing up the minutes, reading the General meeting minutes at the next meeting, and maintaining the files of official minutes. If any member is interested in learning more about this position, please contact Joe at 259-0999 for details. □

POA Bulletin Is Now Available in PDF Format

The POA Bulletin is now available in a PDF version starting with the November, 2008, issue on the POA Website (www.poa4us.org). The free Adobe Reader is needed to open the PDF version. Before November, 2008, in the website's Archived Bulletin section, the Bulletin stories are available only in word processor format. □

More Comments For VHA President

This is a letter sent by Marty Rothbard, a newly elected supervisor on the AAC, to Roger Kass, president of the VHA. The subject is the comments made by Kass in the most recent publication of the VHA:

I just read your message in the Villages Voice and found a portion of it to be very misleading. There is the implication that the newly elected AAC members increased the rental fees for rooms in the recreation centers and that must increase the prices to be charged to residents who wish to buy tickets for shows at the Savannah Center or pay for courses at the Lifelong Learning College, both organizations being private profit making entities.

First, I think a prominent correction should be made to make it clear that the decision was made by the appointed AAC before the current AAC Board was elected. Further, the owners of the two profit making ventures have a choice as to whether they want to pass along the increases to the residents or take the [hit] themselves by doing with less profit.

Additionally, I don't know at this time how much the hourly rate increased. If, for example, it increased \$20.00 an hour and a show at the Savannah Center lasted four hours, it would cost the operators \$80.00 extra per show. If only 200 residents attended (and that might be much too low a number), the individual ticket price would have to be increased by \$.40 to maintain the full profit. Naturally, adjusting those hourly and attendance figures could result in different increases in the price of a ticket, to perhaps \$.15 or \$.90.

Marty Rothbard

Editor's Note: The POA asks that Mr. Kass correct the record in the next issue of the VHA newspaper and that care be taken in the future by the VHA when reporting information like this. □

Larry Blake Home Improvements

Interior and Exterior Painting
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352-446-0502

People Who Don't Like Cats
Were Probably Mice
In an Earlier Life

Tee Time Golf Cart Rentals

Residential — Commercial — Sporting Events



Kenny Patton
Representative

407-276-0809

POA Increases Annual Dues to \$10

The POA Board of Directors has reluctantly decided to increase the annual POA dues to \$10 per year for the 2009 membership year. A membership year runs from January 1 thru December 31. Membership cards for 2009 are now available.

POA dues have not increased in over ten years, during which time our annual expenses have gone up almost ten-fold to about \$65,000. The print run for the Bulletin has increased about eight-fold to over 34,000 copies per month. Bulletin expenses alone, are budgeted at over \$55,000 for 2009.

In addition, we have seen a sharp downturn in Bulletin advertising over the past half year. We have lost and have not yet been able to replace our Select Sponsors which saw their businesses adversely affected by the recent business downturn. They accounted for over \$20,000 in advertising revenues annually.

Consequently, we realized a negative cash flow figure of over \$10,000 for 2008 and this may be more in 2009.

In addition to focusing on a number of cost saving measures, we reluctantly decided to increase membership dues. We hope the membership understands our reasoning and will continue to support their POA.

In comparison, we note that the VHA reported in its November newspaper printing expenses of \$1,740.62 per month (about \$21,000 per year) and no distribution expenses. VHA appears to have a sweetheart deal with the developer to print its newspaper at a lowball rate and then distribute at no charge through the Daily Sun. In comparison, the POA has Bulletin printing and distribution expenses budgeted at \$55,000 in 2009.

It is expensive to continue the operations of your POA. We hope and trust that you understand why we had to increase dues.

With the start of 2009, a new POA membership year will start. It would be a big help if members would send in their membership renewals as soon as possible. We have over 5,000 members and the postage cost alone to send out renewal notices would be huge. We would really appreciate it if you could send your renewal in before we need to send out that renewal notice. You can use the membership renewal form in the upper right hand corner of page 15. Thanks in advance for your help and understanding. □

Letter to the Editor:

Is There a Better Way of Distributing The Bulletin?

With all of the various locations for obtaining the POA newsletter, why is it necessary to have the papers delivered on homeowners driveways? Is it possible to have them inserted into the Daily Sun newspaper as does the Village Homeowners Association?

Mary Ann Kwaske

Editor's Note: The POA doesn't score very high on the developer's Hit Parade (the musical kind of Hit Parade, that is). So, we think it is extremely unlikely that the Daily Sun would want to distribute the POA Bulletin. We have looked in the past at the possibility of mailing the Bulletin to all Villagers, but we found that the mailing expense would be prohibitive. Thus, we have to incur the substantial expense of distributing the Bulletin on our own to Villages driveways. We think that is working well. We have a dedicated group of route delivery people who do a pretty good job of delivering the Bulletin. We hope you agree. □

ATTENTION SNOWBIRDS

Question for Snowbirds: What is worse than going through probate?

Answer: Going through **TWO** probates!

Did you know that if you own real estate in Florida, your estate may have to go through probate, even if you have a Will? Furthermore, if you own real estate up north as well, your estate may have to go through a *second* probate.

Andrew Curtis Revocable Living Trusts



Villages Resident

Andrew Curtis' Qualifications

Over his career, Andrew Curtis has earned:

- An LLM in Taxation at NYU Law School 1986
- A JD at Georgetown University Law School 1983
- An MBA at the University of Michigan 1978
- A BS at Cornell University 1977
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The POA Hall of Fame

At the December POA General Membership Meeting, three members were inducted into the POA Hall of Fame.

Win Shook was active in the POA in the period of about 8-10 years ago. He was Vice President to several presidents, most recently to Joe Gorman in his first term as president. Win passed away in 2002. He was originally from Connecticut and had lived in The Villages in Country Club Hills for over ten years. We had planned to give this award to Win's widow Jan, but she passed away last year after a golf cart accident.

Win is remembered as a friendly, gentle man, with a great shock of white hair, as a good bridge player, and as a wise counsel to the POA Board. He exemplified the best of many members who stepped forward to serve the POA in the time period when the POA was transitioning from its origins on the Historic side of The Villages to the Villages-wide organization that it is today. Win made a great contribution to the POA, and we will always remember his valuable efforts. We are proud to honor Win in the POA Hall of Fame.

The second Hall of Fame award goes to a husband-wife team in the first ever combined award like this to two people.

Lori and Ray Micucci were the driving forces in the two-year-old and ongoing effort to address the vinyl siding problem in The Villages. Ray was in construction in New York state and did hundreds of vinyl siding jobs before coming to The Villages. When he moved here two years ago, he started looking at the many vinyl-sided homes in his neighborhood and realized that the workmanship was sloppy. He spent many, many hours inspecting homes for his neighbors, advising them as to what remedies had to be done, and working with the Villages Warranty Department to get the work done. Ray figures that

he alone inspected over 1,000 homes over the past two years. Ray organized the POA Vinyl Siding Committee that met with hundreds of Villagers about these problems.

Ray and his wife Lori together wrote dozens of articles for the POA Bulletin explaining the problems, helping residents to understand and identify deficiencies in their own homes, and carrying the banner for developer recognition of and responsibility for the solution to the problem.

Many people took advantage of Ray's recommendations and their homes now have secure vinyl siding installations. Ray worked tirelessly on many occasions to do the repair work himself when the warranty department or builders were unwilling to help.

Both Ray and Lori have worked closely with other POA members trying to fashion a solution with the developer. It is doubtful that many residents would have independently recognized the problems so as to avoid greater problems in the future.

Although Ray and Lori are relatively new to the POA, both exemplify the best of dedication and selflessness in helping their fellow Villagers. We are proud to have such dedicated people in the POA and we owe them a collective "thanks" for their efforts. We are proud to honor Ray and Lori in the POA Hall of Fame.

Thanks to Win Shook and Lori and Ray Micucci for being inspirations to us all. □

POA East Side Auxiliary

A meeting for the proposed POA East Side Auxiliary is planned for Thursday, January 15, 2009. The meeting's purpose will be to discuss the Auxiliary's mission statement, organizational issues, and initial objectives.

If enough people show up and are interested in this idea, then we may be able to start an East Side Auxiliary of the POA to focus on East Side and Lake County issues. If not enough people show up, then the whole idea will go kaput!

The meeting will be held in the Henry Fonda room in the Paradise Center, starting at 3:00 p.m. If you support the objectives of the POA, but have been unable or unwilling to attend the evening meetings at the Laurel Manor Recreation Center, this should be a good opportunity for you to participate in your POA close to home. This is an important meeting. Hope to see you there. □

POA Still Accepting Hospital ER Stories

The POA is still accepting your stories about your experiences in the Emergency Room of The Villages Regional Hospital. Whether these are good, bad, or indifferent, we urge you to tell us your experiences.

Thus far we have received over 150 stories from residents detailing their experiences. About 20 of these have been positive to the ER; over 130 have been negative about the services of the ER.

We are summarizing these experiences for review by the appropriate regulatory and licensing agencies for hospitals and medical professionals. We are hoping that the abuses and shortcomings of the ER which we have been able to document will ultimately result in improvements in the services of the hospital.

We have talked to several people who say that they don't want to get further involved. We can understand this sentiment. However, if you don't come forward to tell us your story and follow up on the complaint process, then whatever happened to you might potentially happen to one of your family members or neighbors. We as a community have to pursue this process to force improvements in the hospital so that others will not experience whatever bad experiences you had.

So, we need your help. All Villagers need your help. Please contact us for the details about how you can make a difference in your community hospital for the better. Contact us at one of the numbers or addresses shown on page 15. □

The Recreation Centers and the Customer Service Center have the Roundabout Brochure available. This shows how to drive through those often confusing Roundabouts in The Villages. This brochure was designed and produced by Sumter County and printed by The Villages. You can pick up your copy now.

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Letter to the Editor:

Bulletin Is Negative on Hospital

I have read your paper for quite some time, and I believe your negativity is overwhelming to the point that I may quit reading it. On several issues your paper has nothing good to say. The Hospital is one of them. I do want improvement in areas that may need improvement. Remember this is a smaller hospital and they cannot do everything. In every hospital, people die, people do not get well and people receive not quite adequate care sometimes. This is a fact of life. They cannot be all to everyone. For about 4 months out of the year, this hospital is overflowing with patients, This type of staffing is extremely difficult. It is also difficult to get medical personnel to work in this environment. Also the patient Load at this facility is mostly Medicare aged. The reimbursement cannot be that good. I do think your idea of brainstorming with people from The Villages, the POA, Medical Personnel and whoever else needs to be involved is a good idea, and I hope you get this going. I also do not think that building another hospital at the other end is the answer. The need may be to put all efforts into making the one we have more capable and better prepared for the whole area. On the other hand why not print some good stories and the like about the hospital and give them a boost once in a while. I do think the POA is necessary because the VHA has a viewpoint that is only one sided.

phillis62@comcast.net

Editor's Note: You say that the Bulletin "has nothing good to say" and you "may quit reading it" and "the negativity is overwhelming"? Please, if you will just send us your

name and address, we will put you on the No-Throw list for Bulletin delivery. There is no good reason to continue to subject yourself to something that so severely aggravates you. Let us simplify your life.

So, if you die in a small hospital because of substandard care, it's OK because the hospital is small? Or, overrun with snowbirds? We think the accepted standards of care should be present in any hospital no matter what the size or issues are.

You want us to print good stories? Well, we do print good stories when they are warranted. But, we can't do that all of the time, because the nature of our role as a watchdog of the developer's activities is to print the stories one might consider "bad" because you won't read those stories in the Daily Sun. Where else would you get the information we print? If you only want "good" stories, just read the VHA paper and forget about the Bulletin. In the eyes of the VHA, the developer can do no wrong.

The Villagers need to be informed about what's happening in our community. The stories are not always positive. So, when the POA prints those stories about problems, why do you criticize the messenger?

On the hospital, we have consistently stated our desire to have the best hospital we can have. We praised the hospital in the last issue for the positive changes instituted over the previous month or so. We have urged the hospital to clean up the serious negative areas noted by the Joint Commission in its last inspection of the hospital.

We do agree with the last sentence of your letter. But, this substantially weakens your whole argument. If the POA Bulletin is so overwhelmingly negative (in your first sentence), how can you claim (in your last sentence) that the Bulletin is "necessary" to overcome the one-sided views of the VHA? □

TVRH Is Still Too Small

Last month the POA Hospital Committee announced its finding that The Villages Regional Hospital (TVRH) is too small and lacks the sophisticated equipment needed to serve our community. Although the hospital facility on El Camino Real looks imposing – far too much space is devoted to conference rooms and offices instead of patient care. We believe we owe you a better explanation of our conclusion.

TVRH does offer services in cardiology, pulmonary medicine, neurology, urology – but they only offer very basic services. Advanced services – along with sophisticated diagnostic and laboratory equipment – are all located at the Leesburg hospital (LRMC) and Villages residents must drive to Leesburg to get their service.

How does this affect you? For an example, let's say you need a knee replacement but you also have a cardiac condition. Your orthopedic surgeon probably won't do the surgery at TVRH as cardiac services are limited. He will do the surgery at a hospital that offers comprehensive cardiac services. Most surgeons have hospital privileges at more than one hospital just for this purpose. Your surgeon is not discriminating against TVRH – he is making responsible decisions for your best health. If TVRH does not provide the proper safeguards and back-up for their work – surgeons and other specialists won't practice at TVRH.

Most patients do not expect to have complications after surgery – but they do occur. Surgeons like quick access to their counterparts in other medical specialties and effective lab/diagnostic services. Most patients do best with immediate intervention to unforeseen problems. Thus, even if you request hospitalization at TVRH, responsible surgeons will not operate at TVRH if they have any doubt that they and their fellow doctors can take safe and effective care of you during your hospital stay. □

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Letter to the Editor:

More Bulletin Negative on the Hospital

Upon moving here to the Villages in March of 2008, I was made fully aware of your organization "The Property Owners Association of the Villages" or the POA. I have received several copies of your Bulletin and have pretty much read them through.

I can't help but comment on you continuous negativity about the "abuses and shortcomings" of the Villages Regional Hospital. Every issue of your POA Bulletin has something negative to say about TVRH.

As a nurse, I have seen what goes on in the emergency room in hospitals in the Boston area, and I have never seen any "abuse" and doubt that TVRH is guilty of this.

What I do know, and have asked many a patient who comes in with back pain, upper respiratory infections, earaches and sore throat's to name a few, "Why didn't you call you physician when symptoms first appeared? THIS IS WHY people who are really in need of ER Services have to wait and the ER becomes backed up!! These people shouldn't be there!! Plain and simple!

I agree that ALL organizations have shortcomings as mentioned in your article, and I believe we all need room for improvement but give these doctors and nurses a break.

Doctors and nurses are trained to give the patient their utmost care, patience, and understanding. From my experience, after being in The Villages for 9 months, I am satisfied and amazed at the care given by the medical staffs I have encountered. Ease up a bit; make me like your organization, because so far I am disappointed!!

Maureen A. Lazzaro

Editor's Note: We are happy you had good experiences with TVRH in your time here. Many people do; some don't.

But, please remember that we have two doctors and three nurses with extensive ER experience on our Hospital Committee. Their conclusions are that only a small percentage of patients do not receive adequate care. Some of the problems we have noted should be avoidable with proper medical care. We see no reason why these problems can't be addressed, solved, and avoided. Confidentiality rules, however, limit what we can report about specifics reported to us.

We note that TVRH has already made significant improvements in an effort to address

these problems:

- a new director of the ER,
- 60 more nurses throughout the hospital including the ER,
- an additional triage team for the ER,
- additional ER beds, etc.

Now we look forward to TVRH telling us when the four negative marks from the Joint Commission inspection are eliminated.

To refresh our memories, the Joint Commission gave the hospital negative marks in the areas of:

- Heart Attack Care
- Heart Failure Care
- Use of antibiotics in pneumonia
- Treatment of venous thromboembolism

These are very serious medical conditions that dis-proportionally affect our aging population. These negative marks are ominous for our residents and must be corrected.

Incidentally, if it wasn't for the reporting of the POA in the Bulletin, we doubt that you would have ever heard of these negative marks. So, if the POA reports on these negative marks, for the benefit of the community, does that mean that the POA is negative? We are trying to promote positive changes by reporting these negative marks – so, don't kill the messenger. □

Welcome Back Snowbirds

Welcome back snowbirds. This is the time of year when we renew old acquaintances (and a few new ones). This is also the time when Villages facilities are filled to peak capacity and we plan ahead to avoid problems.

One facility we tend not to think about is the very small and inadequate facilities of the Emergency Room at The Villages Regional Hospital (TVRH). TVRH officials have publicized improvements they've made to this situation and we know their improvements will be tested in the next few months.

But we all need to help with this problem by making responsible decisions for our own personal health care. We ask that you remember the following:

1) As a service to other Villagers – do not use the TVRH Emergency Room for anything except an emergency situation. Urgent Care Centers are scattered in and outside The Villages and can help you with most non-emergency but urgent problems.

2) Go to the Emergency Room immediately if you have a) acute chest pain, b) serious breathing problems, c) serious bleeding

problems, d) serious numbness of any part of your body, and e) unconsciousness.

3) If you have any of the above problems – call 911 and get the EMT's to take you to the hospital in an ambulance. Villages residents are fortunate to have an excellent Emergency Services staff - they will start emergency care as soon as they arrive and will transport you safely to get help. □

Smart Medical Care

It is a shocking fact that The Villages has only one small inadequate Emergency Room at the Villages Regional Hospital (TVRH) to serve the needs of 70,000 Villages residents at night between 10 pm and 6 am. The POA Health Care Committee has advocated for more and better emergency facilities – so far this has not happened.

Thus the Health Care Committee recommends that you take the following steps to improve your emergency health care despite this problem:

1) If you are ill – get to your physician or an Urgent Care center early in the day. It is much easier for a doctor to work you into their schedule at 9 am rather than 3 pm on any given day.

2) Right now – write a list of your medical conditions and the medications you are currently taking. Store this list in your wallet or purse. Also store this list in your home (EMTs tell us they like the list on the refrigerator). This prepared list will help the EMTs and Emergency Room physicians treat you better and faster.

3) The Villages health care system still does not have computer link-ups between physicians offices, lab and diagnostic services, and TVRH. Make sure you request and keep a personal record of the care you receive - including lab and diagnostic tests. This record will save valuable time if you ever require Emergency Room care and it will also save you the cost of un-necessary repetitive lab and diagnostic tests. □

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Order your item and an e-mail notice will arrive stating that the POA has been credited for a donation check in your name.

See the ad on the right of this story for more information on how this all works. Thanks in advance for your consideration in setting this up for the benefit of your POA. The funds donated to the POA by the iGive.com organization will be a big help to the POA in paying our operating expenses.

For any organization located in The Villages which would like to receive more information about the iGive.com benefits for the POA, or would like a brief presentation at one of their meetings, please contact: Christine Courtwright, 352-753-6139. □

Letter to the Editor:

Gas Lines Inside the House

About a year ago there was some problem reported about with inside gas lines. As I recall, the lines were defective. At the time I didn't think it applied to the lines in my house. My house was built in 1999. Recently I got a letter from TECO selling insurance for protection against high repair costs for people with inside gas lines. I am wondering, if this is just a means of selling insurance which is not needed. As I recall when this problem was brought up, it only applied to homes built back in the 1990s. Can you bring me up to speed on this problem and are these gas lines something that I should be concerned with?

Ed Donaldson

Editor's Note: There is a small but not insignificant problem with some homes manufactured recently that have gas lines inside the house. The wall thickness of the flexible tubing (in the walls and leading up to the distribution manifold usually in the attic) is not thick enough. If your home were to receive a direct and strong lightning strike, the thin-walled tubing might rupture and gas might leak. If the electrical energy were traveling down the tubing, the escaping gas might be ignited. The probabilities are small, but this has happened in The Villages. Some people advocate a lightning rod system for

your home to channel the electrical charge away from your tubing and electrical wiring. Some advocate doing nothing because the probabilities are so small.

What should you do? Start by talking to your electric supply company and getting more facts. Talk to electrical contractors. Consider the lightning suppressors that can be put on your electrical supply box in your garage. Investigate on the internet. □

Letter to the Editor:

Golf Club Rental

On November 25, 2008, I made tee-time for myself and my grandson [who] had a Guest Pass. Jack the starter said: "Where's your golf clubs and bag?" The boy [was not] a golfer, did not have golf clubs, and we planned to share my clubs. Well, exclaimed Jack, this is not allowed, every golfer must have clubs and a bag before he is allowed to play.

He got on the phone and spoke to someone and said "some one will be here shortly with a set of clubs and a bag. That will be \$13.50." OK, I thought, \$10.50 deposit and \$3.00 trail fee. Oh, no, said Jack - that's the fee for the clubs and bag, not a deposit.

No where have I ever heard of this, I have never seen this in any brochure, newspaper, orientation or Good Golf School.

This is just another way for the Villages to add to their revenue.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Richard Miller □

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Who hasn't uttered the word, wish there was something I could do to help." Now you can.

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Bulletin Delivery

We need your help on delivery of the Bulletin.

During some times of the year 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. Thank you in advance.

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 for your help. □

Letter to the Editor:

Community Watch #1

These are comments to E.R. Stocker's Letter to the Editor in the December, 2008, Bulletin concerning the Community Watch.

Get your information right. The Community Watch is not just driving around your neighborhood, they are looking for anything out of place or a burglar, smoke or fire and to let the people know that they are there to help if needed. They do not have arrest powers but they have radios to call the Dispatcher to call the Sheriff's Department.

As a former Village Watch Patrol person on the midnight shift, yes, all the shifts have

at one time, called in for a Sheriff. Gate personal also call in to the Dispatch. Yes they do check on your yards to see that you are in compliance with the rules of your District.

Mr. Stocker, you say to cut the Community Watch and eliminate most of the people and the vehicles. Who are you going to get to let you in the gates, help you when you get lost and can't find your way to your home, or give directions to your friends when they come to visit you?

The Patrols are here to help you, they report the broken pipes that break during the night, gators that are in the roads, people that steal golf carts, carts that tear up the golf course at 2:00 AM.

Also repairs to the gates when someone goes through the gate and breaks it, bears that are roaming or any other animals that any one sees and reports. The Patrols are around the squares at all times of the day and night to receive the new people that come in and have to be escorted to the home were they are staying. They also check every door at the squares, for instance Sumter Landing has 330 or more doors that are checked every night.

You also complain about the part time Staff for Special Events. Who do you think sets up the barricades and get the Squares ready for all events that go on in Spanish Springs Square and Lake Sumter Landing Square, yet, you know its The Part Time Special Events Staff and others.

I think that you are the one that has to realize that you can't get Safety and sleep at night if you don't know were your money is

going. Your Amenities pays for a lot of things, and if you don't know, go on line or to your District and they can tell you.

Lou Myers □

Letter to the Editor:

Community Watch #2

I am writing regarding the article in the December [article about the Neighborhood Watch]. Although the Neighborhood Watch, to some, may seem like a waste of money and time, I would suggest, that they be utilized in a more effective way that would benefit the residents who live alone. There are two stories that I would like to bring to your attention: 1) Elderly resident, living alone, dies in his home, and is not found for three weeks. 2) Senior, in her 60's, with heart condition, found in her chair, after three days, because her dog was barking, and thank goodness, brought attention to his master. The thought of these two people, being in their homes for days, without any one knowing about it, to me, is a crime!!!!

How can we utilize the Neighborhood Watch? Well, for one, you can have the option of signing up for this watch to do a drive by, if your papers are not picked up, or when you sign up, you can opt for the "Watch," to check on you, leave a message at your door, or phone. There are so many ways to communicate. As I said, it would be an option to sign up. I would like your thoughts on this to see if this is something that you think would be feasible.

Georgia Kraemer □



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Want To Give Something Back To Your Community

There is a section that lists places that are looking for Volunteers. Find something that you like to do and get involved with helping others. Villagers are known for their generosity, and helping others always makes you feel better.

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From the POA Website Forum:

Villages Management

Dec 9: A year ago Community Watch had a director and an assistant director, and now it has John Rohan (assistant to Janet Tutt) as director (double dipping?) and two (2) assistant directors. These assistant directors each have two (2) management people under them and they each have management people under them, not including gate attendants. All coming out of our amenity fees. [This is] overkill and expensive. Taking a simple job and turning it into rocket science. Why?

Editor's Note: Running the Villages is a big and complex job that requires a professional staff. In general, the POA is satisfied with the capabilities and performance of the staff. It is not quite rocket science, but the jobs are demanding and The Villages basically runs quite well. □

From The POA Website Forum:

Polo vs. Veterans

Nov 28: Back on Nov 9th, the largest contingent of Veterans, at one time, gathered at the Saddlebrook Softball Fields for the annual Armed Forces Softball Tournament. Not one word was conveyed to the general public. Nor were the results printed [in the Daily Sun] until a letter to the editor from Ted Ramirez, who organized the tournament, was put in this past week. C'mon, Daily Sun, get with it. You sure dropped the ball on this one. I know you were notified.

Nov 30: They were probably too busy covering a polo match. I can't believe how much ink they devote to polo!

Nov 30: I do agree with you that they give a lot of ink for write ups and pictures of polo. Not well attended either for all that space. □

Letter to the Editor:

The Amenity Authority Committee (AAC)

When will we see the actions reported from the new Amenity Team [the AAC]?

James and Dolores Dunnie

Editor's Note: The AAC will meet monthly on the Wednesday before the second Friday at 1:30 p.m., generally in the Savannah Center. In December, for scheduling reasons, the meeting was held in the La Hacienda Center. So, watch the Daily Sun or the Central Districts website for the actual monthly information. The Daily Sun should report on the meeting. The POA Bulletin will comment as needed. □

Letter to the Editor:

Holiday Greetings

I read and reread the entire issue... and are so happy to see so many of us making ourselves heard...hence my email. Now here, in the latest edition of The POA Bulletin, are there any wishes for those of us celebrating Chanukah...

Marcia S. Glatt

Editor's Note: Oh, Oh, we goofed up. Sorry, but we neglected to wish the best for the holiday season to our friends who may not celebrate the Christmas holiday. So, Happy Chanukah and Happy Kwanza. And, Happy Holidays to any of our other friends whom we may have missed. Best of wishes to all of us for a happy and prosperous New Year for continuation of the wonderful life we all enjoy here in The Villages. □

Happy Holidays to All !!



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Our Monthly Column:

Gardening in The Villages

January's Temptations
by Anne Lambrecht
Master Gardener

Up north on cold dark January nights I'd cozy up with some hot tea and an oversized stack of seed catalogs, dreaming of my spring garden. The New Year promised a fresh, new start both with my life and my garden. New plants, new techniques, and new ideas were right around the corner and began with these catalogs. I would say what all gardeners say: this year the garden will be wonderful. Then I would dream about pretty flowers and buttery lettuce in neat little rows.

In north central Florida our winters are mild but we can have weeks of killing frosts. The fierce, relentless wind can wreck even the stoutest misplaced shrub. Spring comes early and strong. January can be a crazy quilt of weather: warm, cold, windy, rainy. Usually it's cold in the morning and warms up nicely during the day. Some days it doesn't warm up at all. All the tender green has virtually disappeared and the garden is all sticks. Other plants, especially the tropicals, have perhaps "burned" with the frost and wind. Succulents and cacti have turned to mush.

Keep your plants watered, even if they're burned. Don't let plants become dehydrated. Deep watering prior to a freeze will help prevent dehydration and damage.

It is very important that you resist the temptation to prune. We can still freeze right into March. Waiting until March to prune and trim is too much to ask, I know--I can hardly contain myself until February, but I try ... I try. I try to keep busy and productive in my garden with other chores for January. It is good to go outside, just to get some fresh air.

Some chores to take your mind off pruning:

Weed. There are always plenty of weeds to pull.

Clean your birdbath, bird feeders and water features. Clean your pots and containers. Use a scrub brush with a mild bleach solution and let them dry in the sun.

Amend your soil with leaves and compost.

Clean and sharpen your tools.

Think about what new stuff you will be growing in your nice, clean pots.

Think about growing vertical gardens: maybe a trellis in a pot, maybe a flowering vine by your entranceway.

And most of all, dream, dream, dream. It's good for us.

Although starting plants from seeds is a dominant trait in my DNA, I try to control myself. The husband would say it's a genetic disorder but I can't resist purchasing seeds from at least two catalogs each year. You need to know that not everything in seed catalogs will grow well here. The wildly popular Johnny's Select Seeds are from MAINE! I loved them in Connecticut, but some of their stuff is not suitable for us—too soon hot and humid. Make sure you check suitability for our Zone (8b-9a).

I start my seeds in any container I can find, usually a hole-punched croissant or strawberry container. My medium of choice is Fafard 3B. It's soil-less and full of nutrients so you don't have to worry about fertilizing and perhaps burning your little seedlings.

I keep my watered seedlings on tables on the lanai. There they are protected overhead from frost and rain and still can get sun and are near enough for my attention. We don't have a nice lanai with nice furniture and a nice floor. The husband refuses. He says

"why bother when someone pours dirt all over the place." I swear I have never — on purpose—poured dirt on the lanai. When you're starting seedlings, real gardeners don't worry about any extra dirt.

When we were dating, the husband would cheerfully come with me to botanical gardens, nurseries and nature centers and January is a good month to visit. There are no crowds, it's not hot and it's very pretty. Now he absolutely refuses. He says other than the gardens at the Playboy Mansion he has no interest. Hugh Hefner has a garden? In any event, the husband will be staying home.

May I suggest the Butterfly Rainforest Exhibit in Gainesville, Kanapaha Botanical Garden in Gainesville, Harry P. Leu Gardens in Orlando (they're having a camellia show Jan 17-18), Bok Tower Gardens in Lake Wales, Morningside Nature Center in Gainesville (good for kids) and USF Botanical Gardens in Tampa.

So layer on the sweaters, folks, and get out there--but leave your pruners inside.

Fafard 3B can be purchased at Porter's. Call them first.

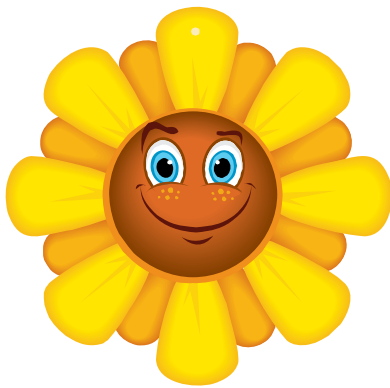
Some good seed companies you can request catalogs from:


Territorial Seeds <http://www.territorialseed.com/>

Baker Creek Heirloom Seed Company <http://rareseeds.com/>

Tomato Growers Supply Company (Ft. Myers) www.tomatogrowers.com


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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 about their experiences.

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 best way to file a complaint. So, here is the listing of who, what, and where to complain about medical service and personnel from any service provider:

• **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

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• **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, and 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, and medical care in general, contact the 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/or 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>

Please copy the POA on correspondence to coordinate our activities on these matters. □

Complaints About Medical Personnel

The Florida Department of Health is the agency to which complaints about medical professionals (doctors, nurses, dentists, etc.) should be filed. Each person with a grievance needs to fill out the three-page form available at this internet website address: http://www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa/enforcement/frm_general-meducf.pdf

This form covers the following areas:

- Quality of care
- Inappropriate prescribing
- Excessive tests or treatment
- Misdiagnosis of condition
- Failure to release patient records
- Insurance fraud
- Impairment/medical condition
- Advertising violation
- Mis-filled prescription
- Patient abandonment/neglect

The POA urges residents with any complaint about service at TVRH to file a formal complaint. By doing so, the hospital's staff will be put on notice that substandard care is unacceptable. Please file a complaint if you have had any bad experiences with TVRH. Otherwise, problems may continue.

If you want copies of the complaint form, please go online or call or email the POA. We can 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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Your CDD Meetings

The Villages CDDs meet at the Laurel Manor district offices:

Second Friday of the month:

SLCDD at 8:00 a.m.
CDD # 2 at 9:30 a.m.
CDD # 4 at 11:00 a.m.
CDD # 1 at 1:30 p.m.
CDD # 3 at 3:00 p.m.

Third Friday of the month:

VCCDD at 8:00 a.m.
CDD # 5 at 9:30 a.m.
CDD # 6 at 11:00 a.m.
CDD # 7 at 1:00 p.m.
CDD # 8 at 2:00 p.m. as needed
CDD # 9 at 2:30 p.m. as needed
CDD # 10 at 3:00 p.m. as needed

The AAC meets on the Wednesday before the second Friday of the month at 1:30 p.m., usually in the Savannah Center.

These meetings have been moving around to various locations, so watch the Daily Sun, the district governments' websites, or the Our Place column on Thursdays, for notices of schedule changes. Holidays can alter the schedule, and special meetings may be held at other days and times.

All Villagers are welcome at any of these worthwhile meetings which show our local governments in action. Residents wanting to know what's going on with their governments should attend, watch the proceedings, listen, and ask questions.

Also, the District Administrator's office conducts a two-hour CDD Orientation program once a week at 10:00 a.m. on Thursdays. Call 753-4508 for details.

CDD Orientation is informative and provides a good basic overview of how CDDs work and are organized. The POA recommends the program for all residents.

However, the POA also recommends that, after attending the orientation, you come to a POA general membership meeting for the rest of the story. You will not get the whole story at CDD Orientation. □

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The Hospital Goofed 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 Parch. □

Golf is a Good Walk Spoiled
Mark Twain

Bulletin Pick-Up

If the Bulletin is not delivered to your driveway within the first ten days of the month, you can get copies at the locations listed below. Please take the time to thank the manager or customer service staff for stocking the Bulletin for pick-up. This would be a big help to us.

Plaza Grande Shopping Center

Ace (Sweets) Hardware
Publix Supermarket
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Spanish Plaines Shopping Center

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Walgreens Drug Store

Mulberry Grove Shopping Center

Publix Supermarket
Walgreens Drug Store

Southern Trace Shopping Center

CVS Drug Store
Publix Supermarket

Colony Plaza Shopping Plaza

Publix Supermarket □

Seniors Vs. Crime

If you have a problem related to financial losses due to scams by dishonest vendors, salespeople, or contractors you should consider contacting the Senior Sleuths for help at these Villages locations:

Sumter and North Lake Counties

Sheriff's Annex -- Sumter County
8035 E. County Road 466
The Villages, FL 32162
352-753-2799, ext. 4253

Marion County

Sheriff's Annex
8230 SE 165th Street -- CR 42
The Villages, FL 32162
352-753-7775

The hours and open days vary by location. So call for details. Wednesdays are best, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Assistance is only available on a limited basis. □

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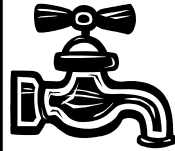
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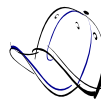
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The POA Discount Partner Program is a continuing benefit for POA members. We hope to be adding additional Discount Partners in future months. Our website also lists this information.

Just show your current year POA Membership card when ordering the product or service listed here. And, please say "thanks" to our Discount Partners for participating in this program.

All Things Fine - 1171 Main St., Spanish Springs, 352-257-7384. 10% off all regularly priced merchandise. Excludes sale items. Not valid with any other offer.

Away From Home Pet Sitting Service in The Villages, 352-454-2623. 25% off first day service of pet sitting while you are away.

Bonne Chimie Custom Skin Care - 990 Alvarez Ave., Spanish Springs. 352-391-9600. 20% discount. Not valid with other promotions.

Bravo Pizza - 1080 Lake Sumter Landing, 352-430-2394. 10% off dine in & take out (whole meal). Not valid with any other discount offer.

Caribongo - 1041 Canal St., Lake Sumter Landing, 352-750-6147. Free color changing Tote Bag (retail value \$9.99) with the purchase of \$30.00 or more at the time of purchase. Offer not valid with any other offer or promotion. Sale items excluded. Limit one Tote per family.

Carvel Ice Cream Store - 674 US Hwy. 441, Rolling Acres Plaza, 352-430-2588. Buy one cone/cup - get one free. Also 30% off on all other items. One benefit offer per family membership.

Chick-fil-A—730 Hwy 441, N. Rolling Acres Plaza, 352-430-0223. Value Size any meal and get a free chicken sandwich.

Cingular (Spectrum Global Network) - 972 Del Mar Drive, Spanish Springs, 352-205-7513. 10% off all phones with activation.

The Club Golf Cart Security System for Villagers, email at yunk38@comcast.net, 352-391-5077. \$3.00 discount (apx. 10%) for the Club Golf Cart Security device for POA members showing their membership card.

Colonial Medical Supplies - 724 S US Hwy 441, Plaza One north of Oakwood Grill, 352-391-5169. Your One Stop Medical Shop. 10% item discount with your POA membership card.

Comfort Suites - 1202 Avenida Central, 352-259-6578. 25% discount, November 2, 2008 through April 30, 2009. Not valid Leesburg Race

Weekend. All reservations are based on availability. Must call hotel directly in advance for individual reservations.

Coral's Casual Patio and Fireplace Shoppe, U.S.Hwy 441/27, across from Wal-Mart, 352-307-8522. Free bottle of "Dew Not" with the purchase of \$300.00 or more. One per customer.

Cozco Handcrafts - 1121 Main St., Spanish Springs, 352-430-0386. 10% off - excludes sale items.

Custom Apparel & Gifts - 920 Bichara Blvd, La Plaza Grande, 352-750-1600. 10% off any item in stock in store; 25% off custom framing.

Edible Arrangements - 11962 CR 101 - Palm Ridge Plaza, 352-391-1334. \$4.00 off purchases over \$25.00.

Enterprise Rent-A-Car - In The Villages at 1076 Lake Sumter Landing. 352-751-2417. Special rates for POA members. A pick-up service is available. One-way rentals to Orlando and Sanford airports are also available.

Flags & Flag Poles - 845 CR 25 across from Lady Lake Post Office. 352-751-1876. \$4.00 off flag pole order of \$119 or more for POA members showing their current year membership card. Discount on "check and cash orders" only.

Gourmet Go Go - A delivery service for dinner menus from local restaurants. POA members receive a \$1.00 discount off regular delivery fees. For details call 352-205-0829.

Great Day on the Water Boat Tours - Discounts of \$5.00, \$7.00 or \$10.00 per person on various boat tours. Call toll free at (866) 269-6584 for details and reservations.

Haagen Dazs - 1001 Lake Shore Drive, Lake Sumter Landing, 352-751-0261. 10% discount for POA members.

Island Images - 1112 Main Street, Spanish Springs, 352-259-7623. 10% Discount on Mondays. Excludes sales items.

Johnny Rockets - 976 Old Mill Run, Lake Sumter Landing, 352-259-0051. 10% off your meal when you show your membership card.

Kilwin's Chocolate and Ice Cream - 1108 Main Street, Spanish Springs, 352-430-3600. Buy one, get 50% off on any ice cream menu item. One offer per family membership.

Marie's Home Hair Care - 352-223-8306. In the comfort of your own home, hair cuts, perms, colors, etc. \$5.00 off to POA members.

MOE'S Southwest Grill - US Hwy. 441 North, Rolling Acres Plaza, 352-430-3610. Buy 1 Get 1 Free every Saturday with the purchase of two medium drinks! Not valid with any other offer. One benefit offer per family membership.

Odd's & Errands by Paula. Your affordable Personal Assistant. 352-430-0764. 10% discount for POA members with current membership card.

Ollie's Frozen Custard - Next to Blockbuster in the Spanish Plains Shopping Center. Either use the Ollie's Coupon in the POA Bulletin, or get a 10% off discount by showing your current year POA membership card.

Panda Express - 869 North Hwy. 27/441,

Home Depot Plaza, 352-751-2507. 10% off, not valid with coupons or specials.

Pizza Hut at Spruce Creek - 17860 SE 109th Avenue, Summerfield, 352-347-7019. 10% discount on every guest check. Not valid with coupons or specials.

Plaza Jewelers - 16770 S. Hwy. 441, Baylee Plaza, Summerfield, 352-307-3846. 20 to 40% saving off the already low retail price, & all watch batteries \$3.00.

Quality Hearing Center - 16850 S. Hwy. 441, Suite 306, Baylee Plaza, Summerfield. Call 352-307-7377 for an appointment. 10% discount for any product or service.

ScentSational Candles and Gifts - 994 Alvarez Avenue, Spanish Springs, 352-753-1604. 20% off any one non-sale item.

SmartSafe Tornado Shelters - One day installation in garage floor or carport. Call Pat Tripp at 352-702-6386. See actual installation. 5-10% off selected models for POA members.

Sonic Drive-In - 11211 SE 178 Pl., Wal-Mart Shopping Center, 352-347-2860. Tuesday Nights: 5 single patty burgers for \$5 after 5 PM. Add-on at extra charge. Wednesday Nights: 1/2 price single patty burgers; 99¢ single topping sundaes. Valid at the Summerfield location only.

Southern Image Photography - 97 Del Mar Drive, Spanish Springs, 352-430-2056. 10% off the Special of the Month.

Stewart Lawn & Landscape Maintenance - 352-245-0214. 20% discount to POA members.

Sunshine Hair & Nail Spa - The Terrace Shoppes of Spruce Creek, Summerfield, across from Wal-Mart, 352-307-0099. 10% off on retail products or nail services.

Vic's Embers - 7940 US Hwy. 441, Leesburg, 352-728-8989. Complimentary after-dinner cocktail or dessert for each person in the party. Not valid with other special offers.

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Village Spa and Salon - 13940 Hwy 441, Suite 802, Oakland Hills Plaza, 352-205-7081. \$15 off Spa Pedicure.

Wholesale Computer Components - The Terrace Shoppes of Spruce Creek, Summerfield, across from Wal-Mart, 352-245-1500. \$15.00 off on any computer repair by showing your current year POA membership card. □

The POA Forum

The Forum is on the POA Website for your use. You can comment on anything going on in The Villages, respond to comments of others, and make your thoughts known. This is your Hometown now -- speak up!

Website at www.poa4us.org

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