

The POA Bulletin

Free Copy



The Property Owners' Association of The Villages

Issue 37.06

Champions of Residents' Rights Since 1975

June, 2011

Golf Carts Can Kill

If we were to ask you if you thought anyone had died from involvement in a golf cart accident in The Villages, what would you guess? (You would have to guess because this information is not recorded by Public Safety or Community Watch, nor is it likely to be published in The Villages media.) At the May AAC meeting, Chairman Bell advised, "I will make a statement that was made to me, 'we have had ten people die in golf cart accidents in the last five years.'" That being said, if we were to ask how many of these fatalities were related to speeding, what would you guess? The answer provided by this same source was "...none of them were related to speeding." All of them were related to drivers hitting the curbing and flipping, hitting abutments, turning too fast, falling out of their golf cart, etc.

There is an active resident Work Group studying safety issues surrounding golf cart usage, but they can only deal with innuendos – no data appears to be available. Chairman Bell, who represents the AAC on this work group asked Eva Rey, the staff coordinator for the Work Group, if there was any way that the Group could get statistical information as to what the safety issues really are as opposed to us chasing things that may or may not be real – that are perceived as opposed to being known.

Ms. Rey replied that, "I think there are statistics available that we could get from the Public Safety Department and other sources but as we've made the statement before at some of our other meetings, those are only the reportable instances - those are only times when law enforcement has been called. So for those residents that feel they have had twenty really close calls in which they had to take action, or they would have been in trou-

ble vs. the one time someone actually uses law enforcement, would not be in the data. So, we can have stats available, but I ... don't know that they would prove a point, especially when you are talking about courtesy and education." Chairman Bell responded that he would like to see some statistical information, not only from law enforcement, but from our own Public Safety Dept. that responds to all of these things whether it be from the ambulance or whatever, so that we can see what the nature of the problem is that we are trying to solve?"

The AAC then voted to have Chairman Bell make this request of the Work Group at their upcoming meeting. The Multi-Modal Path Work Group met the next day, on May 12th, and agreed to do a survey of the paths to see what is out there, like which tunnels have stop bars, which tunnels have speed bumps at the stop sign, which trails have stripes at curves where it is necessary to pay attention, what are the common signs and what are the uncommon signs and what should the Work Group recommend to the districts to use. They also asked for statistics of golf cart accidents.

The POA believes that information regarding golf cart accidents should be publicized both by the District and The Villages media. Many of us have been lulled into a false sense of security when we use our golf

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Community Watch Service

Are Residents Getting the Maximum Bang for their Bucks?

Community Watch (CW) reports to the Villages Public Safety Department (VPSD) under the leadership of Chief Tucker and Scott Wilder, Battalion Chief. The mission statement for CW is "To provide a safe community for Village residents by keeping a watchful eye around the clock. Community Watch is the eyes of The Villages. We are not a law enforcement agency, but we do work closely with the Sheriff's departments of Lake, Marion and Sumter counties as well as the Lady Lake Police Department. We conduct roving patrols in all districts (VCCDD, SLCCDD and Districts 1-10) and are responsible for manning all gates in that same coverage area."

The basic question that needs answers: In the year 2011, are gate attendants and roving patrols and/or entrance and/or exit gate cameras the best means that money can buy "to provide a safe community for Villages residents"?

Chief Tucker's strategic plan for the VPSD articulates the goals and objectives of the personnel that protect the residents and visitors of The Villages. He points out that the world around us continues to change and it will change again in the near future as well. He further points out the need to build upon tradition, but not to become so entangled with tradition that it stops us from grow-

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June 21, 2011
POA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Third Tuesday of the Month – 7:00 PM
Laurel Manor Recreation Center
Cancer Therapy Series
Part I
Dr. Maury Berger
Chemotherapy - 2011 And Beyond
Presentation followed by
Question & Answer Session
COFFEE AND DONUTS
FOR ALL AFTER THE MEETING
ALL RESIDENTS WELCOME – COME AND JOIN US

Golf Carts Can Kill

(Continued from page 1)

carts and therefore, many drivers and passengers do not pay as much attention as they should while using them. If they had read about a passenger being thrown out of a golf cart when the driver made a turn or dodged something in the path because the passenger had not been paying attention to the road ahead, or that a golf cart driver going less than 15 mph in a golf cart lane shared with automobiles had become slightly distracted and bumped the curb which flipped the golf cart and threw the driver out onto the pavement, etc., we believe it would increase the respect for safety concerns that both drivers and passengers in golf carts should have when using them.

STAY ALERT! --- STAY SAFE! □

Community Watch

(Continued from page 1)

ing, that he is not afraid to challenge the norms and look for better ways to provide service and that he will never select a program or option because it is “traditional” without first evaluating its worth to the team and community that the VPSD serves. It is the vision of the VPSD to be seen as an organization that challenges the norms and standards.

Unfortunately, this vision does not appear to extend to Community Watch as we have seen no evidence that any studies or research have or are being done by the CW staff to evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts. North of CR 466 gate attendants, patrols, and the use of one camera at the entrance gate are being used in the same manner as they were 15 years ago – an age when the roads inside the gates were private and non-residents had to be ‘let in’ at a manned gate – they could not just push a button for entry,

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when very few residents had cell phones and when the use of a GPS system by anyone was practically non-existent. South of CR 466, the gates are handled differently. There are very few manned gates and there are multiple cameras at both the entrance and exit gates. Did the Developer make this change because it is a more effective way to provide for the safety of residents, or because it was cheaper? Scott Wilder was unable to answer this question.

Prior to the creation of the AAC we do not recall the effectiveness of CW ever being discussed at either the VCCDD or SLCCDD meetings – it was just business as usual.

Following the Workshop, in order to try and get more data that could be used in evaluating the effectiveness of the two systems, the POA wrote Scott Wilder and asked for the following information:

1. You stated (when asked by Janet Tutt) that it was your recollection that there were about ten instances where law enforcement requested access to gate videos S of CR 466:

a. Over what time period were the ten requests made?

b. What was the nature of the investigations for each of the 10 requests - i.e., burglary, etc.

c. Did information on any of these videos assist law enforcement? If so, how many and to what extent? If not, why not, i.e., quality of the video, etc.

d. If any of these instances took place where there was also a gate attendant, how many of these specific investigations also included an interview with the gate attendant on duty?

e. How many similar investigations took place during this same period for which no videos were requested?

2. You stated that gate attendants, due to their familiarity with residents entering the gates would call for a patrol to come to the

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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 governments are responsive to the needs and interests of residents.

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 our developer and our local governments.

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

The POA has no ties or obligations to the developer of The Villages which 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 Villages residents. □

The Villages Residents’ Bill of Rights

RESIDENTS have RIGHTS to:

1. Be treated in a respectful, fair, and responsive manner by the developer and our local government officials.
2. Have decision-making authority for important issues in our community.
3. Elect our top government officials and approve appointments of the top administrative officials in our community.
4. Approve major purchases of common property and the related debt obligations assumed by residents.
5. Have local governments that are free of any conflict-of-interest issues.
6. Be charged honest monthly amenity 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, un-slanted news reporting from local news sources.
10. Be informed beforehand by the developer on any major change in our community. □

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Community Watch

(Continued from page 2)

area to look for any problems if an unfamiliar visitor entered thru the manned gate -

a. During the same periods as identified in the answer to question above, how many patrols were called in?

b. How many of the patrols that were called in were able to find any incidence of 'mischief'?

c. When mischief was identified was law enforcement called to respond to it by the patrol driver?

d. How many incidents where a patrol driver was called in actually played a role in the arrest of anyone?

Scott Wilder's response was, "I'm sorry, but I can't give you any answers. We don't track this information."

Due to the fact that the data received by the AAC from CW at the recent workshop did not provide the information necessary to evaluate and compare the effectiveness of cameras and attendants, etc., Chairman Bell requested Scott Wilder attend the May AAC meeting for further questioning. At the May 11th meeting an AAC member stated that they need to know the effectiveness of the cameras and attendants before they worry about costs. Its intent is to determine what works BEST and then work on how to provide that service on a cost effective basis. (costs for cameras, the use of fiber optics vs. internet phone lines if cameras are used, are premature.)

When asked for more information Scott Wilder stated that, "currently our records management system pulls in how many times we assist local law enforcement but it does not break that down into different categories or between patrols and gates - so it will just be by recollection."

An AAC response was that we need stories - not necessarily numbers - on how attendants, cameras and patrols were involved and helped law enforcement, and indicated that anecdotes are better than nothing if you can't provide stats.

Further questioning also revealed that the gate attendants do not keep a log, so such things as incidents, number of inquiries for directions, number of 'suspicious entrants',

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POA says "Thanks"

We would like to say "thank you" for the tremendous response of members renewing their 2011 POA memberships and also for the many new members who have joined with us as a way of supporting Residents' Rights for all Villagers. So, if you haven't yet joined with us or renewed your membership, now is a good time to fill out the Membership Form below. If you are not a 'joiner', but appreciate the efforts the POA volunteers are making on your behalf, you can always simply mail in a donation to help defray our costs. Our mission is to keep each of you informed of facts about issues which may not have been clearly or fully presented in other media.

We would also like to cordially invite you to attend one of our monthly meetings, which is where we are alerted to possible problems

that residents are experiencing, i.e. vinyl siding issues, ER waits, etc. The POA meeting is held the third Tuesday of each month at 7PM at Laurel Manor.

A typical meeting consists of about 30 minutes of organization business (treasurer's report, minutes, etc.), reports from Shine, 50/50, updates on the IRS, progress of The PALMS, etc.; 30 minutes of an open forum where attendees can **ask any questions they want** us to answer or find the answer to and/or present problems they are facing; and a guest speaker who will talk for approximately 15 minutes and answer questions for 15 minutes, which concludes the formal part of the meeting.

Attendees are then invited to join us in some social time where the POA provides free coffee and donuts to the attendees. (The month's speaker can always be found in the box at the bottom of the front page of the Bulletin.) □

2011 MEMBERSHIP FORM PROPERTY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION OF THE VILLAGES P. O. Box 1657, Lady Lake, FL 32158

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Community Watch

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etc. which might be used in evaluating their continued use are also non-existent.

At the suggestion of AAC member Ann Forrester, area law enforcement officials will be invited to attend the June AAC meeting and provide their professional opinions on how safe they feel we are and compare the advantages and disadvantages of gate attendants, patrols and the usage of cameras.

The POA has no doubt that the CW staff is competent and hard working. However, as Chief Tucker advises, "...hard work is more than the amount of sweat generated through task completion (miles driven and monitoring resident use of gate cards). The concept involves the "positive" outcomes of the task completion. It involves working smart as we find better and more efficient methods to accomplish the challenges in front of us.

It is very disappointing that there has been NO effort on the part of the CW administrators to evaluate the effectiveness of what they are doing. The POA believes it is important that residents north of CR 466 make their opinions known to the AAC members. As

best we can tell, there is clearly a segment of the population that likes the status quo and is comforted by having a gate attendant who smiles and says "hello" to them. We agree that those gate attendants are part of the image of Florida's Friendliest Hometown, but is that friendly, familiar face worth over \$70,000/year per gate ?

If some level of security and crime deterrent is what you want for your amenity fee payments, then it would seem that the AAC should consider full function cameras covering all entry and exit lanes and both the front and rear views of the vehicles. Each entry would have a button to raise the gate and another button to reach dispatch to get directions or any other help. The recorded views from these cameras would seem to be a better history of what happened at the gate for possible later review by law enforcement, than the memory of the gate attendant who generally has a limited view of the entering vehicles and no view of the exiting vehicles. In addition, residents need to realize that most areas of The Villages can be reached without going through a "manned" gate and that there are some gates which will require a gate attendant for traffic control, especially during the day when there is a lot of traffic. One possible scenario for the AAC would be to replace some of the manned gates with this new camera arrangement and see how it works out.

We suggest you contact your AAC repre-

sentative or all members of the AAC with your views:

- Lady Lake/County jo.weber@districtgov.org
- CDD1 carl.bell@districtgov.org
- CDD2 ann.forrester@districtgov.org
- CDD3 john.wilcox@districtgov.org
- CDD4 rich.lambrecht@districtgov.org
- VCCDD gary.moyer@districtgov.org □

CR 101 Tunnel Repair Update

We have been receiving letters inquiring as to the status of the repairs to the tunnel under CR 101 and that issue has been brought up at the last two POA meetings. At the May 17th POA meeting, Janet Tutt advised that during the first couple of months the cement and the structure were being tested by an engineering company in order to understand exactly what the problem was. Now the second engineering company and the manufacturer are determining the 'fix'. The 'fix', as understood, appears to meet all of the District's requirements so they are taking that 'fix' that was discussed and reducing it to writing and specifications. Those specifications should be completed by the time you read this article.

Once the specifications are finished the District will submit them to the District structural engineer and also submit them to Sum-

(Continued on page 5)

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CR 101 Tunnel

(Continued from page 4)

ter County because they will need to see the retrofit since the tunnel is under a Sumter County roadway. Once both of those engineers sign off on it, an agreement will go back to District 3. The District attorney is currently preparing an agreement between the manufacturer and District 3 to guarantee that the District is totally protected through the 'fix'.

It is hoped that the agreement will be signed at the scheduled meeting during the second week in June. The manufacturer anticipates it will take 4 to 6 weeks for the construction of the spans (they will be corrugated) that they are going to have to put inside the tunnel, and then they will have to be shipped and installed. At this point, based on the discussions, all costs are anticipated to be borne by the manufacturer.

The POA suggests you watch the District's website (www.districtgov.org) for all updates on the CR 101 tunnel situation. In addition, District staff will utilize the E-Notification system to update residents on the status of the tunnel, so please make sure your friends and neighbors sign up for E-notification (the link is at the bottom of column one on the first page of the District website) and check the box to receive 'What's Happening'. □

AAC Meeting May 11, 2011

Old Business Topics Included:

The repairs to the recreation trail across El Camino Real from Freedom Pointe, including the removal of some shrubbery, will take place soon, once the seasonal residents have departed and usage declines.

The AAC discussed the recurring complaints from residents regarding the "saving" of seats on town square. Some residents tie chairs together and place items on them in the morning to "save" the seats for the 5 p.m. DJ events, etc. Staff is working with the entertainment department which owns the chairs and leases the square in the afternoon and evening, to provide a solution.

Staff has begun using E-Verify to confirm legal residency status for all employees of the District and will begin implementing it for contractors as new agreements are issued.

New Business Topics Included:

After a review of the bids and the staff recommendation, the AAC recommended that Rainey Construction be selected to reconstruct the Chula Vista/Mira Mesa multi-modal path. The expectation is that the project will likely start in mid-June.

A Consent Agenda containing an amendment to the agreement with Florida Highway Products, Inc. for inclusion of pricing for Chip Seal and a change to the agreement with Citizens First Bank regarding compensating balances (RAD fund balance required is reduced from \$438K to \$401K) was approved.

Informational Items:

The bid process for the Chula Vista and Mira Mesa golf courses renovation projects (course, irrigation and bunkers) is still proceeding. Once begun, the two courses will likely be closed for at least 90 days this summer and should coincide with the trail reconstruction project.

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AAC Meeting

(Continued from page 5)

Reports Included:

District Management has responded to an IRS request for VCCDD voter information by providing commercial property acreage by owner during the time periods the bonds were sold. Staff will review to determine if votes rather than acreage needs to be provided.

The AAC was advised that a budget workshop will be held on Wednesday, May 18, 2011, at 1:30 PM, at the District Office Board Room on Laurel Manor Drive.

Audience Comments:

The Chairman led a discussion of the Community Watch gate attendant function and possible alternatives. While some residents expressed support for the current physical presence of a gate attendant, others felt that cameras covering all entry and exit lanes (both front and back of the vehicle) would provide a better record of activity at the "manned" gates. Further discussion is planned for the budget workshop.

Two resident requests, one for additional lighting at the Chula Vista Villa entry and the other for expansion of the Croquet/Lawn Bowling facilities were directed to staff for further review.

Please go to the www.districtgov.org website for the official minutes, agendas and meeting schedule. **Next AAC Meeting – Wednesday, June 8th, 1:30 PM, at the Savannah Center.** □

Cancer Therapy In 2011 And Beyond Two Part Speaker Series

The presentations on the future of cancer therapy will provide an opportunity for our members to learn from leading physicians about the new technologies and discoveries that are creating an evolutionary leap forward in the approach to cancer therapy. Whether you are a cancer survivor, cancer patient, have been a cancer patient caretaker, or have been fortunate to not have had any close association with anyone being treated for the disease, we believe that you will find both of these presentations very informative and valuable.

We could sense the enthusiasm for this type of program from the audience which attended the January POA meeting wherein Dr. Norm Anderson, of the Robert Boissoneault

Oncology Institute, graciously replaced the scheduled speaker who withdrew very close to the presentation date. Recently, the POA was contacted by Dr. Maury Berger, an area medical oncologist, who expressed his willingness to speak to our members about the future of chemotherapy. We thought a two part series – the first on chemotherapy – and the second on radiation therapy – by these two specialists would be a great service to those members interested in the future of cancer therapy.

Each speaker will give a 20 minute 'lecture' and then there will be a 10 to 15 minute question and answer session – (no specific case related questions). We asked both of them to provide us with some background information which is as follows:

PART I (Chemotherapy) – Evidence Based Medicine in Oncology and Hematology – From Community Care to the University – Tuesday, June 21, 7PM, Laurel Manor Recreation Center.

Dr. Maury Berger is certified in Internal Medicine, Oncology and Hematology by the American Board of Internal Medicine. He attended Wisconsin for Medical School, did his oncology training at the University of Wisconsin and Medical College of Wisconsin, and ten years later did a two year fellowship in hematology at Cook County Medical Center. He worked for Aurora Healthcare System in Milwaukee for a number of years

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Cancer Therapy

(Continued from page 6)

and has been with Ocala Oncology for ten years, an affiliate program with Moffitt and Shands. Ocala Oncology is part of US Oncology, a cancer care network, which includes 1300 cancer specialists and more than 472 centers spanning 39 states. This network cares for the single largest base of cancer patients in the United States.

Ocala Oncology provides patients comprehensive care for a wide range of cancers and hematological disorders. This network allows Dr. Berger to offer his patients the state-of-the-art medical oncology treatment formerly found only at academic or institutional centers. He has been involved in a number of research studies through his office and US Oncology.

PART II – Radiation Oncology in 2011 and Beyond - Tuesday, July 19, 7PM, Laurel Manor Recreation Center

Dr. Norman Anderson has been practicing Radiation Oncology since 1985 and is the founder and CEO of the Robert Boissoneault Oncology Institute. When asked about his topic, he advised that, "Radiation Oncology can be a mystery. Its invisible nature creates a mystique shrouding the diversity of both success as well as attributable side effects. Separating fact from fantasy can be difficult. Understanding the nature of ra-

diation in clinical terms thus becomes the basis for this presentation. We will:

1. Discuss the rational role for radiation in the treatment of cancer
2. Explain how to maximize cure and minimize side effects in terms we can understand
3. Explain the technology of this field of medicine so that the audience has a frame of reference to judge the value of therapy
4. Understand why we combine different forms of treatment
5. Evaluate those food sources and supplements that will decrease the occurrence of, and aid in the recovery from, malignancies."

We look forward to seeing you at these lectures. □

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***** Letters to the Editor *****

Hypothetical Question
“What If Morse Sells The Villages?”

I have a hypothetical question. Is it possible for the Morse family to “sell” The Villages to a large foreign or domestic corporation? What could be the ramifications of that happening?

Jackie Mullen

Editor’s Note: First of all, the Morse family does not own The Villages. They do

own the majority of commercial property in the area – most of the property around the town squares as well as a substantial interest in the properties (mostly shopping centers) on the county and state roads surrounding The Villages. A fair amount of those properties are located within the two commercial districts, VCCDD (Spanish Springs area) and SLCDD (Sumter Landing area) boundaries. Thus, if these commercial properties were sold those new owners would have control of the seats on the respective Village Center and Sumter Landing Community Development District boards.

The POA had serious concerns about this possibility before the lawsuit settlement created the Amenity Authority Committee

(AAC). This body – the AAC -, comprised mainly (5 of 6 members) of residents, elected by residents, now have control over ALL non-bond required amenity income. Prior to the AAC, the VCCDD – the commercial district - wherein there are no residents and hence the owner of the commercial property (Morse at this point) controls the seats on the Board, controlled the expenditure of all of the amenity funds and the residents did not have any authority to determine how they were expended. An example of how things could go wrong if you looked at spending amenity funds from the point of view of a commercial property owner, rather than a user-resident, occurred in 2002 when the VCCDD board used close to \$2 million dollars, most of it our amenity funds, to straighten Paige Place (the extension of El Camino Real) and construct the new bridge over Lake Mira Mar to facilitate entry to the commercial district. Meanwhile, the Paradise Recreation Center was left to deteriorate so badly that when enough pressure was put on the VCCDD Board by the residents to do something about it, there was no money in the reserve account and it was necessary to

(Continued on page 9)

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*** Letters to the Editor ***

What If?

(Continued from page 8)

take 'another loan' – using future amenity fees to secure the renovation. The establishment of the AAC protects the residents north of CR466 from this type of situation. Resident elected AAC members now decide how non-bond required amenity funds will be spent and commercial district improvement projects must be funded via assessment of commercial property owners.

Aside from this potential problem (currently no resident control of non-bond related amenity fee expenditures for residents south of CR 466), using the VCCDD (homes north of CR 466) as an example (because it is completely built out), the major concerns would be as follows:

- 1) The country clubs are owned by the developer – if these were sold it would probably be business as usual. The new owner would have to set greens fees, etc. similar to what we are used to paying because if they didn't, Village residents would not use them.
- 2) Another issue that would have to be resolved would be the continued provision of the tee time system and other computer services now being provided by the developer.
- 3) The Spanish Springs town square is owned by the VCCDD, not the developer.

However, the developer has a contract with the VCCDD for the right of first refusal for its use for the hours 3PM to 10PM every day of the year. The contract requires payment of a mere \$25.00 a day (\$9,125.00 annually), plus annual CPI increases. Additionally, the developer was granted a lease on the land under the two refreshment kiosks (and permission to build the kiosks) for only \$800.00 per year, plus annual CPI increases.

4) The nightly entertainment on the square is provided by the Developer via his Entertainment Department. It is likely that if he sells his commercial properties to some large corporation he will not be interested in staying around and running the Entertainment Department. Hopefully, by that time the PALMS (proposed performing arts center) will be up and running to provide indoor entertainment and the VCCDD will hire a company or individual to coordinate the performances on the square, using the profit from the liquor sales at the two kiosks to cover their cost. Another possible alternative is for the developer to spin off the entertainment department as a separate company, run by one of his close associates or former employees. This new venture could conceivably continue the entertainment and beverage sales on the squares and book shows and other performances at the Savannah Center, Katie Belle's and also at the Church on the Square.

5) The water and sanitary sewer companies north of CR 466 (VCSA and LSSA) are owned by the VCCDD, so any new owners of the commercial property will always control how these utilities are operated and the setting of rates. Unlike private utilities, government owned utilities are not regulated by the Public Service Commission. It should be noted that the utility south of CR 466 (NSCUDD) is owned by a "dependent" district of Sumter County (not the SLCCDD). While the current NSCUDD board was effectively selected by the developer, beginning in 2012, board members will be elected by residents of the area serviced by the utility.

6) Like the utilities, the Villages Public Safety Department is also controlled by the VCCDD board elected by the commercial property owners. Hopefully a change in

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*** Letters to the Editor ***

What If?

(Continued from page 9)

commercial property ownership would not be allowed to impact this vital service.

7) **PLEASE NOTE:** that the Developer does not have anything to do with the flowers in the roundabouts and other roadside landscaping. Residents pay for these via the maintenance assessment from their residential CDD which is included on their annual county tax bill.

If the developer remains here at least through build-out, as he has stated on numerous occasions, then the major concern for residents should be the establishment of an Amenity Authority Committee to the SLCCD (for residents south of CR 466) with the same powers as that established for the residents north of CR 466. With both resident elected AAC boards in place, the sale of commercial property and the turning over of the VCCDD and SLCCD boards to new business interests should have very little impact on our overall Villages lifestyle. □

Blue "Bathrooms"

It seems this year as probably in years past T&D has had many construction jobs in our neighborhood. What seems new and most irritating is the placement of their "Porto Potties" in plain sight and at the foot of driveways where work is being done. We are use to seeing these at new construction areas, but in completed and mature neighborhoods -- in my mind -- this is unacceptable, unsightly and irregular !!

I can't believe the specific homeowner allows or accepts this under any condition other than in the rear of the property and don't understand why their neighbors aren't as up in arms as I am over this big blue outdoor bathroom which remains in place a week or two or longer.

While we are proud of our neighborhood and The Villages in general - some things need to be called out as wrong and others given some attention. Jerry Shane

Editor's Note: We agree they are unsightly. However, employers, such as T & D, must follow the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) construction sanitation standard which is codified at 29 CFR 1926.51. Paragraph (c) of §1926.51, "Toilets at construction jobsites". OSHA has a table which identifies that an employer must provide one 'toilet' on sites which will

involve one to twenty workers, as long as the project will not be performed by 'mobile crews'. OSHA defines workers who continually or frequently move from jobsite to jobsite on a daily or hourly basis as "mobile". When determining whether the sanitation standards apply to a specific work crew, employers must evaluate the nature of the site and job functions of the crew.

Further, the "big blue outdoor bathrooms" are transported to, maintained, and retrieved by large trucks which would not be able to perform their function in someone's backyard without damaging lawns and landscaping. What would help is for T & D and other similar companies to start **and finish** a job rather than starting and then dragging the finishing out over a two or three week period while they were starting additional jobs. □

Thank You

Please pass this thank you note on to all the hard working and dedicated officers and volunteers who give the only REAL AND WORTHY news we will ever get! I hope you persevere against great odds ("management millions"). For 15 years I have spoken to anyone that will listen about the POA's virtues and the necessity for all of us to become informed and thereby involved. D. Laveau

Editor's note: Thank you for the kind words and continued support. □



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*** Letters to the Editor ***

55 and Over Rule

Who regulates or enforces the 80%-20% occupancy rates in our community? Is there an agency in The Villages who keeps an eye on this?

Keep up the great work. Thank You,
Don Petersen

Editor's Note: For those not familiar with the 80-20 rule, we will begin with a brief introduction. The Federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin. The Housing for Older Persons Act (HOPA) is an exception to that law that allows communities to operate as "55 or over" housing. To qualify for this exception, the following criteria must be met:

1. At least 80% of the units must be occupied by at least one resident over the age of 55;

2. The community must publish and adhere to policies and procedures demonstrating an intent by the housing provider (the association) to provide housing for persons 55 years of age or older; and

3. The housing provider must engage in appropriate age verification procedures that includes a community census from time to time.

The Villages various Declarations of Restrictions contain the following language: "The Subdivision is an adult community designed to provide housing for persons 55 years of age or older. All homes that are occupied must be occupied by at least one person who is at least fifty-five years of age. No person under nineteen years of age may be a permanent resident of a home, except that persons below the age of nineteen years may be permitted to visit and temporarily reside for periods not exceeding thirty days in total

in any calendar year period. The Developer or its designee in its sole discretion shall have the right to establish hardship exceptions to permit individuals between the ages of nineteen and fifty-five to permanently reside in a home even though there is not a permanent resident in the home who is fifty-five years of age or older, providing that said exceptions shall not be permitted in situations where the granting of a hardship exception

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*** Letters to the Editor ***

55 and Over

(Continued from page 11)

would result in less than 80% of the Homesites in the Subdivision having less than one resident fifty-five years of age or older, it being the intent that at least 80% of the units shall at all times have at least one resident fifty-five years of age or older..."

To get an answer to your question, we asked Mr. Gary Moyer, Vice President of Development for The Villages, this question and he advised that The Villages does in fact keep track of this data and that he would forward us the current information. He reported that, "...we (The Villages) have accounted for 42,672 homes of which 40,935 have at least one person 55 or older living within the home, or 95.92%." He further advised that this "...data is comprised of new sales, resales, of which The Villages resale department accounts for a large percentage of such transactions, and data that is available in the public record. We do not have info on leases. For the most part, however, the information is as complete as we can get it and if there are variances, it will only be minor from what is provided above." (We concur with Mr. Moyer's statement and further note that in order to not meet the 80% minimum of over 55's, 8,535 homes would have to be without a person 55 or older living within and we do

not believe we are anywhere near that number in The Villages...)

The POA wonders if the growing number of inquiries we have been receiving on this issue is due in part to an apparent increase in the number of under 55's who are identified as having a Villages address that have been appearing in the weekly Daily Sun article, the 'Police Blotter'. This article consists of "... excerpts from arrest logs of area law enforcement agencies. The arrest log is not intended to imply guilt or innocence; it is merely a means to inform the community..." □

Swimming Pool Hours

The Villages offers so many activities to its residents all day long, including many outdoor activities. I cannot participate in any outdoor activities due to advanced skin cancer. I would like to ask that our community pools be left open for 30 minutes past dusk so that those of us affected by this disease can participate in an outdoor activity too. I was informed that there are two pools open until a late hour, but a half hour at all community pools would make it so much more convenient for the hundreds of us who could benefit from this healthy form of exercise.

Natalie Soto

Editor's Note: There are two pools on the East side of Rt. 441 that are permitted to remain open past dusk because they were in

operation before the regulations were changed which required significantly more lighting for newly constructed pools to be open past dusk." The Recreation Department cannot keep any of the other pools open after dusk because they do not meet Florida Regulation 64E – 0.006 (c) which requires that "Artificial lighting shall be provided at all swimming pools which are to be used at night or which do not have adequate natural lighting so that all portions of the pool, including the bottom, may be readily seen without glare." The regulation requires specific lighting at the pool water surface, the pool wet deck surface and underwater lighting, which would make it a very expensive project. □

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***** Letters to the Editor *****

Welcome to the POA

I am enclosing my check for \$20 for membership in your organization. We moved here in June of 2005 and, at that time, your organization was characterized by an in-your-face strategy. Over the last several months I have noticed your attempts at civilizing relations with other organizations in the area and an effort at a rational response to problems. It is now time to join.

Thank you for becoming what your principal statement says you want to be.

Walter Griffith

Editor's Note: Welcome to the POA and thank you for recognizing our efforts. □

Dogs on Leashes

I believe all dogs are to be on leashes when they are outside. How about dogs with collars on them that supposedly keep them in the yard? We went for a walk and there were 2 dogs in this yard barking and having a fit and we thought they were going to come after us but they seemed to stop short because I believe they had those collars that stop them. I do not believe dogs should be left out like

that to bark up a storm and nobody from that household did a thing.

Jim Horning

Editor's Note: We forwarded his question to Diane Tucker, District Operations Manager, who oversees deed compliance and this was her response to him: "The Restrictive Covenants state that the pet(s) must be kept on a leash. We would be happy to have our Deed Compliance Officer talk with the property owner if you can provide us with an address." □

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*** Letters to the Editor ***

NPH Little Known Illness

Nearly six years ago, after two terribly frustrating and frightening years, a forty-minute surgical procedure at LRMC gave me back the life I had lost. The culprit was a seriously or erroneously under diagnosed affliction known as NPH. Since that time I have made continuing efforts to "pay it forward" by sharing my experience with others who may be suffering the same fears and frustrations without knowing what is wrong. Or perhaps even worse, are being treated for the wrong condition.

WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT NPH CAN DESTROY YOUR LIFE - Believe it! I am an NPH survivor because an internist suspected that my symptoms were not indicative of dementia, Alzheimer's or Parkinson's but a lesser known and too frequently misdiagnosed condition known as NPH, or Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus, most frequently seen in children and erroneously referred to as "water on the brain". Many medical experts believe that as many as 750,000 persons over 60 years of age are afflicted with NPH, but as few as 20% are accurately diagnosed and treated. The remaining 80% face a future of declining physical and mental capabilities and increasing incontinence, along with several other possible related conditions.

WHAT IT IS - The human brain is awash at all times with cerebro-spinal fluid or CSF constantly produced, circulated through the

brain, draining into the body, disposed of and replaced with an ongoing supply. Within the brain are three storage areas known as ventricles. NPH occurs when the fluid does not drain on a timely basis and these ventricles fill with excess CSF, putting pressure on surrounding brain cells and causing the symptoms, which are too often not recognized for what they represent.

THE SYMPTOMS - The first noticeable symptom is usually gait disturbance; trouble walking. Commonly, people with NPH may walk with slow, short, shuffling steps and keep a wide stance (for balance) when standing still, or even when walking. People with NPH may also feel as if they cannot lift their foot from the floor. They may feel weak and unsteady in their legs, have a hard time getting started walking, and experience sudden falls.

Signs of dementia often associated with normal pressure hydrocephalus may include having trouble remembering (memory loss), being unusually slow to speak or to understand what is being spoken, having difficulties with tasks that were once routine, and a reduced attention span. The person may also have difficulties with basic reasoning and problem-solving. A general lack of interest in life, as well as changes in behavior and mood, may also accompany NPH.

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*** Letters to the Editor ***

NPH

(Continued from page 14)

People in the early stages of NPH may also feel a frequent or urgent need to urinate. Later, as the effects of NPH worsen, these urinary symptoms may progress to incontinence, or the inability to control the flow of urine. In fact, incontinence is often associated with more advanced cases of NPH. Minor memory problems, more frequent urination, even slight difficulty with walking and balance, might be overlooked or attributed to aging and not mentioned to ones health care provider. But when diagnosed early there is a higher success rate for treatment and much-improved quality of life. If you notice any of these symptoms in yourself or a family member, contact your healthcare provider.

DIAGNOSIS - When symptoms are present, one or more tests will be ordered, that may include an MRI, CT scan, lumbar puncture or others to determine whether CSF is circulating as it should. Various neurological tests may be included.

TREATMENT - The effects of NPH cannot always be reversed. However, proper treatment may make a significant difference in a patient's quality of life. Currently, there are no effective medications to treat NPH.

In order to relieve the pressure of the excess CSF and restore its natural flow rate, a neurosurgeon can implant a small adjustable shunt under the skull from which a tiny plastic tube is attached to direct the excess fluid into the bodies amazing disposal system. Once implanted in a brief surgical procedure, the patient will soon forget it is there. Usually no more than one night in the hospital is required, and that simply for observation to be sure all is well. While a shunt does not assure total recovery from symptoms, there are many first person stories, including my own, of patients who experience full recovery and return to all prior activities within a few weeks.

Untreated, NPH symptoms will generally worsen and likely lead to crippling and death over time. Individuals who are advised not to undergo shunt surgery may see improvements with periodic lumbar punctures and/or other treatments. When shunt surgery is suc-

cessful, patients experience a reversal or lessening of their symptoms and an improved quality of life.

If you or someone you know exhibits the symptoms of NPH, please take this information to your health care provider. You are strongly encouraged to learn everything you can about NPH. Early recognition and corrective action may have a profound effect on the future for you or someone you know.

If you have access to a computer, type in NPH in any search engine and you will find numerous sites, which will provide all the information you could hope for. If you wish to speak to me directly about my experiences with NPH I will gladly accept your call.

Del Lasley 352-750-2755

Editor's Note: Thank you for sharing your experience. While this is not a typical letter that the POA would respond to, we believe that if this information helps even one resident, it is worth publishing. □

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***** Letters to the Editor *****

Facts Vs Opinions

There have been recent letters to the editor scolding you for being both too confrontational and not confrontational enough. If I may, I'd like to add a third suggestion -- call it the Sgt. Joe Friday approach -- to present only the facts in your articles and confine the editorializing to Editorials. I believe you already do your best to cover all sides of controversial issues and I'm grateful for that. I also value the POA's opinions and advice, but would expect those to be clearly differentiated from other reporting.

Lori Davies
Country Club Hills

Editor's Note: We make every effort to identify our sources in an article when we are presenting a 'fact'. If there is no citation, it is likely a POA opinion. □

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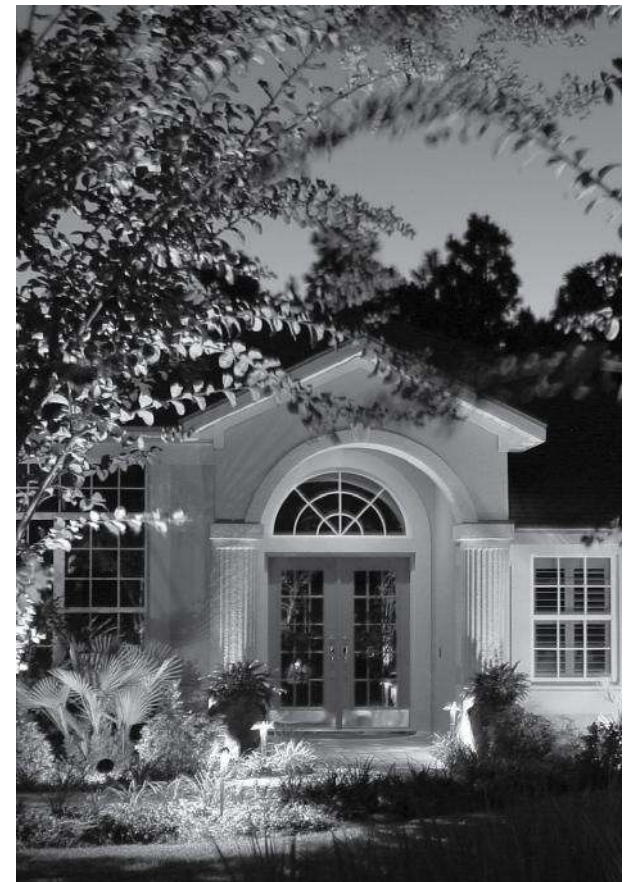
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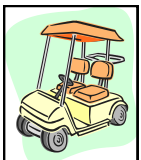
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Lightning Matters

Lightning Safety Awareness Week

By Len Hathaway
Study Group on Lightning

The purpose of this monthly column is to inform residents about lightning and how it can impact your personal safety, your home, and your appliances/electronics. It is important to understand the potential impact of lightning as we are located in the Lightning Capital of the USA.

In previous columns we have addressed a wide variety of lightning subjects that can be accessed at the POA4US.Org web site home page then scroll down to "POA Links", then select "Archived POA Bulletins" and the desired year and month. In this issue we address personal lightning safety in recognition of Lightning Safety Awareness Week.

Lightning Safety Awareness Week occurs each year in June to focus attention on the dangers of lightning in advance of July, August, and September, the peak months of the lightning season however, we can and do experience lightning year round here in Central Florida. The week of June 19-25, has been designated Lightning Safety Awareness Week by the National Weather Service

(NWS). Lightning awareness is particularly important for Central Florida because we experience on average 80 thunderstorm days each year according to the NWS. Further, the NWS notes that all thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous.

Personal Lightning Safety

• **Outdoors** NWS's theme is "When Thunder Roars Go Indoors!" Good advice. To reduce your risk you need to recognize that no place is absolutely safe, but some, such as homes and large enclosed substantially constructed buildings, particularly

those with lightning protection systems (rods), are better than others.

• NWS data places the annual number of US lightning fatalities at 60 (and injuries around 400) and Florida leads all other states in fatalities. Many more people are struck

(Continued on page 18)

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Lightning Matters

(Continued from page 17)

and survive but may suffer long-term injuries such as sleep disorders, memory loss, chronic pain, muscle spasms, depression, and more.

Pro golfer Lee Trevino was struck by lightning while playing in the 1975 Western Open in Oak Brook, IL. His injuries included

permanent damage to his flexibility and sensitivity of the vertebrae in his lower back.

Remember, it is up to the golfer to decide when his or her safety may be in jeopardy. The US Golf Association rules state that any player has the right to stop play if that player believes there is a danger from lightning.

Therefore, seek shelter; avoid trees, bleachers, metal fences, dugouts, open picnic shelters, flag poles, street lights, hill tops, softball & polo fields, tennis & pickleball

courts, shuffleboard, bocce, basketball, & horseshoe venues, convertibles, bicycles, motorcycles, power lines, fishing, high ground, bodies of water including swimming pools, and GOLF CARTS.

• **Indoors** Once you are in a home or substantial building there may still be a lightning threat to your personal safety. Therefore, you need to avoid corded telephones, electrical equipment, windows, metal doors, metal door/window frames and plumbing fixtures. In 2009, a local social networking web site reported that a Villager was injured while taking a shower when his home was struck by lightning.

Lightning Tips for Villagers

The Study Group on Lightning, a small group of Village volunteers, with no affiliation to any firm or organization related to the lightning protection industry, offers a free non-commercial 45-minute Power Point presentation, Lightning Tips for Villagers, that addresses direct lightning, indirect lightning, validation of LPS, primary & secondary surge protection, susceptibility of corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) gas lines to lightning, common myths and misunderstandings. It is intended to help homeowners make an informed decision on their own residential lightning risk. If your group or organization would benefit from a presentation contact Len Hathaway at lhatha@aol.com or Bob Freeman at stalit1@aol.com. □

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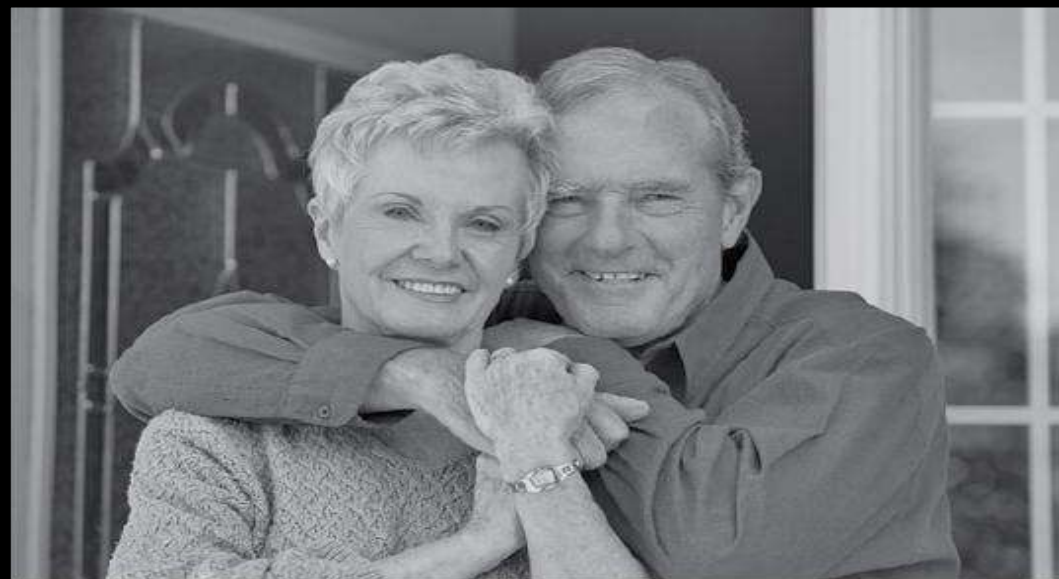
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