

# The POA Bulletin

Free Copy



The Property Owners' Association of The Villages

Issue 37.10

Champions of Residents' Rights Since 1975

October, 2011

## Project-Wide Agreement (PWA) Part Three

### Section I. The case for a review by an Outside, Independent Consultant

Before we begin to further discuss the PWA, let's recall our purpose. As stated in the original article in the August 2011 Bulletin, the POA is a "watchdog" organization with regard to residents' interests. The POA will attend the meetings, do the research and report the facts we believe residents should be aware of. The PWA is an interlocal government agreement which involves a substantial amount of money (more than \$7M annually), and consumes more than half of the annual maintenance budgets of CDDs 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. The POA believes that since at least two of the CDD Boards are now controlled by resident elected Supervisors, it might be appropriate to review the PWA in its entirety.

We began our review by researching the topic of interlocal government agreements (IGA). We found that they are a common practice used by local governments throughout the country to work together to reach common goals and to solidify compromises they have negotiated. An IGA is essentially a formal written contract between governmental entities that sets forth the purposes, powers, rights, obligations, and responsibilities of each of the parties to the agreement. The purposes of an IGA can include long range planning, managing growth and development, revenue sharing, increased cost efficiency of development or delivery of services, and protection from the adverse actions of other public entities.

Inherent in all of the literature we reviewed was that the first step in initiating an IGA is for each individual governmental entity to determine what they have to gain and what they have to lose if they participate in a proposed IGA and then attempt to negotiate

with the other parties in order to achieve the best benefit they can for their own constituencies. With this in mind, we then reviewed the Districts documents to determine how the PWA actually originated.

The original 2003 PWA was between the SLCCD (Sumter Landing Community Development District) and CDD5. (It has been expanded over the years to include CDD6, 7 and 8 and the 2011-12 Agreement will also include CDD9.)

Transcriptions of the two meetings in which the PWA was adopted and the meeting in which it was first amended are as follows:

8/27/2003 – CDD5 Monthly Board Meeting

Pete Wahl, District Manager – "Mr. Chairman – you got a revised agenda at your place this morning, (No public announcement that it would be on the agenda. – All supervisors were appointed/elected by the Developer.) 'The interlocal agreement that exists between District 5 and Sumter Landing for maintenance of area wide Projects' – There are some projects which are part of or outside of the boundaries of District 5 that District 5 enjoys the benefit of and this agreement is **simply an agreement that as-**

sure that you will be participating in the funding and operation and maintenance of certain of these items. So, that agreement is before you and we would recommend approval."

There was an immediate motion to approve. There was no discussion or any explanation by Mr. Wahl upon what the formula

*(Continued on page 2)*

## AC Underground Refrigerant Line Service Warranty Extended

The POA would like to thank the Developer, along with the air conditioning subcontractors who were involved, for taking financial responsibility for the repair and replacement of HVAC copper refrigerant lines, together with the cost of the repair and/or replacement of other air conditioner components whose failure is reasonably related to the failure or leaking of such HVAC lines due to corrosion.

In June, at the request of numerous residents (VHA members included), the POA took up the cause of broadening the original unwritten 'five (5) year window warranty' that was previously negotiated by the VHA.

The POA, as should be all residents, especially those benefiting from this new broadened Service Warranty, is especially grateful to residents Ray and Lori Micucci and non-resident Dave Gott, who combined have spent several hundred hours meeting with residents, observing line set installations, researching failure issues, meeting with the Sumter County Building Inspector, collecting and organizing just under 200 complaint forms from homeowners, and assisting in the writing of the POA Bulletin articles on this subject which we ran in the July, August and September issues.

A copy of the new Extended Service Plan

*(Continued on page 6)*

**October 18, 2011**

**POA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**Third Tuesday of the Month – 7:00 PM**

**Laurel Manor Recreation Center**

**Speaker: Mary F. Trotter**

Attorney and Counselor at Law

**"New" Florida Residents - Are Your Wills, Trusts, etc., VALID in Florida?**

Presentation followed by  
Question & Answer Session

**Coffee & Donuts**

**FOR ALL AFTER THE MEETING**

**ALL RESIDENTS WELCOME – COME AND JOIN US**

## Project Wide Agreement

(Continued from page 1)

was based, parameters of what was to be included, the cost savings or increases that would inure to CDD 5, items which should be negotiated or anything else.

The motion passed.

10/13/2003 – SLCDD Monthly Meeting - All Supervisors appointed/elected by Developer.

Pete Wahl – “Mr. Chairman, what you have here is an interlocal agreement between this Board and CDD No. 5 indicating that they will share certain costs for what are considered our project wide costs, and we will share in the funding of what are considered their project wide costs so that everybody that benefits the same gets to pay the same.”

Chairman – “Okay, so we need a motion and discussion for this interlocal agreement.”

No discussion

The motion passed.

5/19/2006 – CDD 5 Monthly Meeting - The First Amendment to the Agreement was not listed on the agenda provided to the public – it was brought up by Mr. Wahl under staff reports. Mr. Wahl stated that “We do have a staff report – I put on your desk this morning – I think I did – a list of Exhibit A. These reference the project wide costs... and we need to accept the list with an amended Exhibit A as submitted and authorize the Chairman to execute an amended agreement that is being developed, apparently I got it but I didn’t realize what I had so I don’t have a copy of that for you but it will simply be incorporating this language of Exhibit A.”

The motion passed.

As ‘ungovernment-like’ as the above proceedings appear, the worst offense occurred at the November 17, 2006, CDD 5 monthly meeting when the Project-Wide was on the agenda, but in the presentation to the Board,

which now included two residents, Mr. Wahl only presented the additions to the Project Wide list and did not advise the Board that by signing off on this Agreement they were taking away the right of the residential districts to have a vote on what improvements would be included on the Project Wide list.

### THE ORIGINAL 2003 PWA READS AS FOLLOWS:

“PROJECT WIDE IMPROVEMENTS. For the purposes of this Agreement, Project Wide Improvements shall include those improvements described in Exhibit “A”. As additional Project Wide Improvements are developed within the Project, the parties, **by amendment**, shall add such additional Project Wide Improvements to this Agreement.” (Emphasis added.)

“AMENDMENT. This Agreement may be modified in writing **only by the mutual agreement of the parties in** accordance with their respective laws, rules and procedures.” (Emphasis added.)

### THE NEW 2006 CLAUSE READS AS FOLLOWS:

“PROJECT WIDE IMPROVEMENTS. For the purposes of this Agreement Project Wide Improvements shall include those improvements described in Exhibit ‘A’. As additional Project Wide Improvements are developed within the Project, **Sumter Landing District by resolution, shall add such improvements** to the Exhibit ‘A’ Project Wide Improvement listing as attached to this Agreement.” (Emphasis added.)

**This is the early paper trail for a matter which currently involves 7 to 8 million dollars annually** and it certainly does raise some questions. The most paramount of which is - IF an OUTSIDE, INDEPENDENT expert had been hired by RESIDENT ELECTED SUPERVISORS to evaluate the merits of the proposal would they have ad-

(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 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, unslanted news reporting from local news sources.
10. Be informed beforehand by the developer on any major change in our community. □

The POA Bulletin is published monthly by the Property Owners’ Association of The Villages, Inc. Articles represent the opinion of the POA or the writer, and Letters to the Editor or Forum postings represent the opinions of the writers. Care is taken to ensure that facts reported herein are true and accurate to the best knowledge of the POA and are taken from reliable sources. The POA assumes no liability for any information published, opinions expressed, or delivery to any person or location. The POA does not endorse or recommend the products or services of any advertiser or discount partner. All publication rights are reserved. Publication or reprinting of any material contained herein is by written permission only.

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## Project Wide Agreement

(Continued from page 2)

vised the Supervisors to respond differently?

From the data the POA has reviewed, it seems reasonable that the numbered CDDs should request a 'first ever' review of the PWA. This is a high ticket item (over \$7M) and should have the same level of professional involvement as a bond reissuance.

**Step 1** - Find out what each district, including the commercial district, is saving by participating in the PWA. This is not that hard to do. In the maintenance contracts that we reviewed, the bulk of the cost was based on area of grass to be maintained, shrubs/trees/beds to be maintained and quantity of annuals to be changed out quarterly.

Each district knows what these volumes are and they are typically spelled out in the contracts, district plans and Villages specs. This is also true with maintenance responsibilities for retention ponds as their identification number for use on contracts usually indicates the District which has the maintenance responsibility.

Each district should determine their stand-alone maintenance costs for the proposed Project Wide Improvements so that they are in a position to evaluate the financial impact various proposed formulas might have upon their residents.

**Step 2** - While an outside independent, financial/consulting firm should have been used originally, it is not too late, that is, if the SLRDD developer elected board and all of the residential CDD boards agree to it as the PWA states that: "This Agreement may be modified in writing only by the mutual agreement of the parties..." IDEALLY, a district's share of the total maintenance cost should be based on their share of the maintenance expense they generate toward the total. If your district generates 25% of the PWA maintenance expense, then you should pay 25% of the total bill (and hopefully your 25% share is less than what it would cost you on your own). As far as reserves for sinkholes, that should be collected based on the area of your district to be covered by the sharing of risk (the "insurance" policy). Again, if your district has 25% of the storm water pond area to be included, you should contribute 25% of the transfer to reserve expense. However, fac-

(Continued on page 11)

## Last Call for 2011 POA Membership

On behalf of the Officers and Directors of your POA, 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 for the 2011 fiscal year, now is your last opportunity as we will begin soliciting 2012 POA memberships starting with the November POA Bulletin. If you are not a 'joiner', but appreciate the efforts the POA volunteers are making on your behalf, you can always simply complete the form below and 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.

Current POA members who have provided us with an e-mail address will receive our monthly POA Email Newsletter remind-

ing them of the speaker and date of the upcoming monthly POA membership meeting, as well as informing them of any matters that we believe they should be aware of on a timelier basis than what our monthly Bulletin can provide.

We had our first "Alert" e-mail notification two months ago when the IRS report came in the day after the Bulletin was printed. POA members received the POA summary and information the next day by e-mail and did not have to wait four or five weeks to have it provided to them in our monthly Bulletin. (You must have paid your 2011 POA dues to receive the POA E-MAIL Newsletter.)

Thank you to all who have responded to our invitation to join the POA. If you have not yet joined, and you appreciate the efforts the POA is making on your behalf, and/or you want to receive the POA e-mail alerts and meeting reminders, please join now – the membership application is below. □

### 2011 MEMBERSHIP FORM

PROPERTY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION OF THE VILLAGES

P. O. Box 1657, Lady Lake, FL 32158

#### PLEASE PRINT!

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLD

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

VILLAGE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

NEW

RENEWAL

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ANNUAL DUES (\$10.00 PER HOUSEHOLD): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

EXTRA DONATION: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with your membership dues (Checks payable to POA).

Memberships run annually from Jan 1st to Dec 31st.

Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for return of your membership card by mail. If not included, your card will be held at our monthly meetings for you to pick-up.

Thank you for your continuing financial support.

## IRS Investigation Did the VHA President Mislead Residents?

In the September, 2011, publication of ‘The Villages Homeowners Association Voice’ the message from Don Hahnfeldt, the President of the VHA, contained what we believe were two incomplete statements regarding why residents should have optimism about the IRS Review. Those statements are as follows:

1. Mr. Hahnfeldt stated, “... Part of the process in the maturing of a CDD is the transfer of facilities (and associated amenity fees) from the Developer to the Community. This process is almost half complete (through CDD5), but has been delayed for about three years by an IRS review related to bond issuance by the Village Community Development District (VCCDD) – a review very similar to a previous IRS review in 2003 that resulted in **“no findings.”**”

This statement is correct, but it is not complete and therefore could be misleading. Following is an excerpt from the actual letter from the IRS to the District:

IRS examination of 1999A Bond Issues Report, January 29, 2003—” We have recently completed our examination of the bond issues named above. As a result, we have decided to close the examination with no change to the position that interest received by bondholders is excludable from gross income under section 103 of the Internal Revenue Code. **Our closing of these cases, however, should not be construed as an approval of your method of operations. We have concerns regarding: the amount of control the de-**

**veloper has over the issuer; the questions of value of the assets sold by the developer to the issuer as these are not arm’s length transactions; the treatment of income and expenses, whether income is properly reported and expenses deducted only once; compliance with state law. While we are closing this examination, evidence of non-compliance revealed through a state audit or by other means could result in a need to open another examination on this bond issue.”**

2. Mr. Hahnfeldt also stated, “IRS Outcome No Risk To Villagers - The IRS bond issue review is a matter between the IRS and the issuer, which is the VCCDD. Neither the Developer nor residents are involved in the review or subject to any potential finding for action. When we became Villagers, we signed a contract with the Developer agreeing to pay an amenity fee in exchange for amenities and services that could not be diminished. Those amenity fees cannot be changed outside of our agreements and the VCCDD does not have the authority to assess residents...”

This statement is correct, but Mr. Hahnfeldt does not address the fact that the VCCDD pledged our amenity fee stream as the Trust Estate for the bonds, nor does he advise residents who the responsible party will be if there is a negative finding. At the June 10, 2009, Amenity Authority Committee meeting residents expressed their concern that the amenity services were at risk if there

was a negative finding by the IRS. They asked for assurances from District Manager Janet Tutt and Attorney Archie Lowry that they would not be. Some of their responses are as follows:

AAC Member – “So you are saying that under no circumstances can the amenity stream be encumbered?”

Lowry - “No, I haven’t said that at all.”

Resident – “I was led to believe in the previous AAC meeting from Ms. Tutt, as well as her article, that the residents would not be impacted financially.”

Tutt – “I still believe that it is going to have a positive result—there will be no change to your amenities or to your assessments.”

Resident – “Okay, I understand that from a contractual standpoint. My concern and I believe that of a lot of residents, is **if the IRS prevails where will any monies come from? If it’s from the amenities fees, then obviously we are going to be short changed somewhere else - it has to come out of somewhere else and what I would ask is for an unequivocal statement from you or Mr. Moyer or the VCCDD that we will not be affected monetarily.”**

Tutt – “I can’t give an unequivocal statement and I won’t hypothesize - I have been cautioned to not hypothesize as to what could potentially happen one way or the other except to say that we have been very positive ...”

**YOU BE THE JUDGE ON WHETHER THERE IS ANY RISK TO VILLAGERS** □

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## Houston, We Have A Problem

Well, it may not be Houston, but Florida definitely has a problem. So did the State of Maryland, when it passed aggressive legislation meant to confront and end urology physician self referral in medicine.

The referral of prostate cancer patients by urologists to a facility in which they own a financial investment has been a national ethical issue for five years. It has now become a violation of state law in Maryland, with other states proposing similar legislation.

As explained in the Baltimore Sun newspaper in May of this year, "Medicos who refer cancer patients to their own radiation centers 'increase the use of services and costs substantially' and don't improve care, according to research published in The New England Journal of Medicine in the 1990s."

Referring to radiation facilities owned by urologists in Maryland who are still performing treatment, the Baltimore Sun warned, "You should know that its professionals operate under incentives that are substantially different from those of doctors without a financial stake in your therapy. If they want to zap you at their prostate center, get a second opinion about whether that's really the best option."

Unfortunately, Florida continues to lead the nation in this financially incentivized approach to directing cancer treatment. Patients have been informed that if they do not receive radiation in their urologist's facility, they will have to find another urologist to care for them. This tactic, however, is vehemently criticized by urologists who practice at leading academic medical institutions within our state. If diagnosed with prostate cancer, perhaps it would be wise to seek that second opinion with a non-invested urologist ... before your treatment.



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352-527-0106

**Inverness Office**  
605 W. Highland Blvd.  
Inverness FL 34452  
352-726-3400

## Warranty Extended

(Continued from page 1)

can be found to the right of this article.

If you compare the contents of the Plan with the requests of the POA for coverage you will find the Developer has been responsive to the concerns the POA expressed and what we suggested would be a fair resolution.

You will recall that in the last Bulletin we stated that, “...we recently learned that the Sumter County Building Inspector had not been informed of the large number of leaking copper line set problems and consequently we concluded that the Developer may not know of the severity of the problem; therefore, we will no longer assume that the Home Warranty Department is sharing the true extent of the problem with the Developer but instead, we are taking steps to insure that the Developer is fully apprised of all the information we have. Gary Morse came to the aid of The Villages residents in the class action lawsuit and we are hopeful that he will likewise address this issue.”

Thank you, Mr. Morse, for stepping up and accepting financial responsibility by establishing the Extended Service Plan. Note to residents who will be seeking coverage under this Extended Service Plan:

1) If you sent the POA the form with your receipts attached: If you sent us the original or copies and you did not retain a copy for yourself, please email us at rym@aol.com and we will return your copy as it will assist you in applying for reimbursement with the Warranty Department.

2) It was noted in the article in the September 16, 2011 edition of the Daily Sun that if you paid for this repair previously but do not have your receipts you should still go to Home Warranty with as much information as you have because, “...they are committed to solving all the issues related to the leaking refrigerant lines.”

3) You will find the required Request for Reimbursement Form on page 14.

The POA will continue to follow this issue as homeowners make their applications to Home Warranty for refunds of expenses related to the copper tubing that has already been replaced, and we look forward to hearing from residents who benefit from the Extended Service Plan. □

### EXTENDED SERVICE PLAN

<b>Cost to Homeowner</b>	\$ 0
<b>Effective Date</b>	September 15, 2011. See “Term” section below.
<b>Coverage</b>	Repair and replacement of HVAC copper refrigerant lines, together with the cost of the repair and/or replacement of other air conditioner components whose failure is reasonably related to the failure or leaking of such HVAC lines due to corrosion.
<b>Assignability</b>	Automatically extends to subsequent owners.
<b>Term</b>	This ten (10) year term will cover new homes sold before and after the Effective Date. Examples of how the term will be applied: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new home sale closing that occurred eight (8) years before the Effective Date (September 15, 2003) will be covered by the Plan for matters falling within the Plans Coverage back to September 15, 2003, and for an additional two (2) years going forward so that the effective term of the Plan is ten (10) years for the home.</li> <li>• New homes sales occurring on October 1, 2011, will be covered by the Plan until October 1, 2021.</li> <li>• New home sales closing prior to September 15, 2001 will not be covered by the Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Limitations</b>	After September 15, 2011, all requests for work under this Extended Service Plan must go through The Villages Home Warranty Department (352-753-6222) so that the obligations of the manufacturers and installers can be maintained. Similarly, all requests for reimbursement for past air conditioner repair work will be processed by The Villages Home Warranty Department. All future service work not going through The Villages Home Warranty Department will void this Extended Service Plan.  The costs of simply upgrading an existing air conditioning system, cosmetic changes, and other air conditioner matters not resulting from a HVAC line failure are not covered by the Extended Service Plan, but some of these air conditioner matters may be covered under the manufacturer or installers warranty. Check with The Villages Home Warranty Department if you have questions.  There are no warranties, express or implied, which extend beyond the Coverage described above.

**THE VILLAGES OF LAKE-SUMTER, INC.**

**By H. Gary Morse, President**

## Hall of Fame Nominations for 2011

POA Hall of Fame nominations are being accepted for 2011. Nomination letters should include contact information for the nominee, a rationale explaining why the nominee should be inducted along with the name and contact information for the nominator. Nominations must be received by the POA Board of Directors by December 1. Submit nominations by mail to The Property Owners’ Association, P.O. Box 1657, Lady Lake, FL 32158-1657 or email as email text or as PDF or Word attachments to Board member Myron Henry

(mcshenry@gmail.com).

POA Hall of Fame induction is an honor reserved for past or present POA members who have made notable contributions to the POA and to residents of The Villages. A list of previously inducted POA Hall of Fame members appears on page 23. The POA Board will carefully consider all nominations and collectively decide on which nominees are to be formally inducted into the POA Hall of Fame for 2011. The formal induction ceremony will occur at the December POA membership meeting. □

## AAC Meeting Summary September 7, 2011

### Old Business Topics Included:

- Property Management Director Sam Wartinbee reported that as a result of technology advances (virtual cameras), the number of cameras needed for the "Gate Camera Pilot Project" has been reduced. Installation should begin soon at the Del Mar (unmanned) gate and the Chatham (manned) gate. Community Watch will provide a status update at the October meeting regarding the reporting of statistics and other information during the project.
- The shade structure at the Paradise Archery Range should be completed by September 9th.
- Ms. Tutt reported that staff is discussing permitting information with local government before expending any time or funds looking into the feasibility of expanding the Tierra Del Sol Recreation Center.
- The refurbishing and widening of the golf cart trail on the north side of the Paradise Recreation Center is proceeding. The fire hydrant has been moved, the old concrete taken up and the new concrete was to have been poured on September 9th.

- Construction continues on schedule for the Chula Vista/Mira Mesa Multi-Modal Path reconstruction project. "Substantial Completion" is expected on October 3rd, with final completion planned for October 28th.
- The AAC recommended that the VCCDD approve an agreement to make October 1, 2011 the effective date for the soon to be completed Agreement for Services. While the \$500,000 annual cost of the Recreation News will be split 50/50 between the VCCDD and SLCCDD during the 2011-12 fiscal year, staff agreed that alternative allocation methods would be considered in future budgets.
- The 2011-12 Budgets for the Recreation Amenities Division (\$38,494,452) and the Mulberry Fitness Center (\$168,699) were approved.
- The AAC approved awarding the bid for 585 banquet chairs for the Savannah Regional Recreation Center to OEC Business Interior for a total cost of \$120,773.25 plus freight. The district expects to receive between \$10 and \$12 per chair as a trade-in for the current 12 year old chairs.

### Consent Agenda:

- A consent agenda was approved that included a management services agreement with OMI to maintain certain pump stations and facilities, a renewal of an agreement with ValleyCrest Golf Course

Maintenance to maintain Briarwood, Walnut Grove, Amberwood and Oakleigh executive golf courses, a renewal and CPI amendment to the agreement with Professional Turf Managers, Inc. for maintenance of facilities to include the Silver Lake, Hilltop, Chula Vista, Mira Mesa and De La Vista executive golf courses, the Silverlake and Chula Vista Recreation Centers, the Hilltop parking lot, the Paradise softball field, the Ventura Drive entry and the Rio Grand Lawn bowling courts. The consent agenda also included the renewal of the agreement for concession services at the Saddlebrook Softball complex, a budget 2010-11 budget amendment to provide the Chula Vista/Mira Mesa path reconstruction funds from the lawsuit Settlement account and the awarding of a landscaping and irrigation maintenance contract for Saddlebrook and El Santiago Recreation Centers to the Down to Earth Lawn

(Continued on page 8)

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## AAC Meeting

(Continued from page 7)

Care II.

- A request to approve a First Amendment to the Ground Lease (Spanish Springs Town Square) Agreement with The Villages of Lake Sumter, INC. was tabled, to be readdressed at the October 12, 2011 AAC meeting over concerns voiced by an audience member regarding the lack of landlord rights in the original agreement.

### Reports:

- Ms. Tutt reported that Government Day will be held on Saturday November 5, 2011 from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at the Laurel Manor Recreation Center.
- VCCDD Attorney Lowry reported that final build out at Freedom Pointe resulted in 240 units rather than the original planned 249, so as of October 1, 2011 fees from 240 units will be collected.
- Supervisor Weber requested that Mr. Wartinbee see what he could do about

getting the U.S. Post Office to paint the Paradise mailboxes. Mr. Wartinbee suggested that calls from residents to the Lady Lake postmaster would be more effective. Ms. Weber was advised that the Paradise Center parking lot had been crack-sealed and a coat of sealer followed by restriping will occur after October 1st. Also, the parking lot near the Paradise tennis courts and softball field will be receiving a ¾" asphalt overlay.

### Audience Comments:

Staff will investigate a resident request to provide electricity and ceiling fans at the Hilltop pool shade structure.

Please go to the [www.districtgov.org](http://www.districtgov.org) website for the official minutes, agendas and meeting schedules. **Next AAC Meeting – Wednesday October 12th, 1:30PM at the Savannah Center.** □

## Questions & Answers About Life in The Villages

If you have never been to a POA meeting, you may not be aware that at each meeting we conduct an open forum for thirty minutes during which time audience members can ask any question or make any comments they wish. As resources, in addition to the POA Board, Janet Tutt, Villages Community Development District Manager, and Richard Lambrecht, Amenity Authority Committee member and former Chair, are present to provide the responses.

Questions and responses (R) from the September 20<sup>th</sup> meeting which we believe will be of interest to residents are as follows:

(1) Are there going to be any changes to the events that we have planned like the Italian Club and the German Club and the patriotic things that we do have? Are there going to be any changes in the upcoming months?

**R:** There has been an email circulating that says there will be no more parades. The District has no involvement in those events – They are all through entertainment so you would need to contact the Entertainment Department (part of the Developer's organiza-

(Continued on page 9)

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## Questions & Answers

(Continued from page 8)

tion) directly to get the answer. Following the meeting we contacted John Rohan and asked him if he could clarify this for us. He stated that he was not aware of the German club sponsoring any parades. I think they are a participant in the German American parade sponsored by the Entertainment Department. Otherwise, if it was the German-American club's parade they would be responsible for all the costs and support required to host the parade. Recreation has not hosted or sponsored a German-American parade that I am aware of any time recently. I am not sure if the club goes to the Entertainment Department to request a parade or Entertainment goes to the clubs to get participants in their parades. This would be a question to address with the Entertainment Department. The only parade the Recreation Department currently manages is the Christmas Parade held at the polo fields. If the German-American Club wants recreation to host a parade we would explore costs, etc., like any other event we get requested to offer.

(2) Can anything be done about the dogs that are at the Square? There seem to be more and more dogs right in the Square. Are they just waiting for someone to get bitten? **R:** There is no policy on the public streets against having dogs provided they are on leashes and there has been no effort to insti-

tute any policy or procedure.

(3) We have just been here a couple of months and we just got our pretax bill and it has the bond fee, but right below it there is a maintenance fee of several hundred dollars. What is that exactly? **R:** That is the payment for the common area maintenance of your residential CDD. It covers such expenses as landscaping along the roadways where no homes abut them, maintenance of retention ponds, administrative expenses and street lighting. Assessments are determined by taking the total budgeted expenses for the year and they divide that by the total number of assessable acres in the CDD to determine a per acre cost. You are then assessed based upon the size of your lot. It is an annual assessment

(4) We live in an area that is not yet built out. Will our CDD maintenance fee go down once all the homes are sold? **R:** No. Until each lot is sold, the Developer (who is the property owner) is responsible for paying the annual maintenance assessment on each un-

sold lot.

(5) Is there anything happening on the road that goes between the Paradise Dog Park that goes up past Paradise Recreation Center? **R:** Yes. 'All' of the roads east of Rt. 441 were dedicated to the public. There was a list of roads that were handed over to Lake County by the Developer. For some unknown reason three roads – Paradise Drive being one of them - were omitted from that list and Lake County has maintained that they were not their responsibility. Lake

(Continued on page 10)

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## Questions & Answers

(Continued from page 9)

County has now agreed to take over their maintenance as long as 50% or more of the property owners on those three roads approve Lake County taking them over. Since there will be no cost to the residents it should receive the necessary votes.

(6) As we are waiting for the tunnel under CR 101 to be fixed, it raises the question – are some of the other tunnels also at risk? **R:** Based on the last email between and among the attorneys today (9/20) it appears that we MAY have an agreement. If that is the case District 3 has authorized their chair to sign the agreement so we are hoping that by the end of the month or sooner we will have a signed agreement. The spans have already been constructed and they are sitting in the closed structure so the construction can begin practically immediately after it is signed. As far as the other tunnels, there are none with major structural issues like CR 101 had. In

the recently approved budgets in the numbered districts money was added to do regular inspections of all of the tunnels.

(7) We are relatively new here. How would you find out what district you are in? **R:** You can call Customer Service at 753-4508 and they can tell you or you can go on the district web site – districtgov.org – and look at the map which identifies the districts.

(8) As far as the copper tubing is concerned, that affects homes built in what year? **R:** The Extended Service Plan went into effect on September 15, 2011, so ten years back would be September 15, 2001. So any home built after September 15, 2001 and before September 15, 2021, has a ten year warranty window.

(9) I want to say thank you very much to the District administration for finally getting the utility info on the web site so that we can pay the bills online.

(10) Addressing Janet Tutt: I have been getting a lot of good comments from a lot of the residents concerning illegal immigrants that used to work for the VCCDD and the SLCDD and I want to thank you very much for your efforts in solving this problem we had here in The Villages. Secondly, I would like to say I have gotten a lot of complaints about the ones that are currently working for the builders, roofing companies, etc, that are not District employees. Residents want them out as well so we feel that since you are the chief of our local government, it is your job

to make that happen. Thank you. Janet responded – we have no authority when it comes to the private sector employment.

(11) Many CDD 4 residents received a deduction in the interest re-fi of the infrastructure bond so those that did not pay the bond off early got a 'kickback'. If I paid my bond off when I bought my house, which reduced the liability as a result of paying it off early, why don't I get some of that re-fi money back? **R:** It's the same as if you had refinanced your home and someone else had already paid theirs off – it's refinancing at a lower interest rate and it would not have an impact on the home that had already been paid off. Rich Lambrecht responded further: In each of your numbered districts you all have a bond that you are paying off for the infrastructure in your district. In this case it was District 4 and what we found was that in Phase I the bonds were ten years old and now the financials were right for us to consider paying it off. It was sort of a 'perfect storm' – the ten year interval had passed so we did not have a lot of arbitrage to pay, interest rates were about as low as they could possibly be, so what we ended up doing was paying off what was left of the bond issue and taking out a new bond issue. We went from something over 7% interest to something under 5% so we effectively refinanced the bonds, so anybody who had paid their bond off years ago was done and did not participate. (The interest rates weren't that low

(Continued on page 11)

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## Questions & Answers

(Continued from page 10)

back when they were paid off.) Now was a good time to refinance the bonds and we saved CDD 4 residents probably over a million dollars.

Janet Tutt responded further: While there are some residents present with more recent bond issues, which are not necessarily callable, I can assure you that our Finance Director and myself review each of them along with our financial consultant so as each numbered district moves along, if in fact, your district has bonds that at a certain point can be callable, and it looks as if the market will allow you to have enough of a savings to do that, we will do it regardless of what district it is. □

## Project Wide Agreement

(Continued from page 3)

tors such as can be found in CDDs 5 and 6 where they have greater financial exposure for landscaping expenses due to the amount of acreage they have along the Boulevards, as opposed to CDDs 7 and 8, need to be considered. As a result, they also had far greater infrastructure costs which they are paying through their infrastructure bond assessments to construct those Boulevards. CDDs 7 and 8 benefit from the beautiful landscaped roadways and recreation trails they use which

were constructed with CDD 5 and 6 residents' money. It would be reasonable that CDDs 7 and 8 might agree to share in the maintenance costs because of the value they can perceive.

This is why an independent professional needs to be hired to do the analysis and to come up with recommendations for:

- an equitable formula for cost sharing;
- criteria to be used for placement of items in the PWA;
- whether or not combining residential and commercial districts for the purpose of this particular IGA are in the best interest of BOTH parties;
- to assist in negotiations between the parties as needed, etc.

District staff has hired consultants in the past for situations involving far less money.

### Section 2. Criteria To Be Used To Determine Inventory Covered by the PWA

As discussed above in Section 1, as a re-

sult of the passage of the November 17, 2006 Project Wide Amended Agreement, the residential boards have NO CONTROL over what properties are placed on the PW listing. What are, or are eventually to be resident elected CDD Boards have turned over more than 50% of their maintenance assessment funds to the control of the developer elected Board. So, why make a fuss about electing residents to the CDD boards in the residential districts if they are going to turn the majority of their responsibility and control over to the developer elected commercial district Board?

Below are some examples of items that the SLCCDD has approved for inclusion in the PW listing since the signing of the initial PWA:

- accepted the deed and maintenance responsibility of over 600 acres of mitigation areas and then placed them in the PWA for maintenance funding;
- placed Market Square, which is an assessable SLCCDD owned property into the PW

(Continued on page 12)

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# Project Wide Agreement

(Continued from page 11)

Listing and then assessed the PW fund \$43,000 for its annual assessment which is paid to the commercial owners property maintenance budget; it should also be mentioned that the amenity system receives income from the developer for his rental of the town square each evening. (Note: The amenity system receives your amenity fees, rents the square to receive additional income and then has the residents via their numbered district assessment pay for maintenance of the square. And the amenity system contributes NOTHING to the PWA);

- placed maintenance of the Sumter Landing Lighthouse in the PWA for funding;

- placed maintenance of the Sumter Landing dock and gazebo in the PWA (why should residents pay via the PWA to maintain the tour boat landing which is part of the amenity system when their amenity fees are supposed to cover those expenses);
- used \$130,000 of PWA funds for architectural fees and construction of the new Recreation Department requested park instead of using the more appropriate amenity fees; (See Note above)
- expended \$8,500 to put up the Christmas tree on Market Square, to name a few.

At a glance, it would certainly appear that the criteria for adding properties onto the PW List should be better defined to eliminate inclusion of any expenses which should be the responsibility of the amenity budget and those which should be paid for by the commercial property holders, especially in light of the fact that the residential CDDs (5, 6, etc.) NOW have NO VOTE in the matter, nor do they have any say so in whether or not

some of the entries identified above are appropriate. From our review of the minutes, it does not appear that these decisions are even included in agenda packets or discussed at the residential CDD meetings.

### Section 3. Criteria For A Government To Be Considered for Inclusion in the PWA

Should the PWA be limited to the numbered (residential) districts 5–10, which have common needs and structure and only include their basic maintenance responsibilities, such as, specifically identified landscaped rights-of-way including street lighting; entry features; preserves; storm water retention basins and other water retention areas; tunnels and recreation trails; or should it include the Sumter Landing commercial district which is structured substantially different because it continues to accept additional properties located outside of its geographic boundaries from the Developer, and includes commercial, income producing property?

(Just a Note: The PWA budget for fiscal year 2011-12 is set at almost \$7.3M. While the Sumter Landing commercial property owners are assessed \$94,498 of the total, which is less than 1.3%, they actually only contribute \$50,990 since \$43,508 is directly returned to them for town square maintenance. Are we to understand that their inclusion in the PWA and \$51K contribution is in the best interests of the residents who pay the remaining \$7,249,000, plus the balance of

(Continued on page 13)

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## Project Wide Agreement

(Continued from page 12)

their own annual CDD maintenance fee and their monthly amenity fee?)

We have reviewed several Engineer's Reports for various interlocal government projects around the country and believe that hiring an independent consultant to take a look at the current PWA and make recommendations would be very worthwhile. At \$7M and more, the PWA is a big ANNUAL expense for the residential districts. Residents of the numbered districts have no idea if they are receiving equitable benefits as required by F. S. 163.01(2) and 163.01(5)(f).

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## Lightning Matters

By Len Hathaway  
Study Group on Lightning

American history tells us that Benjamin Franklin was a prolific writer, media baron, scientist, diplomat, political leader and inventor. One of his inventions resulted from a 1752 well-known kite flying experiment that proved that lightning was electricity. At the time, lightning was considered a supernatural phenomenon – an expression of God's will. Lightning was feared because it caused deaths, injuries, and property damage. Franklin's vision: lightning could be tamed with a lightning rod connected to a cable that terminated in the ground, which is the idea behind a lightning protection system (LPS).

Philadelphia buildings were the first to be protected by the newly invented technology during the summer of 1752. As a result of his invention, Franklin became internationally known on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1753, he received honorary degrees from

Harvard and Yale.

But not everyone was convinced that an LPS would silently do its job safely. Persisting to this day is the myth that lightning rods attract lightning. The UK's Royal Navy took this position and unlike many other navies did not protect their wooden ships with lightning rods. By 1832, they had lost 220 ships due to lightning strikes before installing rods.

The Study Group on Lightning has given dozens of presentations to church and civic groups, and to Village clubs. We often hear this myth being repeated even though it has no basis in fact

This myth is debunked in the book, *The Art and Science of Lightning Protection*, by Dr. Martin Uman. This book is available from The Villages Public Library on Belvedere Blvd.

If your group or organization would benefit from a free non-commercial Power Point presentation on lightning contact Len Hathaway at [LHATHA@AOL.COM](mailto:LHATHA@AOL.COM) or Bob Freeman at [STALIT1@AOL.COM](mailto:STALIT1@AOL.COM). □

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## POA Elections

Nominations for the election of POA officers and directors are now open. Anyone wanting more information on serving on the POA Board should talk to any officer or director for more information. The term of office is one year. You might find the opportunity to serve to be rewarding and not as much time as you might imagine. Elections will be held at the November membership meeting and the investiture at the POA Annual Meeting in December. □

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## \*\*\* Letters to the Editor \*\*\*

### Military Service Is History

In 2005, a notice was put in The Daily Sun newspaper looking for Veterans to participate in an article they were planning. They wanted to have Veterans tell their story of their military career.

A total of 440 Vets from all branches of service responded. This was a big program. It took several weeks with many interviews

and several pages of pictures and stories.

The end product was a special section dedicated to local Vets and their experiences while serving in the military. Many of these Vets had served during various war times. Many of the stories were about World War II and The Daily Sun received many awards for this particular project.

A group of Veterans and concerned citizens thought this article should be available to everyone wanting to read about the World War II experience as told by local residents.

The Wildwood Library in Wildwood, Florida has agreed to have these articles available at their facility as part of their library catalog. All that participated in this article and were part of this history are grateful for their cooperation.

As we all know, many of the World War II Vets are no longer with us, but I am sure if they were they would say "THANK YOU" for sharing and having this information avail-

able to all who want to know more of our American history.

As for myself and all other Veterans still able to tell you about this experience we say a big "THANK YOU" to the Wildwood Library for their cooperation with the Veterans who want this history to stay alive

Jack Cheppo, Captain U.S. Air Force

**Editor's Note:** Thank you for sharing this information with us and we hope many residents will take advantage of this opportunity and make a stop at the Wildwood Library. But more than that, Jack, heartfelt thanks to you and your fellow Vets for your service and sacrifices on our behalf. □

### Appliance Failures

We moved in August 2009. So far, we have spent over 1000 dollars to repair our microwave, refrigerator. Dishwasher all out of warranty. Is this normal? Enjoy your paper.

Thanks, Mike Micchelli, Bonita

**Editor's Note:** From everything we are aware of, this is not normal. We realize your home warranty would have expired, but have you checked the warranty on the individual appliances? Also, is there any indication that an electrical malfunction—too much or too little juice - caused the appliances to malfunction? □

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

**Katie Belle’s and Under 19 “Residents”**

Thank you for all you do, very much appreciated. I have some questions regarding our Villages.

1) We understand Katie Belle’s is a private club for residents and their guests. It is advertised this way. They are having shows that have been advertised as "The newest hot spot in Central Florida" and the fees are \$\$\$ for residents, and \$\$\$ for General Admission? We have tried to go to Cattle Baron's when a show is going on and we are told, as residents, we can't enter because of a show, reservations only. Are we misunderstanding something?

2) We understand according to our CDDs, that visitors under the age of 19 may stay for a maximum of 30 days a year. We know there have been several staying 6 weeks or more, did we read something wrong?

Well, that is all for now, thanks for considering answers for us. Linda Fess

**Editor’s Note:** (1) Katie Belle’s is owned by the Developer. It was open to the general public until a few years ago when it began limiting entrance to Villages Residents and their guests. (It is not part of our amenity system.) There are very few venues in The Villages suitable for professional performances. As our population has increased, our venues have not. However, Katie Belle’s can accommodate some of these entertainment groups and, in order to be sure that the facility fills to make it profitable, it would be reasonable for the Developer to open it up to the general public, as well, on those occasions. Likewise, like the Savannah Center or Church on the Square, on those occasions the facility would be closed to anyone not having an admission ticket.

2) You are correct regarding the age limit. However, you must remember that our



deed restriction enforcement is complaint driven. If no resident complains the restriction will not be enforced. □

**Dark Lamp Post**

Is there anything that can be done when neighbors do not replace burned out lamp-post bulbs?

**Editor’s Note:** The deed restrictions for homesite lamp post does not address your issue. We checked with the Deed Compliance Office and they advised that what they usually do when they get a complaint that a resident has the lamp post, but the light does not work, is to call or go by and introduce themselves and let the resident know that the bulb could possibly be out or the light is no longer working. Most often the resident does not realize that the light is not on. You can report this situation by calling Community Standards at 751-6719 and you may remain anonymous. □

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## \*\*\* Letters to the Editor \*\*\*

### Flood Problems

I live on Persimmon Loop in Duval. On Friday, August 19<sup>th</sup> our street and the villas behind us experienced severe flooding. This rain caused many thousands of dollars in damage to at least ten homes. The watermark outside of my house was 12" in both front and back.

Tommy McDonough, from Development Services, came by to survey the damage in the area and he was in disbelief as to what he saw. He had inspectors go into the sewer lines where they found some debris although not enough to cause the problem. He felt a severe buildup of mulch that covered the grates in the Villas and catch basins, on our street, caused the issue. Neighbors who witnessed the water buildup said that once it reached the upper level it drained quickly after about 20 minutes. I question whether there was a blockage in the sewer line and believe the pressure from the water buildup blew through the blockage and that is why it drained it as quickly as it built up. I suggested that maybe more frequent clean-out inspections would prevent a reoccurrence. I also mentioned notifying and asking residents to **avoid using mulches such as pine bark, shredded bark and rubber which float and can be washed away easily.**

Michael Maromonte

**Editor's Note:** Diane and Kenneth Gentz

advised us that they had reported the problem to the District Property Management Office and Debbie Franklin and Sam Wartinbee have contacted them. They were told that divers had inspected the drains and removed some debris including sand, grass clippings and bags of dog feces. A homeowner on Persimmon Loop said she spoke to workers cleaning the drains the day after the storm and it was reported to her that there was a 70% sand blockage of the drains. Sam Wartinbee told us that as a preventive maintenance measure, the frequency of inspections of drains would be increased from every 4-5 years to every two years. We believe more frequent inspections are definitely necessary and warranted. In the meantime, an additional suggestion for residents would be for them to report any storm drains that appear to be sluggish during heavy rains to Property Management (753-4022). This could potentially head off what might otherwise end up as a costly repair by residents for water damage to their homes. □

### Sex Offender Arrested

There was an article in the Daily Sun on Sept. 2, that is worth bringing attention to Villagers. A Village man in the 900 block of Nash Loop was arrested because he used the Internet to solicit sex with a minor seeking a sexual relationship between a father and son, uncle and nephew, brothers, or additional "taboo couplings." It is important to pass this information on to anyone who has grandchildren visiting in close proximity.

Linda Lawless

**Editor's Note:** Thank you for sharing this information. □

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## \*\*\* Letters to the Editor \*\*\*

### Community Watch Services

Several months ago, there was considerable discussion regarding both the manned gates as well as observations regarding the merits of the Community Watch program. The last POA bulletin provided an update on the status of the trial for assessing the value of monitoring with gate cameras as an alternative to personnel doing such monitoring.



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There remains, at least in my mind, the status of assessment of the value of Community Watch. It was my understanding that there was to be some pursuit of specific data regarding examples of safety enhancement which seems to be the rationale for the service. Anecdotal instances are just subjective recollections that are difficult to quantify.

To argue that the service provides some level of deterrent is a stretch, especially in the absence of hard data. If the three examples of Community Watch involvement cited in a previous POA bulletin are representative of what we can expect, then the service needs to be scrutinized more closely.

In the Marion County portion of The Villages, there is a Citizen's patrol that has a presence. The Sumter County Sheriff has stated that Community Watch is an asset, providing patrol that would otherwise require more expenditure for his department. Perhaps Sumter and Lake Counties should consider subsidizing Community Watch.

I certainly support the part of the service that contracts with seasonal residents to provide regular checks of their homesites. That service apparently does generate revenue.

A service that recently required a nearly \$200,000 expenditure for vehicles, not to mention the cost of maintenance, fuel and personnel should be able to demonstrate quantifiable added value. If unable to do so, then consideration should be given to deter-

mining whether this is a luxury that we can continue to afford.

Respectfully, Julaine Charles

**Editor's Note:** The basic question as to the value of these services cannot be answered until the Community Watch Department develops and uses adequate evaluation tools to assess the value of these services.

Do we need patrols? Do we need them four times a day? Are they of more value during the daylight or after dark? Do we need gate attendants at any gates? Do we need them at some gates because of heavy traffic in the area? Do we need them for 6–12–18 or 24 hours per day at specified gates? Are cameras and signs that The Villages is a video monitored community at each gate entrance as effective a deterrent as an 'attendant' is espoused to be? In the year 2011, when all of our roads are open to the public at the push of a button, are gate attendants, roving patrols, entrance and/or entrance and exit gate cameras, or some combination the best means that money can buy "to provide a safe community for Villages residents"?

At its September meeting, the AAC members again asked that the Community Watch staff prepare evaluation tools and techniques for review by the AAC and they were advised by Scott Wilder, Community Watch Director, that they would be available and presented at the October AAC meeting. □

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## \*\*\* Letters to the Editor \*\*\*

### Maintenance and Manning of Gates

I want to thank you for all your efforts in keeping the POA energetic and useful.

I am wondering how The Villages funds the expense of maintaining and manning the gates. I personally think most of this expense is useless. It was once indicated to me that it was for traffic control, but I think it does more to impede traffic control than help.

I don't claim to know about every gate, but I can't think of a single one that accomplishes anything since The Villages cannot keep traffic from using the Villages streets because they turned them over to the counties for maintenance. I would hate to think this cost is coming out of our amenities fees or any other fee that I help fund, now or in the future.

Thank you, Larry Arps

**Editor's Note:** You are paying for it every month as the total cost for maintaining and manning the gates is paid for by your amenity fees.

We are hopeful that after a full evaluation, as indicated in the response to the previous letter, modifications will be made to not only decrease our costs, but through the use of technology, increase our safety. The gates themselves do have value in that they slow traffic down where there are many golf carts crossing and alert automobile drivers to the fact that they are entering a residential street with a lower speed limit. □

### Mixing Cars and Golf Carts

First, thanks for another excellent issue of the POA Bulletin for September 2011.

My email refers to the letter referenced above:

If Golf Cart drivers used their vehicles as though they were cars and not toys, operating them in accordance with the rules of the road, the Morse Blvd traffic circle would not be a problem!

As for the remark "Don't mix cars and golf carts", that is totally up to the driver of the golf cart.

P.S. Davies

**Editor's Note:** We all need to continue to encourage our friends and neighbors to treat their golf carts with the same respect as they do their cars—for the safety of all of us. □

### Televisions on Lanais

Are there any guidelines available for the usage of televisions on the lanai?

Jeffrey Taffuri

**Editor's Note:** The Villages Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions read as follows: "Each Owner shall use his property in such a manner as to allow his neighbors to enjoy the use of their property. Radios, record players, televisions, voices and other sounds are to be kept on a moderate level from 10PM to one (1) hour before daylight." □

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## \*\*\* Letters to the Editor \*\*\*

### Commerce Along 466A

Howdy! I was curious if there will be more "commerce" along 466A like up on the other main roads (466 & 441)?? Colony Plaza is busy during the summer and CRAZY busy once the "birds" come back. Particularly, Publix and Walgreens. I know I'd heard about a grocery store coming down by the new building, that the tax etc. offices are in, but wondered about other things, like strip malls with restaurants, stores etc.

Elizabeth Nelson

**Editor's Note:** That is primarily a Developer issue and they do not usually announce any new ventures until ground is actually broken. However, if you look on the Sumter County GIS map you will note that the Developer does own commercially zoned property along that corridor. □



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### Daily Sun Political Events Coverage

I have been struggling with this concern for a long while. It involves how local political events are covered in the "Daily News."

More specifically, when prominent Republican leaders come to The Villages, they are treated as if they were the "Messiah." But when a prominent Democratic leader comes to The Villages, that event is totally ignored.

As an ex-newspaper man, I don't think that this bias reporting is fair to those who are not Republican.

Furthermore, I can't understand why The Villages would invite Dick Cheney here to promote his book, which demeans the characters of Colin Powell & Condalisa Rice.

It seems to me that he is more responsible for the mess this country is in than President Bush.

William S. Corkish

**Editor's Note:** The failure of The Daily Sun to provide fair and unbiased reporting is the reason many residents subscribe to Leesburg and/or Orlando newspapers instead. □

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### Community Watch Without Power?

Why are construction trucks and/or lawn service trucks allowed to park in the golf cart lanes on the roads? O'Dell circle is a prime example of this. I have observed trucks working on lanais, yards, building swim pools, etc., park for days at a time.

What are the Community Watch folks watching? I have witnessed near accidents as the golf carts try to move around the parked service vehicles when a car or truck going in the same direction does not budge. Will it not be until someone gets killed that this practice will stop?

The Watch says they have no power, etc. Then why have them? Let's put those monies into something with teeth.

Ron Marchioni

**Editor's Note:** We agree that the service trucks in the golf cart lanes are dangerous, but the fact of the matter is that there is nowhere else for them to park. Many are too heavy, leaking oil, and have long trailers, so parking in resident driveways is not the answer. We all need their services at some time or another so we just have to take special precautions, whether we are in a car or a golf cart as we approach these situations. (We cannot fault Community Watch on this one as the County Sheriff would not have the authority to ticket them either.) □

### La Zamora Gate Traffic Light

I attended the August meeting of the amenity board where the board addressed the traffic light question. I spoke to the question

(Continued on page 21)

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## \*\*\* Letters \*\*\*

### La Zamora Gate Light

(Continued from page 20)

and stated we had over 900 signatures on signed petitions with about 96% in favor of the light. The vote was three to two and then Mr. Carl Bell spoke and said it was not an amenity issue and voted no and said let the county do the eminent domain right and take the property. This, in effect, stopped the issue because the county now has to expend resources to do this. It would not have cost us a cent had the vote to go ahead won.

This is a dangerous spot and begs for a traffic light to prevent damage to life and limb.

Martin Dubbs

**Editor's Note:** All is not lost. The County has installed flashing lights on CR 466 to warn drivers to slow down and be alert. One would assume that when the 315 homes just up the road from that intersection are inhabited and/or the property across the street from the La Zamora gate is developed, that a traffic light will likely be installed. □

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## Fitness Challenge October Challenge:

Attention all Villages

'Couch Potatoes'

**Fitness Challenge #3**

By Judi Da Costa, Personal Trainer

Hey there, I hope you have had an awesome month and thank you for your emails.

Now that you've started movin' and groovin' to the advertisements during your favorite programs, I hope you are seeing a difference and that getting up and down in your chair and just getting your body to move is becoming easier than it was a couple of months ago. But you can't stop there, so if you are ready, here's your next challenge!!!!

The advertisements hit the screen, you again stand up and march in place, this time start with your arms at your side, take your arms out to the side then up to shoulder height and then down to your side again. continue repeating the arm moves when you march. This is a lateral raise. If this seems too easy and you want to try with the cans of soup, perhaps try one arm at a time, and remember stand up nice and straight when you march!

If you have a question, or would just like to drop me a line, you can find me at my website, [Exercise2gether@aol.com](mailto:Exercise2gether@aol.com). □

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Our Gardening Column:

## Seeds

### Tiny Parcels of Life

by Anne Lambrecht, Master Gardener  
[annegarden@embarqmail.com](mailto:annegarden@embarqmail.com)

I love seeds! They represent the promise of a living thing; a plant in waiting. I love to plant them; I love to collect them. For years I received seed catalogs and during the long, cold nights of my Connecticut winter, dreamed of my new spring garden – renewed and different each year. I still do this here in Florida.

Seeds come in an army of sizes from dust particles to coconuts; from the silky tailed seeds of the milkweed, striped or black elliptical seeds of sunflowers, round roofed seeds of oaks, nearly square seeds of corn, rock hard round pits of cherries.

There are good reasons for growing from seeds: bragging rights, saving money: you can pay \$5 for a flat of French marigolds or \$5 for a quarter ounce of seeds, enough to plant 25,000 seedlings! There's a primeval feeling you get when you put the seeds in your bare hand and plant them in the spring soil. You have now become one with the earth.

There are a few requirements to grow from seed: first, quality seeds are essential, the fresher the better. Most seeds have two requirements for germination: suitable air temperatures and moisture. When should you grow? You need to know our climate's last spring frost date (March 10) and first frost date (December 10) and back in or go out from there according to the information on the seed packet.

Growing from seed is not fool proof: even with good directions and perfect cultural practices there are lots of factors that can mess you up: disease, insects, animal pests, too much water, seeds drying out, growing medium imperfec-

(Continued on page 22)

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**POA Discount of 20%**

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## Gardening

(Continued from page 21)

tion. Sometimes seeds need a period of cold in order to germinate (nature's way of making sure that seeds don't germinate until the killing cold of winter has passed). I've got some butterfly peas that climb my light post whose seed pods I leave outside during the winter.

Seeds of some plants can remain dormant for months or even years while the seeds of most species remain viable for only a few years. How do you know? You read the seed packet. There's a ton of information on these.

I always was in awe about Thomas Jefferson's bureau filled with seeds and how many would actually sprout year after year. I keep my unused seeds in a cool, dry, dark place and discovered that the percentage of germination declines each year. I admit – begrudgingly – that MY success with seed germination on *new seed* is about 75% but it is so worth growing something unusual.

Seeds are the only way the home gardener has real access to the world's available species and cultivars. Garden centers usually have the cheap and common choices but dozens, even hundreds more are available if you're willing to start with seeds – and to shop by mail. Heirloom cultivars, regional cultivars, rare stuff, etc. Fortunately there are specialized seed farms and seed saving organizations to give us that unusual "what the heck is THAT"!

As the older generation passes away, unless other gardeners come forward to replant their seeds, outstanding varieties become extinct. Unique genetic heritage is lost forever. Home gardeners should know that heirloom vegetables and flowers are the best – the cream of the crop – each unique and irreplaceable.

Thanks to several seed saving companies, there are seeds with rare and fascinating histories being rediscovered.

### Some very cool seed companies:

- W. Atlee Burpee & Co, [www.burpee.com](http://www.burpee.com)
- D. V. Burrell, [www.burrellseeds.us](http://www.burrellseeds.us)
- Baker Creek Heirloom, [www.rareseeds.com](http://www.rareseeds.com)
- The Cook's Garden, [www.cooksgarden.com](http://www.cooksgarden.com)
- Heirloom Seeds, [www.heirloomseeds.com](http://www.heirloomseeds.com)
- Hudson Valley, [www.seedlibrary.org](http://www.seedlibrary.org)
- Le Jardin, [www.artisticgardens.com](http://www.artisticgardens.com)
- Johnny's Selected, [www.johnnyseeds.com](http://www.johnnyseeds.com)
- The Pepper Gal, [www.peppergal.com](http://www.peppergal.com)
- Seed Savers Exchange, [www.seedsavers.org](http://www.seedsavers.org)
- Seeds of Change, [www.seedschange.com](http://www.seedschange.com)
- Select Seeds, [www.selectseeds.com](http://www.selectseeds.com)
- Southern Exposure, [southernexposure.com](http://southernexposure.com)
- Territorial Seed, [territorialseed.com](http://territorialseed.com)
- Thomas Jefferson Center for Historical Plants, [monticello.org/site/house-and-gardens](http://monticello.org/site/house-and-gardens)
- Thompson & Morgan, [www.tmseeds.com](http://www.tmseeds.com)

- Tomato Growers Supply, [tomatogrowers.com](http://tomatogrowers.com)
- Wildseed Farms, [www.wildseedfarms.com](http://www.wildseedfarms.com)

It's getting to be that time of year when I mulch my garden and I've noticed that the Husband is keeping a low profile. No matter how much mulch you think you need, you always need twice that amount to do a good job.

So this year I ordered a whole truck load—a BIG truckload--of mini pine bark nuggets which will be blithely dumped onto our driveway. It is a true cause of dread for the Husband because he won't be able to get his car out until the job is done.

### Upcoming Garden Events in October:

**Oct 8<sup>th</sup>** 8:00-noon. Marion County Master Gardener plant sale - trees, shrubs, Florida Friendly plants, mulch, rain barrels, publications. Call 352-671-8400 for information.

**Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>** 8:00 – noon. Lady Lake Garden Club plant sale at Log Cabin in Lady Lake. Call 352-307-5166 for information.

**Oct 29<sup>th</sup>** Sumter County Master Gardener plant sale – Wildwood Town Hall in the Farmer's Market. Call 689-4668 for information. □

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The POA Discount Partner Program is a continuing benefit for POA members. Just show your current year POA Membership card when ordering the product or service. And, please say "thanks" to our Discount Partners for participating in this program. (\* = new this issue)

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(Continued on page 23)

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## Discount Partners

(Continued from page 22)

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