

THE



Issue 41.03



BULLETIN

March 2015

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Champions of Residents' Rights Since 1975

The POA Website – www.poa4us.org

Recreation Trail Striping The Multi-Modal Path Story Continues

Thanks to the interest of The Villages' residents, the issue of striping on the Recreation Trails continues to be a hot topic. Striping was discussed at the February District Board meetings in CDDs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. North of CR466, the trails under consideration include those running parallel to Camino Real and Buena Vista. South of CR466, the trails include Morse Boulevard, Buena Vista and CR466.

A description of various striping options being considered, (yellow skip centerline striping, white curb striping, and/or reflectors), are described in this issue on pages 14-15, in an article which provides the results of a POA survey completed in District 7. For comparison purposes, we have also provided the results from the District 4 survey that appeared in January's Bulletin.

The POA has pursued the striping issue because an overwhelming number of our members favor some type of striping on the trails. Most residents believe striping would visually assist golf cart operators during night time driving and inclement weather, resulting in a more comfortable experience under those conditions; and it would make trails safer.

District Board Results:

CDD3 - Chairman Bill Ray, after receiving input from residents, requested that the topic be brought up again at their March meeting.

The Board agreed.

CDD4 - Supervisors were united with irritation regarding negative comments reportedly made by other District Board members who were upset because CDD4 had responded to their residents' requests to replace the reflective yellow skip centerline on its trails. (See a Letter to the Editor (page 18) from a CDD4 Supervisor summarizing his statements at the February meeting.)

From 2005 to 2010, CDD4 had skip centerline striping which worked very well for the residents. After the trails were re-constructed, residents asked, "Where's the striping?" They wanted the trails re-striped. Supervisors requested another engineering firm be brought in to study traffic behavior, speed and other

(Continued on page 2)



See Page 13 for Parade Information!!

IRS INVESTIGATION Summary and Update

Background. The POA continues to receive many questions, particularly from new Villagers, about the ongoing IRS investigation of the tax exempt bonds issued by the Developer-controlled Villages Commercial Districts: The Village Center Community Development District ("the VCCDD") and the Sumter Landing Community Development District (the "SL-CDD"). The following is a simplified summary and update of a very complex matter.

First, you need to understand that the bonds under investigation are those issued by the Commercial Districts to purchase the amenity facilities and amenity contracts (as well as the utility companies) from the Developer. **They are NOT the residential infrastructure bonds issued by the numbered districts and at-**

(Continued on page 2)

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

POA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Third Tuesday of the Month – 7:00 PM
Laurel Manor Recreation Center

**"How Lightning Protection
Systems Work"**

**Presented by Glen Schulte
Triangle Lightning Protection, Inc.**

**Followed by Questions & Answers
Audio and Visual in Overflow Room
Donuts and Coffee after the Meeting**

All Residents Welcome - Come and Join Us!

Trail Striping Update

(Continued from page 1)

factors related to striping, in an effort to make the entire multi-modal path system safer. The study would focus on data-driven recommendations.

The issue of Multi-Modal Path striping was also on the February meeting agendas of all District Boards south of CR466. After listening to a presentation by a Kimley-Horn engineer regarding reasons why Districts “could not” have skip centerline striping, (i.e., it would fundamentally change the trail to a ‘golf cart highway’, there is no data to warrant a change, striping cannot be district to district), and he advised that Kimley-Horn’s recommendation is NOT TO (use a skip centerline), each Board shared their current position:

CDD5 - Supervisors were against centerline striping, okay with reflectors, and did not address curb striping.

CDD6 - Supervisors were also okay with reflectors and against centerline striping.

However, they agreed that curb striping should be considered and asked their representative on the Project Wide Advisory Committee (PWAC), to request that this type of pavement marking be looked into.

CDD7 - Supervisors were against centerline striping. Some were also against reflectors, but they wanted more information from the engineer about the pros and cons of curb striping. They requested that their representative ask that the PWAC commission a study on curb striping.

CDD8 - Supervisors were against centerline striping, but they were interested in further information on painting the curbs, including associated costs.

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 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.

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CDD9 - There was no interest on this board in striping.

CDD10 - Only three supervisors attended, two were against striping and one thought the issue needed to be looked into further.

When various supervisors asked the Engineer for his position on curb striping he stated that he had prepared for the centerline striping issue and would have to have further time to study the issue of curb striping before he could give an opinion.

So the jury is still very much out on the issue of striping.

It is time for everyone to start working together, including the AAC, PWAC, Districts 1-10, District Staff and Kimley-Horn Engineering, so that we can make our multi-modal “shared-use” Recreation Trails, safer and more enjoyable for all residents in all Districts throughout The Villages. □

IRS Summary/Update

(Continued from page 1)

tached to your home.

The current investigation began on January 7, 2008, as part of an IRS crackdown on perceived abuses in the issuance of tax-exempt bonds. On February 23, 2009, the IRS Agent notified the VCCDD that, after reviewing all of the documents he had received to date, he had three questions regarding the tax exempt status of the bonds that had been issued by the VCCDD. These questions were:

1. Is the VCCDD, the issuer of the bonds under investigation, a qualified issuer of tax exempt bonds? The IRS position is that the

(Continued on page 4)

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. □

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Animal Lover? Need Papers Shredded?



The 5th annual Community Paper Shred will be held on Saturday, March 28, at Buffalo Ridge Animal Hospital, from 9AM - 12 Noon. See ad on page 5. The address is 748 Villages Campus Circle (off CR466 near Walmart, between Red Lobster & Golden Corral, behind Tire Choice). Hill's Shred Express, a licensed professional disposal company, will be on hand to accept your items to be shred on site.

Donations will be accepted with 100% of the proceeds going to the Humane Societies of Sumter County & Leesburg. **Last year the event raised over \$9,000 for the Humane Societies of Sumter County and Leesburg.**

Personal items only!! NO COMMERCIAL LOTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

This event is co-sponsored by Buffalo Ridge Animal Hospital, Hill's Shred Express, & the Rainbow Family & Friends Club. □



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THE POA HAS YOUR BACK DO YOU HAVE OURS?

We still have concerns in The Villages – the eventual outcome of the ongoing IRS investigation; the desire for the creation of a resident elected Amenity Authority Committee for the Sumter Landing Community Development District residents, changes in the entertainment offerings as the Developer nears build out, to name a few. The more members the POA has, the better able it will be to help manage good results for residents if there are problems. We are supporting you. We urge you to support us.

We put a Bulletin on almost every drive-way in The Villages every month at a cost of \$105,000 per year. We believe it is important that all residents have all of the information about happenings and events in The Villages as they make decisions on various issues.

The POA has no ties or obligations to the Developer which might compromise the POA position or its advocacy of Residents' Rights.

We are making every effort to research the issues and advise you of any pertinent information which may not have been included in the various Villages media outlets.

If you believe we are providing a service and if you read the Bulletin, we urge you to become a POA member. Reminder, Bulletins go to all residents, not just POA members. (Membership form and information below – annual membership year is from Jan 1 through Dec 31.)

Paying a membership fee of \$10 per year will help to keep the POA financially sound and your membership numbers will increase our 'clout' if action needs to be taken. □

POA 2015 MEMBERSHIP – NEW/RENEWAL & DONATION FORM

Please complete each section and return to: **The POA, P.O. Box 386, Oxford, FL 34484**

New Renewal Number of People in Household

PLEASE PRINT! or Use the **ONLINE FORM** found on our website **POA4US.ORG**

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(SAME LAST NAME)

NAME(S)(2) _____
(DIFFERENT LAST NAME)

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VILLAGE _____ VILLAGES ID# _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE _____

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(We respect your privacy. Your email address is for POA Official use ONLY)

1. **MEMBERSHIP NEW/RENEWAL:** Please enroll my POA membership for **2015** at the **Annual Rate of \$10 per household.** A check payable to POA is enclosed. Memberships are for Households and run annually from **JAN 1ST to DEC 31ST.** (check the box that applies)

I will include a stamped, self-addressed envelope with this form and my check. Please mail me my **2015** Membership Card.

Please hold my POA Membership Card for me to pick up at one of the monthly POA meetings.

2. **ADDITIONAL DONATION:**

Please accept my additional **2015** contribution to the POA in the following amount: \$ _____

3. **TOTAL CHECK AMOUNT:** \$ _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUING FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

Dues Paid Date _____ (Office Use Only)

IRS Summary/Update

(Continued from page 2)

VCCDD is not qualified to be an issuer of tax exempt bonds because, primarily due to ongoing Developer control, it does not meet the criteria to be a political subdivision of the state. **The Districts have challenged the IRS finding on this question.**

2. Did the Series 2003 facilities acquisition price reflect the fair market value of the assets? For example, were the amenity facilities sold by the Developer to the Commercial Districts overpriced and thus the bonds over-issued? **The Districts have claimed "victory" on this question, but the POA is unaware of any confirmation from the IRS that the IRS agrees. Therefore, the POA is not sure of the status of this question.**

3. Were the Bond proceeds used for a governmental function or did the nature of the facilities acquired with the bonds result in private business use, and hence are they taxable Private Activity bonds? An IRS Notice on this question was received by the District on January 9, 2015. In that Notice, the IRS asserted that the bonds were, in fact, Private Activity bonds, since they were issued as

part of the Developer's business, and not eligible for tax exemption. In a January 26, 2015, memo to all Villages CDD Supervisors, District Manager, Janet Tutt, advised that **the District disagrees with the conclusions set forth in the filed documents.** (The Districts have until March 2, 2015, to file their response to this Notice.)

Since that 2009 Notice, the investigation has now expanded to also include bonds issued by the Sumter Landing Community Development District (SLCDD).

Why all this matters to you.

A negative finding to any of the three questions would result in the bonds in question not being tax exempt, (i.e., all the interest paid on them in the past and future would be subject to tax).

The potential impact on The Villages amenities system has been discussed in earlier issues of the POA Bulletin. In a nutshell, the amenities system would be threatened if the outcome of the IRS investigation leaves the VCCDD and SLCDD with such large financial liabilities, (perhaps due to bondholders suing because the Districts' representation that the bonds are tax exempt was not true), that the Districts can no longer continue to main-

tain and furnish the amenities at their current levels. A more complete analysis can be found in the August 2009 POA Bulletin, which is available on the POA website: poa4us.org, by clicking on Archived Bulletins. Copies of relevant documents can be found at districtgov.org, by clicking on the IRS Updates link.

The VCCDD's redemption of its bonds. A major development occurred last year, when the VCCDD recalled all of its bonds under investigation -- paying them off with funds received by issuing substitute **TAXABLE** bonds (at current lower interest rates). It is interesting that the VCCDD did not pay them off by selling new purportedly tax-exempt bonds, which would have borne an even-lower interest rate. The SLCDD has not yet redeemed its bonds that are under investigation.

Your amenity fees pay the Commercial Districts' attorneys. As the dispute between the IRS and the Commercial Districts drags on, the Commercial Districts are using your amenity fees to pay the Districts' attorney fees. The total amount expended, as of January 31, 2015, by the VCCDD is \$450,993.11 and by the SLCDD \$579,122.49, for a total of \$1,030,115.60.

The POA's views and objectives. The POA has not taken a position on the relative merits of the positions of the IRS and the VCCDD/SLCDD, although the POA sincerely hopes that the VCCDD and SLCDD are able to prevail in regard to all three questions. If that does not happen, the POA hopes that the IRS (or a court if litigation ensues) applies its ruling only prospectively -- so that it only applies to future bond issuances. In any event, the POA believes that it is the ultimate responsibility of the Developer, both morally and legally, to ensure that the amenity system that he promised you, the Villagers, is continued -- regardless of the outcome of this investigation.

The POA's objectives in this matter are to keep you informed of developments and to try to protect your rights by ensuring that any resolution of the IRS investigation does not jeopardize your amenities or result in the costs of an IRS victory being passed on to you. The POA has previously written to the IRS to ex-

(Continued on page 5)


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IRS Summary/Update

(Continued from page 4)

press our concerns, and the POA will continue to report to you at POA meetings, in the Bul-

letin, and in the e-mail alerts to our members, all publicly available news in this matter. Unfortunately, it is not clear to us, and may not even be clear to the parties involved, how much longer the more-than-seven-year investigation will continue until some kind of definitive conclusion is reached. □

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Law Enforcement In The Villages

Sergeant Robert Siemer, from the Sumter County Sherriff's Department, was our guest speaker in January. Below is some of the information he presented followed by audience questions and answers. Sergeant Siemer is the second in command for The Villages part of Sumter County. He is the "understudy" for Lt. Wolfe, who is scheduled to retire in September.

The biggest problem in The Villages, more than anything, is the scams that you find here. A lot of the scams come from overseas. If you get scammed via a telephone call, call the Sheriff's Department and ask to have a Dep-

uty come to your house and initiate a report that gets sent to the Detectives. The Detectives are going to take that phone number that the scammer called you from and find an IP address and hopefully the number is in something called **street doc**. Once we follow the money out of the country we take that file and send it to that jurisdiction, but it's hard to get that money back or bring somebody to justice.

We are often asked what the difference is between a robbery and a burglary. I hear this often in The Villages—"my house got robbed". Your house can't get robbed – it's actually burglarized. Robbery is the forceful taking of something either with violence or the threat of violence. If somebody walks up to you and tells you to give them your wallet or your purse and threatens you with violence, or commits violence against you to take those items from you, this would be a robbery. Burglary is entering or remaining in a structure or conveyance with the intent to commit a crime. A good example would be someone breaking into your home and stealing your television set. That would be a burglary.

We find many "crimes of opportunity" in The Villages. For the last 2 years, during the holiday season, the Department assigned the TAC team, myself and additional units to pa-

trol parking lots of retail stores. In 2013 and 2014, we didn't have a single burglary in one of those retail stores because we were patrolling them. We had a mixture of deputies in marked patrol units and also in unmarked cars and they just drove through the parking lots. We were looking mostly for people who didn't belong in the retail stores – the guys who were just walking through the parking lot checking door handles, looking inside car windows and things like that. All they have to do is break that window or try the door handle and they can take your items. We ask that you hide those items and if you can't hide them, put them in the trunk, or take them home before you continue shopping.

Another good way that you can prevent crimes, or at least crimes of opportunity, is to not leave your garage doors open when you are in the house or the back yard. Somebody will drive by and see your golf clubs sitting there and they have the opportunity to just run up there and take them. So, if you aren't home or are in the house for an extended period of time, please close your garage door.

About 3 years ago, we had 3 cars actually stolen from here in The Villages. The cars were in open garages and with keys left in the

(Continued on page 7)



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Law Enforcement

(Continued from page 6)

ignition. So, it would be a great idea to take the keys out of your car.

The new gate cameras are a fantastic tool. These cameras will make the Detective's jobs easier. I remember spending hours and hours, when I was a Detective, watching video surveillance. With the gate cameras, we have found people who have come into this community and have committed crimes, and we were able to get pictures of them and their car, and it's definitely a great tool.

You are our best eyes and ears in the community. You know what the normal is inside your community. **If you see anything suspicious, or if you see someone who you are unsure of in the front or back yard of somebody's home, please call us.** If it turns out to be a landscaper, there's no harm and there's no foul, but at least we find out who the people are. When we are notified of a burglary, we do something called a neighborhood canvas. We'll walk to the houses on the street in the area that has been broken into to see if anyone noticed anything unusual. We'll knock on the doors and talk to people and you'd be surprised how many people tell us, "You know, it's funny, two hours ago there was a guy in the back yard and I thought he was a landscaper or something. I'd never seen him before but I didn't think anything about it."

It's very important for residents to call us so we can at least check out these people and find out who they are. (NOTE: Since Sergeant Siemer's presentation there have been seven burglaries in The Villages—one north of CR466 and six south of CR466. **CALL THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE IF YOU SEE ANYTHING**

UNUSUAL.)

Traffic and golf carts are always a hot topic. Sheriff Farmer found a need to have a Traffic Unit. We didn't have a Traffic Unit five years ago. It was just a road patrol and we would contact Florida Highway Patrol to come out for traffic crashes. The county now has 3 Traffic Units rolling at all times, plus we have additional Traffic Units assigned just to The Villages.

One deputy drives a motorcycle. He is actually assigned to The Villages and he patrols and enforces the traffic laws. He pulls cars and golf carts over. The golf cart, by law, can only go 20 miles an hour (MPH) so anything over 20 MPH makes you subject to being pulled over and you can get a criminal citation. Historically, if you have to go to court the judge will withhold adjudication, as long as you do what he tells you to do. He will make you pay a fine and that fine is generally around \$500. He will make you take your golf cart to a company and undo whatever it is that you did to make it go more than 20 MPH and you will be required to show proof to the Court of the modification. He'll warn you not to come back in front of him again a second time for the same violation, because he could put you in jail.

We now have 12 new Deputies and we will have them on the road and that will cover every zone. Before we were short several deputies on every zone, but now we're up to where we're supposed to be. This is actually the largest training class that we've ever had at the Sheriff's Office.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH SERGEANT SIEMER

1) Do we have helicopters and if so, how many? **A)** We do have one helicopter. It's located at the shop down in Bushnell where it stays in the hanger that we have there. The Sheriff's Office does not use our helicopter for anything other than Sheriff's Office business. The Sheriff's Office does not Medivac or transport anyone.

2) I received two phone calls saying that I was being investigated for fraud and I was supposed to call some number to find out what was going on. Of course, I didn't do it because I'd heard about this scam. **A)** Yes, you're talking about the fraud that is going on right now. People will call your home. IRS is one that is going on right now. Someone will call you and say you owe money to the IRS and if you don't pay us right away we are going to tell the Sheriff's Office and the Sher-

(Continued on page 8)

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Law Enforcement

(Continued from page 7)

iff's Office will come and arrest you. It's not true. The IRS will not contact you by telephone initially. They will contact you by mail first. Definitely try to get the phone number if you have Caller ID, call the Sheriff's Office and we'll take the number and follow up.

3) I heard your comment about the motorcycle officer giving out tickets, especially to golf cart drivers. Is there any added presence in the squares, especially as the squares shut down and happy hour is over? Although I don't go to the squares very often I notice that there are a lot of inebriated, happy people leaving the squares after dark and getting in their golf carts and driving home. A) Absolutely, as a matter of fact, that's one thing I

should have mentioned about golf carts. Keep in mind, too, that all traffic laws, like DUI, reckless driving, etc., are all enforceable by the Sheriff's Office and local police in the area. You could go to jail for a DUI in your golf cart and we do enforce the "OPEN" container laws, as well as write tickets on any reckless golf cart drivers.

4) What happens to 14 year olds who are driving a golf cart and get pulled over for a traffic violation? A) Just because the law says they can, it's not a good idea. They obviously don't have a driver's license and if there is some type of enforcement action done like a ticket, a citation or something of that nature, the State of Florida will actually issue them a citation and it would be held against them when they go to get a driver's license in their home state when they turn sixteen.

5) Do you have any plans for, or do you see a need for, getting body cameras like they are doing nationally? A) I know that the Sheriff's Office is looking at them. I think it's going to be a standard in the State of Florida and probably nationwide sooner or later.

6) I drive my golf car constantly. The walkers scare me to death. They walk with earphones in, with their backs to you, and as you're coming up on them, you have no idea what they're going to do. I've stopped several

times and said, "You should be walking on the other side facing oncoming traffic" and they look at me as if I'm insane. So more education for walkers and bicyclists is needed. A) Absolutely.

7) Do you have cameras in the patrol cars and also computers? A) We do have computers in all of our patrol vehicles, but we do not have cameras yet.

8) Could you explain what type of law enforcement is done with golf carts on the golf cart paths? A) The only enforcement we can do if the golf cart path is not connected to the roadway (multi-modal path/recreation trail) is DUI's, open containers and reckless driving. If it's connected to the roadway, (such as on the neighborhood streets and Morse Boulevard north of CR466), we can enforce and golf cart drivers have to obey the same laws as any other driver. They have a 20 MPH speed limit that they cannot exceed, they must stop for a stop sign, and anything like that. We enforce all the traffic laws.

9) What is the law pertaining to panhandling? A) If there is any panhandling, call us. We do have a County ordinance against panhandling, so if they don't have the permits that they are supposed to have, we can run them out of there.

(Continued on page 9)

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Law Enforcement

(Continued from page 8)

10) What role do citizen complaints play in traffic enforcement? Driving up Morse the other morning, I go through the gate and I look behind me in my rear view mirror and there's a vehicle behind me with a handicap sticker and the motorist cannot stay on the road. He's halfway in the golf cart lane and halfway in the road for 2 miles. It's definitely a reportable incident, but what should I have done? A) Report the incident. You can always call us if you have a cell phone. We do this every day. People call in reckless drivers, or drivers that may be drunk, or whatever the case may be. Call in and tell us where you are and we'll see what we can do about trying to find that vehicle. In your case, it would be a little bit harder if he turns off, but you could give us the street that he turned onto. We'll send a deputy to you, and we'll keep you on the line until the deputy gets to you, and then make the traffic stop.

11) Periodically, I get a phone solicitation for funds for the police department. Is that legitimate and do the funds actually go to your police department? A) We don't actually so-

licit money from anybody from the Sheriff's Office. We do collect money twice a year though. One collection is for our "Kids, Cops and Christmas Fund".

12) Is it legal for "street legal" golf carts and LSVs to ride in the golf cart/bicycle lane on streets shared with vehicles, or are they required to ride in the main part of the street with the cars, et al? A) Sergeant Siemer conferred with Lt. Wolfe and they advised the POA that, "...after much research and talking with the Sheriff's Office legal adviser, here is our take on it: **NO. LSV's and registered Golf Carts (street legal) cannot travel in the lane that is marked cart/bicycle lane.**" In regard to their use on the multi-modal path (recreation trails) Lt. Wolfe referred us to the District for this answer. In her July 6, 2010, Memo to District Manager Janet Tutt, District Counsel Valerie Fuchs opined that, "... it was the intent of the County and State approved development orders (that require that the districts provide non-automotive, non-vehicular, multimodal paths for bicycles, pedestrians, skaters and golf carts) that **LSV's and street legal golf carts** are types of vehicles that fit within the definition of 'golf cart' for purposes of establishing the **permitted uses of the multi-modal paths.**" □

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Amenity Authority Committee (AAC) Meeting Highlights

February 11, 2015

Audience Comments:

- Regarding the e-verify system utilized by the contractors working in The Villages, District Manager Tutt assured the AAC that all contractors are required to use a verification system for this issue.
- Audience member thanked the AAC for all the improvements made and requested the lights at the entrance of La Paloma and various other items be reviewed.
- Comment regarding the installation of an indoor swimming pool.

- Audience comments were received requesting a set of swings be installed at Paradise Park. Staff advised that the item will be added to the budget wish list for review.
- Concern was expressed regarding when the lighting at the Chula Vista Pool would take place. Staff advised the testing of the lighting would occur around February 14th.

Consent Agenda:

- Review and approve presenting the Recommendation of Award to Mark Cook Builders for the demolition and reconstruction of El Santiago Recreation Center to the VCCDD Board on February 11, 2015. Staff provided an overview of the bidding process. AAC discussion and audience comment was received regarding the process and pricing. The AAC unanimously approved the recommended contractor for the demolition and reconstruction of El Santiago Recreation Center. Mark Cook Builders did not submit the lowest price for the project, but the process for selection was done by Request for Proposal (RFP), not by bid, and members of the selection committee took into consideration, all facets of the project, not just price. Janet Tutt, District Manager, reviewed the proposal and the recommendation process, and found that all had been done properly. The AAC, although not liking that the fact

that the awarded contractor's price was \$190,000 (10%) higher than the contractor with the lowest price, upheld the selection committee's choice, rather than create a possible legal problem for not following the established process. Supervisor Wilcox requested the RFP process be evaluated moving forward.

New Business:

- The AAC approved adding sign wall lighting to Lady Lake Villas - Chula Vista Villa, Hacienda Villa and Courtyard Villa.
- The AAC approved dates for Budget Workshops for the 2015-16 Budget Calendar.
- The Company constructing the Buffalo Crossings Assisted Living Facility - just north of CR466 - requested that 10 to 20 of its assisted living units be permitted to participate in the VCCDD amenity fee program. Following discussion which included agreement that this was not setting a precedent for adding more rooftops into the VCCDD amenity program and with the understanding that any further such requests would be handled on a case by case basis, the AAC approved the request by a 5-1 vote (Supervisor Deakin voting against) and Staff will prepare an Agreement for the AAC to review.

(Continued on page 11)

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AAC Meeting Summary

(Continued from page 10)

Old Business:

Capital Projects Update:

- El Santiago Recreation Center: The AAC recommended awarding demolition and reconstruction of the El Santiago Recreation Center project to Mark Cook Builders. The total estimated cost for the project, including landscaping, irrigation, furniture and fixtures is \$2,203,037. This is in addition to the \$350K paid for the original building. Projected completion date: December 2015 (Paid for with lawsuit settlement funds.)
- TierraDel Sol Recreation Center: The contractors are installing the exterior finishes and completing the interior framework. Projected completion date: April 2015 (Paid for with lawsuit settlement funds.)

Please go to the districtgov.org website for the Official Minutes, Agendas and Meeting Schedule.

Next AAC Meeting—Wednesday, March 11, 2015, 9AM at the Savannah Center. □

If you have a question about anything in The Villages, or how to do something, or want to report a problem, etc., please call the VCDD Customer Service Center at 352-753-4508.



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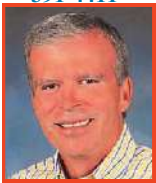
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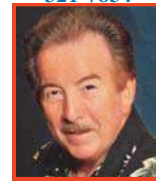


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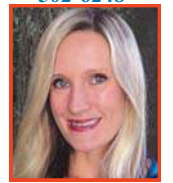
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On Tuesday, March 17th, the St. Patrick's Day parade will kick off this year's string of rollicking, frolicking festivals bringing out the Irish, the Italian and the German in all of us.

Who doesn't feel that surge of pride in our heritage when we see friends and neighbors proudly marching down streets lined with cheering fellow Villagers? Let's face it, these parades have become a major part of our shared cultural heritage making this such a uniquely wonderful community.

For years the Entertainment Division organized these events, but decided to discontinue parades here in The Villages. Two years ago the Resident Parade Committee was formed in partnership with the Recreation Department to continue these fun parades.

For the first two years of resident control, representatives of the 4 Irish/Celtic, 3 Italian and 2 German clubs filled this committee and prepared and orchestrated each event. Their success however, has depended on the scores of volunteers who have selflessly turned out to "make it happen". They have filled the roles of

marshals and crossing marshals, handled staging, check-in, and parking, handed out water or shirts and helped with clean up.

We owe them a huge debt of gratitude for their efforts. Without them we would have had NOTHING. There would have been no Green Beer and lilting voices singing "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling", no aroma of sausages and peppers while groups of happy Villagers danced the Tarantella, and no Oktoberfest Bier while glasses were raised in a rousing "Ein Prosit".

No, none of that would have happened without those selfless volunteers. So we call out to you once again, please help us continue this fabulous Villages tradition. The first of these great parades is just around the corner on March 17 and we need your help. We are asking for help from ALL Village residents,

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not just members of the 9 clubs noted above.

Please email Sally Canna at saracanna@comcast.net ASAP with your willingness to help us keep the tradition alive.

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Districts 4 and 7 Recreation Trail Striping POA Survey **RESULTS**

PURPOSE OF SURVEY: To determine the preferences of Districts 4 and 7 residents.

BASIC DATA:

CDD4 CDD7

- **716 783** Households received the email,
- **673 779** Opened the email, and
- **261 266 (39% and 34%)** Households responded to the Survey.

1) How many people are in your household?

- 14% 9%** One Person
- 84% 90%** Two People
- 2% 21%** More than Two People

2) Do you own or drive a golf cart?

- 93% 97%** Yes
- 7% 3%** No

3) Do you ever drive a golf cart at night or in the rain?

- 86% 95%** Yes
- 14% 5%** No

4) Are you in favor of striping the Recreation Trails along Buena Vista Blvd and along Morse (South of CR466) Blvd?

- 82% 77%** Yes
- 18% 23%** No

Note: If you answered **YES** to question No. 4, please answer ALL remaining questions, 5 - 9. We need that data to get the best evaluations. **THANK YOU.** If you answered **NO** to question No. 4, you will be taken to the end of the Survey

5) Do you favor using Reflective Yellow Skip Centerline Striping?

- a) It is a 3 foot long center stripe with 9 feet between stripes.
- b) It identifies the lanes for users traveling in opposite directions.
- c) It alerts users to use caution if passing slower traffic.
- d) It improves visibility at night and during

rain storms.

(Cost is about \$ 0.12 per household, per year)

- 94% 91%** Yes
- 6% 9%** No

6) Do you favor using Reflective White Solid Striping on the Curbs?

- a) It identifies outside edges on **BOTH** sides of the Recreation Trail.
- b) It improves visibility at night and during rain storms.
- c) It enables users who may be blinded by the glare of oncoming headlights to look down and away from the glare.
- d) It has a longer life because it is not in the high traffic areas.

(Cost is about \$ 0.24 per household, per year)

- 84% 82%** Yes
- 16% 18%** No

7) Do you favor using Roadway Pavement Markers, (RPM's)?

- a) These are reflective, raised markers,

(Continued on page 15)

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Striping Survey Results

(Continued from page 14)

(usually white or yellow), glued to the road, (like the blue reflectors previously used in the Villages to identify fire hydrants).

b) Used primarily on curves and narrower sections of the Recreation Trail in addition to centerline striping.

c) **Note:** RPM's can be a tripping hazard for pedestrians, skaters, cyclists, etc.

(Cost is about \$0.04 per household per year)

41% 52% Yes
59% 48% No

8) Do you favor using BOTH No. 5 and No. 6?

(Cost to do BOTH is about \$ 0.36 per household per year)

76% 79% Yes
24% 21% No

9) Do you favor using ALL three, (Nos. 5, 6 and 7)?

a) But only using No. 7 on curves and narrower sections of the Recreation Trails.

(Cost to do ALL three is about \$0.40 per household, per year)

41% 49% Yes
59% 51% No

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It is suggested that new and resale home buyers in The Villages review and examine the property tax proration's when they receive their final tax bill in November.

The closing taxes are typically based on estimates from the Property Appraiser and/or the seller(s) and are prorated between the buyer and seller at the time of closing.

The final tax bill is sent to the owner of record in November.

If the final tax bill is sent to the seller(s) they are to forward it on to the buyer.

When the bill is received it is recommended that the buyer thoroughly review the contents and if a discrepancy is noticed forward the adjustment to the seller and request a reimbursement.

If the resolution is not agreed to then the problem should be referred to the Closing Agent for a solution.

If there is a question regarding the contents

of the Tax Bill it would be appropriate to call the specific county tax department.

Lake County (352) 343-9622

Marion County (352) 368-8200

Sumter County (352) 793-0260

(These departments are not responsible for the allocations of the prorated taxes as they should be discussed with the Closing Agent.)

As an example, the final tax bill received in November is to accurately represent the agreed upon amount and proration at closing.

If the closing amount or allocations are different than the final bill, (i.e., proration effect at closing 60% seller and 40% buyer, final November bill reflects 30% seller and 70% buyer), a request for an adjustment should be made to the seller.

If you fail to reach an agreement the issue should be referred to the Closing Agent. □

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District News Releases

CDD9 - March 5, 2015, 6:00 P.M. in the Eisenhower Regional Recreation Center.

The CDD9 Board of Supervisors will host a **Town Hall Meeting**. It will include an opportunity to learn interesting facts about the District and residents will be able to ask questions of the District Supervisors.

CDD4 - March 12, 2015, 6:00 P.M. in the Mulberry Grove Regional Recreation Center.

The CDD4 Board of Supervisors will host their **Monthly Meeting**. This is an opportunity for residents to see their elected officials in action. The Board will conduct their meeting and **provide an opportunity for residents to ask questions during an extended question and answer session.**

For more information please contact Jennifer McQueary, District Clerk, at 352-751-3939, or by email, jennifer.mcqueary@district.gov.org.

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LETTERS

Letter to the Editor:

Engineer Draws Line Against Striping On Paths CDD4 Recreation Path Striping Rebuttal

I am disappointed that Richard Busche, an engineer of Kimley-Horn Associates, has expressed an "opinion" that striping along the multimodal paths isn't in the best interest of our residents, with only anecdotal evidence and no facts to back up his claim, in his article dated February 3rd in The Daily Sun. It is my opinion that Traffic Study recommendations and conclusions should be based on data.

Example: CDD4 wanted to put a four way stop sign at the intersection of Mulberry Lane and Belle Meade after residents complained of many near misses. We contacted the Traffic Manager for Marion County to request a four way stop at this intersection. The Traffic Manager's initial "opinion" based on anecdotal evidence was that the four way would cause traffic to back up onto CR42. We requested a traffic study to determine the extent of the back-up problem. The county Traffic

Manager, to his credit, agreed and the study revealed no traffic problem onto CR42 and the stop signs have been installed at the intersection.

I agree with the statement in the Daily Sun article, "it's really important that we do not start to turn this multimodal path into a golf cart highway". Some would say we are already there with the size, weight and speed of the golf carts travelling the paths throughout The Villages. The observations made in the article provide no evidence/data that suggests striping has contributed to this situation. In fact, unscientific polling of CDD4 residents reveals that striping has provided a "reference point" for carts to stay the course, avoid drift and provide a safer more confident ride both day and especially at night.

The article also states, "striping is used and necessary only on narrow curves, sharp turns, or areas where there are vision or speed challenges". I agree with this statement and, in fact, by providing striping to our residents, CDD4 has addressed the vision challenges especially at night with headlight glare and non-lit areas along the path. I would submit that speed is a challenge on the entire multimodal system, not just the curves.

The article states, "drivers feel they can't

cross the center, so they press pedestrians more closely and more quickly than they would with no line present". All drivers know the difference between dotted and solid lines.

My wife and I walked the path, two abreast from the Lopez tunnel to the Springdale tunnel to "test the system". Carts approached us, recognized us, and passed when there was no traffic in the other lane.

I'm disappointed that other districts have labeled CDD4 "rogue" and were galled/aghast as regards to our effort, supported by our residents, to keep everyone safe.

Finally, in an effort to make the entire multimodal system safe, CDD4 has asked that another engineering firm be brought in to study traffic behavior, speed and other factors that are contributing to an unsafe environment. The study will focus on data driven recommendations. Our residents deserve nothing less. Paul D Kelly, CDD4 Supervisor □



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LETTERS

Letter to the Editor:

Indoor/Covered Swimming Pool

The Amenity Authority Committee (AAC) is exploring options for an indoor/covered pool north of CR466. My questions are: Who will pay to construct it and maintain it? Who will be able to use it – all residents or just those north of CR466?

In my opinion, the AAC should lower our amenity fee rather than spend hundreds of thousands of dollars for an indoor pool. Another option is to build the indoor pool south of CR466 where the Villages population is greater and let those households potentially pay for it. Bill Welch

Editor's Note: As noted, this issue is in the exploratory stage and will not come back to the AAC for three or four months. Hopefully the annual survey which the Developer and District send to each resident will have a question or two on this issue which can be presented to the AAC, along with the exploratory findings of District staff. Once they have all of the available information, the AAC can make an educated decision on this situation. □

Letter to the Editor:

Recent Burglaries

Want to know if you and your staff are aware of all the home burglaries that have happened in the last two weeks. The Daily Sun posted an article with very little details. The villages-news.com has posted a very good article. I think our residents need to know the facts as they are law enforcements eyes and ears. Can you get the word out through your newsletter or other means?

Thank you, Lloyd Nippins

Editor's Note: The information that was provided to the public can be found in this Bulletin at the bottom of page 7. □

Letter to the Editor:

Sinkhole Insurance

We had a sinkhole on our property in February of 2014 which went under the corner of our lanai, so it was a little scary. It was 4' by 5' by 6'. State Farm covered all expenses of filling and subsequent inspections, ground penetrating radar, etc. I have no idea what that cost as I was never given a bill except for some irrigation damage the repair people

must have done. We pay State Farm about \$425 a year for the extra sinkhole insurance and I am very happy to do so.

Thanks for all you do, Carolyn Conway

Editor's Note: Congratulations! You are one of the lucky ones who were able to secure the extended sinkhole coverage. □

COMING SOON!! OUR "DID YOU KNOW?" SECTION!

We are exploring additional items of interest for Villagers, things like, "Did you know there is a BOX full of lost keys at the Lady Lake Post Office?". Stay tuned for more tidbits! □



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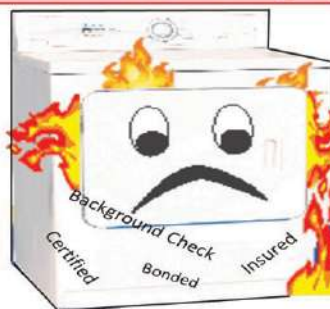
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Leading the Fight Against Scams

2014's "Dirty Dozen" Tax Scams

The Internal Revenue Service and Seniors vs. Crime want to remind Villagers to use caution during tax season to protect themselves against a wide variety of scams ranging from identity theft to return preparer fraud. The 2014 "Dirty Dozen" listing of tax scams, compiled by the IRS, highlight a variety of common scams taxpayers can encounter at any time. Many of these schemes peak during filing season as people prepare their tax returns.

Illegal scams can lead to significant penalties, interest and possible criminal prosecution.

The 2014 "Dirty Dozen" tax scams were:

- 1. Identity Theft:** Tax fraud through the use of identity theft tops this year's "Dirty Dozen" list. In many cases, an identity thief uses a legitimate taxpayer's identity to fraudulently file a tax return and claim a refund.
- 2. Pervasive Telephone Scams:** In 2014, the IRS saw an increase in local phone scams across the country, with callers pretending to be from the IRS in hopes of stealing money or

identities from victims.

3. Phishing: If you receive an unsolicited email that appears to be from either the IRS or an organization closely linked to the IRS, such as the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS), report it by sending it to phishing@irs.gov.

4. False Promises of "Free Money" from Inflated Refunds: Scam artists routinely pose as tax preparers during tax time, luring victims in by promising large federal tax refunds or refunds that people never dreamed they were due in the first place.

5. Return Preparer Fraud: About 60 percent of taxpayers will use tax professionals this year to prepare their tax returns. Most return preparers provide honest service to their clients. But, some unscrupulous preparers prey on unsuspecting taxpayers, and the result can be refund fraud or identity theft.

6. Hiding Income Offshore: Numerous individuals have been identified as evading U.S. taxes by hiding income "offshore". The IRS uses information gained from these investigations to pursue taxpayers with undeclared accounts.

7. Impersonation of Charitable Organizations: Be wary of charities with names that are similar to familiar or nationally known organizations. Some phony charities use names or websites that sound or look like those of respected, legitimate organizations. IRS.gov has a search feature, Exempt Organizations Select Check, which allows people to find legitimate, qualified charities to which donations may be tax-deductible.

8. False Income, Expenses or Exemptions: Another scam involves inflating or in-

(Continued on page 21)

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2014 Tax Scams

(Continued from page 20)

cluding income on a tax return that was never earned, either as wages or as self-employment income in order to maximize refundable credits.

9. Frivolous Arguments: Promoters of frivolous schemes encourage taxpayers to make unreasonable and outlandish claims to avoid paying the taxes they owe.

10. Falsely Claiming Zero Wages or Using False Form 1099: Filing a phony information return is an illegal way to lower the amount of taxes an individual owes. Don't fall prey to people who encourage you to claim deductions or credits to which you are not entitled.

11. Abusive Tax Structures: Abusive tax schemes have evolved from simple structuring of abusive domestic and foreign trust arrangements into sophisticated strategies that take advantage of the financial secrecy laws of some foreign jurisdictions.

12. Misuse of Trusts: Trusts also commonly show up in abusive tax structures. They are highlighted here because unscrupulous promoters continue to urge taxpayers to transfer large amounts of assets into trusts.

The IRS reminds taxpayers that tax scams

can take many forms beyond the "Dirty Dozen", and people should be on the lookout for many other schemes. More information on tax scams is available at IRS.gov. Remember, the IRS does not initiate contact with taxpayers by telephone or email to request personal or financial information. This includes any type of electronic communication, such as text messages and social media channels.

Villagers are fortunate in that there are several local organizations available to assist with tax questions free of charge. However, no one will watch out for your interests better than **YOU**. When in doubt as to what you can do to protect your interests, contact your nearest Seniors vs. Crime office in The Villages for advice or assistance. There is never a charge for their services.

Seniors vs. Crime can be reached at 352-753-7775 at the Marion County Sheriff's Office in The Villages; 352-689-4600, Extension 4606 at the Sumter County Sheriff's Office in The Villages; or 352-750-1914 at the Wildwood Police Annex in Brownwood. Volunteers' at all three offices are ready, willing and able to assist you. To keep up with the latest scams, **LIKE** 'Seniors vs. Crime Region 4' on Facebook. □

You can find ACRONYMS for Villagers online at poa4us.org/acronyms.html

Our Gardening Column:

Spring Festival 2015

by Anne Lambrecht, Master Gardener
annegarden@embarqmail.com

One of the best plant sales around is the legendary Marion County Master Gardener's Spring Festival at the Agricultural Extension Center, 2203 Old Jacksonville Road in Ocala, held this year on March 14th and 15th. More than just a plant sale, this is a huge, dizzying festival, big enough to satisfy plant freaks of every nature.

The Spring Festival gets bigger and better each year. This year there are over 90 plant related vendors, selling flowers, vegetables, herbs, garden décor, fountains, pond accessories and much more. Orchid purveyors, native plant growers, bromeliad and succulent people will be there -- tables and tables of colorful annual collections -- all to make our decisions tough. There are vendors selling garden gizmos, hardscape, pond and waterfall equipment, and drip irrigation equipment. Of course, the Marion County Master Gardeners will be buzzing around in their green shirts, all of them willing and able to answer any of your gardening questions.

New this year will be the Festival's very own food court: a food truck rally! A great variety of innovative food trucks for every palate will be there.

In addition to the vendors, during both days the Master Gardeners provide free lectures and seminars by big name horticulturalists, professors, county experts and other professionals.

They will speak on lawn care, composting,

(Continued on page 22)



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Spring Festival 2015

(Continued from page 21)

growing tomatoes, palms for central Florida and insect control. There are also intimate in-garden talks held right in the Master Gardeners' demo gardens. These talks include vertical gardening, heirloom vegetables, raised gardens, organic pest control and many more. University of Florida plant publications will also be available for sale.

Now, you needn't be concerned if you can't carry all your purchases around. There's a holding area manned and protected by our wonderful 4H youth volunteers. When you're completely satisfied that you've shopped till you've dropped (or the money runs out), these wagon-equipped 4Hers will bring your treasures to our plant pick up area where you can load up.

Don't worry about parking close; there are regular tractor trams transporting happy gardeners to the festival and back again. There is a \$1 charge to enter the festival. Kids under 12 enter free. Speaking of kids, there is an area just for kids in the auditorium called the Kids Gardening Zone. I am the Queen Bee of this area – come and see me! Giant butterflies and bugs, huge colorful flowers and plant dis-

plays will greet you upon entering the Zone. Educational and super fun activities all about gardening and our natural world will be held in our new auditorium.

This year's theme for the zone is "Pollinators! Birds, Bees, Bats and Butterflies". Kids and their parents will learn about our amazing pollinators while having fun constructing native bee nests and making muddy clay seed balls. Kids will be able to plant seedlings of Seminole pumpkin, watermelon and Teddy Bear sunflowers to bring home.

New this year is a walk where the kids and their parents can bat through a cave and see bats all around them and hear their actual sounds. The Master Gardeners will have plenty of kid-sized wings and masks of pollinators to decorate and wear (the kids are so cute flying around the festival!). A real working bee hive will be on display courtesy of the Marion County Beekeepers Club. And the "Bug Man" will be back with his many glass cases of Florida insects.

The University of Florida's FAWN automated weather network station will be there to teach kids how to use its tools for weather alerts, forecasts, data, temperature, wind and rain. Captain Compost and the Worm Hotel will be there. Kids can actually see worms

working hard to make new soil! Our 4H team will be there to do some fun crafts about entomology and pollinators.

Lots of fun children's activities are planned by some of Marion County's local civic organizations. The Ocala Police Department is providing a Kids' Safety Program. The Marion County Public Library will have fun and easy bookmarks and a seed packet craft for awareness of the library and its many offerings for young people.

So, come on out to the festival. You plant people know what I'm talking about! You will have a tremendously fun time – I guarantee it! For more information, call 352-671-8400.

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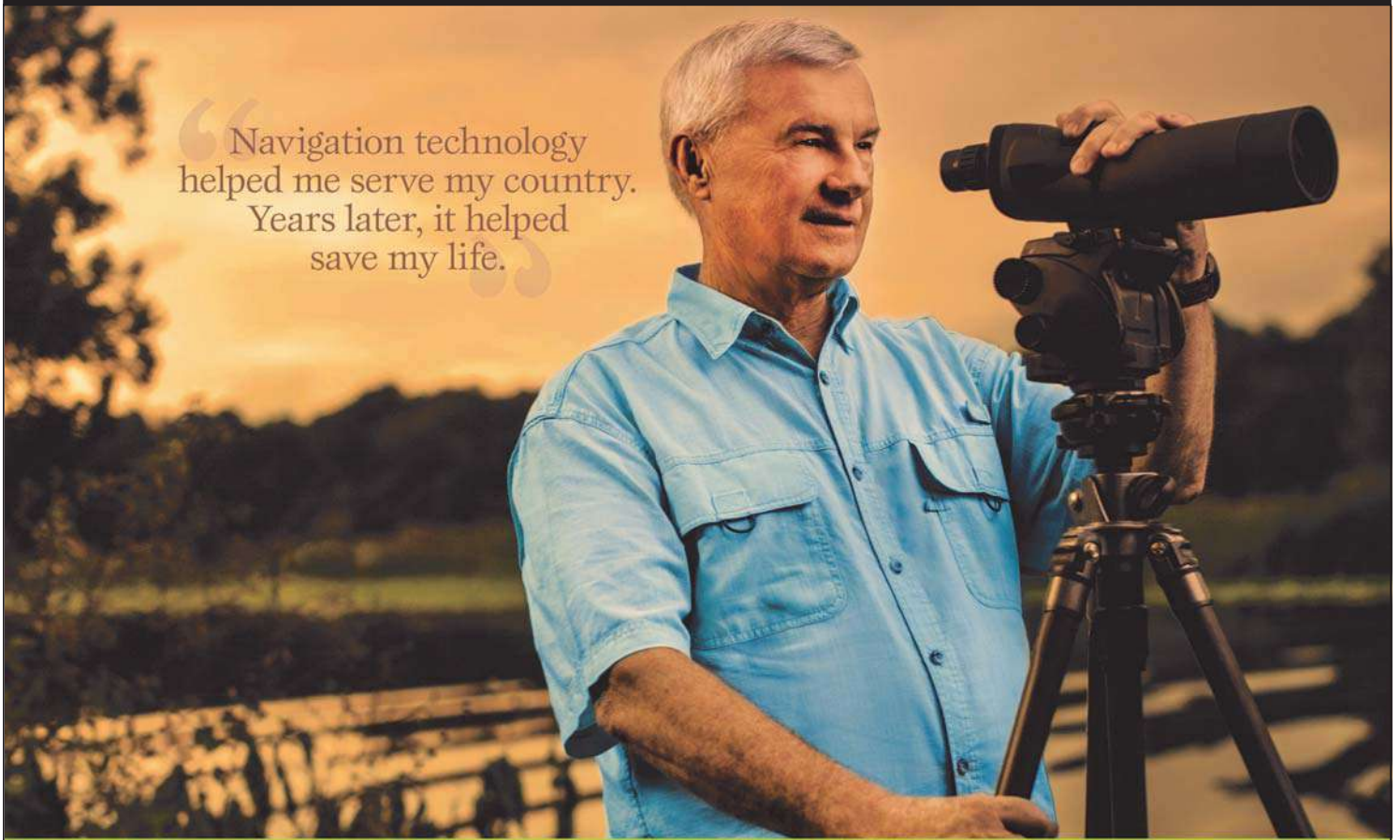
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“Navigation technology helped me serve my country. Years later, it helped save my life.”

Bud Conklin beat prostate cancer with the help of advanced technologies, like RBOI's Calypso 4D Localization Treatment.

Not many things slow Bud Conklin down. In his 60s, this Air Force veteran still hits the gym regularly and completes a weekly 20-mile bike ride. So when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer, he sought out the most advanced and efficient treatment available. After discussing his options with RBOI cancer specialist Dr. Bennett, Bud chose the high-tech Calypso treatment, which works like a GPS system in the prostate to optimize radiation targeting and minimize side effects. Bud is now cancer free and proud to say he didn't miss a beat in his fast-paced life. We helped Bud write his success story. Let us help write yours.

THE VILLAGES

OCALA

TIMBER RIDGE

LECANTO

INVERNESS



Visit RBOI.com or call 1.352.259.2200 to schedule a consultation.

