April VHA Town Hall Meeting Recap

During the April 18 Town Hall Meeting residents and guests received the following answers to questions:

Q: With the recent land acquisitions (including Fenney), there have been various published estimates on the number of homes that will be built. Is there a more accurate estimate or is it too early in the planning stages to provide that number?

A: Dr Lester- Always look for the most accurate information which will first be published in The Daily Sun. The property owned is approximately 8,000 acres and the estimated number of homes is 14,000.

Q: The wording of a recent report in the online-news was confusing regarding plans to extend Buena Vista Blvd to the Village of Fenney. Would you please clarify the status of that plan if there is one?

A: Dr Lester- As of this date there is no extension planned. That’s not to say that there may not be an extension in the future and all of us hope that someday connectivity with all Villages could be possible. Once again the best information available will be found in The Daily Sun.

Q: Is it true that Fenney residents will get free golf cart usage at The Villages golf courses outside of Fenney, but Villages residents who don’t live in Fenney will not get free golf cart usage for the courses being built at Fenney?

A: Dr Lester- The Villages of Fenney residents do not have golf cart access to a Country Club and they will receive complimentary golf cart use on the existing Country Clubs. Additionally, until Red and Gray Fox open they will receive complimentary golf carts for use on Executive Courses (to be picked up at a Country Club). The Villages recently reduced the golf cart rental fee for all residents to $3.00 for 9 holes and $6.00 for 18 holes.

Q: As residents of Silver Lake who moved here only a couple years ago, we have seen a noticeable change in the water area along Paradise and 441 which has become unsightly, unattractive and smelly. These areas have become overgrown and not maintained in the fashion we have come to expect in The Villages. What can be done to improve these areas? Can some kind of liner or other means help prevent the beautiful ponds from drying up?

A: Sam Wartinbee - We are in desperate need of rain. This is one of the very few times when the water has dried up in portions of the lake. When it happened before a study confirmed that a liner would not be appropriate because there would not be anywhere to pump excess water during heavy rainfall times. There will be some work done in the problem areas in the near term.

Q: The area along La Grande Plaza in not maintained as beautifully as other areas of The Villages. What can be done to improve this area?

A: Dr Lester - There will be a plan announced in the near term regarding major improvements in this area. Look for more in The Daily Sun.

Q: Can lighting be improved/increased around the mailbox area at La Grande Plaza to increase safety and security at night?

A: Dr Lester - There will be a plan announced in the near term regarding major improvements in this area. Look for more in The Daily Sun.

Q: Can the road around La Grande Plaza be improved and maintenance increased?

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Versatile New Vehicle For Sumter Sheriff

The Sumter County Sheriffs Dept. has a new vehicle in its fleet. It is called the Xtreme Green PMV (Police Mobility Vehicle). This vehicle is a fast way for deputies to get around during events. It is also equipped with an AED (Automated External Defibrillator). You will see the vehicle at parades and the square driving around.

Deputy Richard Boyher will be patrolling around the square at Sumter Landing in this versatile new vehicle. Look for him and give him a friendly wave.

Xtreme Green PMV
Police Mobility Vehicle
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A Message from VHA President Fred Briggs

Hello again everyone. It’s been a very busy time in the VHA since the beginning of 2017. We’ve conducted a Hoedown, given out awards, had a thank you party for our Hoedown volunteers and are getting ready for our “Flight with the Developer.”

Most of all, we’re so excited about the success of our combined efforts with the CDD Recreation Department and the VCCDD in getting the new Enrichment Academy up and running and soon to be holding classes. I must admit that the heavy lifting has been done by our District Manager and the Recreation Department in the Planning and Execution effort. However, without the encouragement and support of our VHA Membership and the willingness of the VCCDD to stand up and be counted in their support of the effort it may not have happened. We’re moving into a new era of educational opportunity, and of the many possibilities for lifestyle enhancements available to our residents; this will be one of the best.

The first time I came to The Villages, I met a man outside of the Old Mill Movie Theater and said to him, “There seems to be a lot for people to do in The Villages.” His response was “If you can’t find something to do in The Villages, you just need to go to a funeral home and wait!” I can say without hesitation that The Enrichment Academy (TEA) provides a myriad of opportunities for those of us who came here to learn and grow in our knowledge of almost any interest you can think of. The man I spoke of was absolutely correct in that if you’re bored or thinking there’s nothing to do, you need to start reading the Recreation News and scan the lifestyle opportunities available and those that will be available in the future. In The Villages there is something for everyone.

Once again, in April we had an overflow crowd at the Rohan Center for the District Manager’s presentation of “Where Your Money Goes.” We will be asking Janet Tutt to give her presentation again in the near future at other locations. It’s been completely revised, and I recommend it to everyone. If after attending the presentation you want a copy, they will either email or mail you a copy, if you request one. This is your opportunity to understand how your money is spent and answer any questions you might have.

I must address one issue that I found distressing in the April edition of the POA Bulletin. In response to a question regarding the difference between the POA Bulletin and The VHA Voice, the respondent went further and stated at one point that the “VHA agreed not to be an advocate for the Residents when they have issues with the Developer or the District.” Nothing could be further from the truth. The VHA is and always has been a Homeowners Advocacy organization that also provides educational opportunities for our residents and programs to support a positive Lifestyle. Being an advocate doesn’t mean that you need to be the loudest or most negative voice in the discussion in an effort to reach a solution that is fair and equitable for all.

It was the VHA who met frequently with the Developer and Owens Corning for many months to help resolve the defective shingles issue, it was the VHA who brought together the participants and helped find a solution to The Wall, it was the VHA who worked with The Developer to resolve the refrigerant line issue, and who helped facilitate the new Enrichment Academy. There are many other issues where we worked behind the scenes to find a solution, these are only a few, and we didn’t have to raise our voice or threaten anyone to come to a resolution that served the best interests of our membership and all residents. We continue to believe that working with our Partners and those organizations that have the ability to solve problems is the best way to accomplish a satisfactory result. We are your best choice for advocacy and membership value.

Fred Briggs
VHA President

Policy: Vision, Mission and Core Values

As The VHA marks 25 years of serving the residents of The Villages, we are continuing to identify additional areas in which we can serve our community. In order to achieve this goal, we are proud to announce our new Vision, Mission and Values statements.

The VHA Vision
Keeping the Dream Alive

The VHA Mission
To enhance the residents’ enjoyment and pride of community through compassion, advocacy and education.

Core Values
The VHA is committed to excellence and driven by the following values:
• Ethics
• Honesty
• Independence
• Education
• Collaboration
• Proactivity
Seniors Vs. Crime - Phony Check Scams

Seniors Vs. Crime has been a constant advocate of the old rule “If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!” This especially applies when a windfall arrives in your mailbox in the form of a check you either didn’t expect (lottery winnings), a job offer (Secret Shopper), or much more than you expected when selling something online (the Overpayment Scam).

Yes, the check is clearly marked “Cashiers Check.” Yes, it looks very official – routing numbers, account numbers, the whole bit. Yes, there is a small ‘catch’ associated with that check – the sender wants you to mail/send/wire transfer/iTunes card or something else untraceable – their ‘change’ to them or their ‘fees’ to them. Sounds reasonable – why shouldn’t you do it?

Scammers know how to design phony checks to make them look legitimate. In fact, the Council of Better Business Bureaus just released a list of the most “risky” scams, based on how likely people are to be targeted, how likely to lose money, and how much money they lost. Fake checks were number two.

Fake, phony or counterfeit checks drive many types of scams – like those involving phony prize or lottery wins, fake jobs, mystery shoppers, classified ads sales, and others. In a fake check scam, someone asks you to deposit a check – sometimes for several thousand dollars – and, when the funds seem to be available, wire the money to a third party. The scammers always have a good story to explain the overpayment - they’re stuck out of the country, they need you to cover taxes or fees, you’ll need to buy supplies, or something else. But when the bank discovers you’ve deposited a bad check, the scammer already has the money, and you’re stuck paying the money back to the bank.

So don’t deposit a check and wire money or send money back in any shape, form, or fashion. Banks must make funds from deposited checks available within days, but uncovering a fake check can take weeks – especially if it is an out-of-state check. If a check you deposit bounces – even after it seemed to clear – you’re responsible for repaying the bank. Money orders and cashier’s checks can be counterfeited, too.

No one will watch out for your interests better than YOU. Want to avoid the latest rip-offs? Sign up for free scam alerts from the FTC at ftc.gov/scams.

If you need assistance with understanding any aspects of fake check scams, contact your nearest Seniors Vs. Crime office in The Villages for advice or assistance. Better yet, visit any of our offices. We have an extensive “collection” of fake checks to show you. Seniors Vs. Crime can be reached at:

• The Marion County Sheriff’s Office in The Villages – (352) 674-1882
• The Sumter County Sheriff’s Office in The Villages – (352) 689-4600;

Hablamos español. Por favor pregunte por Yolanda. Viernes - 9:00 a 11:00; (352) 674-1882

For more information, please contact Jennifer McQueary • Jennifer.mcqueary@districtgov.org or 751-3939
North Vice President – Joan Testa
cdsjoan@sbcglobal.net • 817-247-9677

Center Vice President – Phil Walker
Pdwalker9146@sbcglobal.net • 753-8618

South Vice President – Kay Elder
Kvirgo@aol.com • 633-9494

The VHA North Area Workshop program, “Run-Hide-Fight – Surviving an Active Shooter” drew a large crowd to the Chula Vista Recreation Center on Thursday, April 20.

After greeting the crowd and giving the attendees a brief overview of the many VHA programs and positive community support, North Vice President Joan Testa introduced Sumter County Sheriff’s Deputy Richard Boyher.

Deputy Boyher commented that while we don’t expect to encounter an active shooter situation here in The Villages, when we travel outside The Villages we could find ourselves faced with just such a situation. He stressed “situation awareness” which he explained as being aware of our surroundings as well as the people in our vicinity.

The next step he said is to make a plan for the safest way to react if confronted with a dangerous situation. “People prey on people who aren’t prepared,” he told the audience.

After showing a video that illustrated “run-hide-fight” scenarios and how people tend to react when faced with an active shooter, Deputy Boyher gave additional information on self-protection and conducted a lively question and answer session.

VHA North Area President Joan Testa announced that the North Area will be holding informative workshops once a quarter and ask for topics of interest for future meetings.

Lady Lake - Lake County
Dan Bard, VHA Representative Mira Mesa
dpbinfl@aol.com • 352-391-2035

Have you noticed the decrease in traffic and crowds? We miss our northern friends, but it is a nice change from the hustle and bustle of a few weeks ago.

NEW! A Wawa Gas Station and Convenience Store is proposed for the Southwest corner of Highways 466 and 441. This 6,100 square foot project will require the removal of some buildings and businesses currently occupying the land. The Wawa Store and Gas Station will be open 24/7, 365 days per year. Wawa also plans to build near Lowe’s.

Now is the season that we become good neighbors by keeping an eye on our “Snow Birds” home and yards while they are gone. If you see a problem, call Community Standards at 252-751-3912. They will check it out and make sure the owners know about the problem.

Who owns Wales Plaza Road? The question may be answered soon. The Lady Lake town Manager will meet with Lake County and The Villages Developer to determine who owns the road. For the time being, based on a resident complaint about pot holes on the road, the Town of Lady Lake proactively elected to patch the road for safety reasons.

Editors Note: VHA President Fred Briggs has worked to resolve the issue of repair and ownership of Wales Plaza Road since the summer of 2015. VHA Board Meeting minutes recorded information on the Wales Plaza ownership controversy going back that far. At the Sept. 9, 2015 Board meeting, President Fred Briggs reported that he was “still working toward a resolution of the Wales Plaza street repair.” Fred stated, “Lake County is going to renovate the 50+ foot stretch and turn it over to Lady Lake – possibly in October.”

January 13, 2016 Board minutes – Fred Briggs reported that there is still no progress on the Wales Plaza issue. Lady Lake will not take the area over until it is in pristine condition.

Board Minutes of July 13, 2016 – Wales Plaza Road: President Briggs reported, “Lake County will be meeting with an engineer to determine what work has to be done to repair this section. Once repairs have been completed Lake Lake will take over this area.”

VHA President Fred Briggs has continued to work toward a resolution of this issue.

Fast forward to the present - According to Dan Bard’s report (above), Lady Lake has repaired some pot holes. But the ownership controversy still hasn’t been settled. Neither Lake County or the Town of Lady Lake want to “own the road” and be responsible to its continuing upkeep.

We are still waiting for news about the 41.5 acre parcel the developer has offered for sale behind the Rio Grande Family Pool. Lake County is still working on the project. It has been a few months since the original proposal. Once the county is done with their part, Janet Tutt will be able to present it to the Amenity authority Committee (AAC) for their review. It could be an ideal area for resident recreational purposes.

The planned assisted living/memory care center on Hwy. 27/441 (next to TOO Your Health Spa) will be expanded to 146 beds.

That’s all for now – see you next month. Stay healthy and safe.

Dan

SOUTH AREA
Kay Elder, VHA South Vice President
Kvirgo@aol.com • 633-949

On Monday, April 10, an overflow crowd accepted the VHA South Area’s invitation to learn how our fees are spent. District Director Janet Tutt presented an excellent program entitled “Where Your Money Goes” She explained how funds are distributed to meet the responsibility of maintaining our Villages standards.

This program was of special interest to many residents in the southern part of The Villages. The VHA South Area team was pleased with the response to Ms. Tutt’s presentation and will be planning future programs of interest.
Have you ever approached an intersection and heard a siren? Perhaps you have looked in your rearview mirror and saw flashing lights behind you. Chances are that you have passed an emergency worker or a law enforcement officer who pulled off the roadway with his or her lights flashing.

You should be aware that in Florida the law requires that you move over, make way and slow down when approaching all emergency and law enforcement vehicles stopped on the roadway. The law, known as the Move Over Act, is designed to protect law enforcement officers, firefighters and other emergency workers from needless, accidental tragedy.

After 40 years in law enforcement and public safety, I have learned that driving, especially when responding to calls for service, is the most hazardous duty performed by law enforcement officers, firefighters and emergency service professionals. Many fatalities and injuries to emergency service workers could have been avoided had the driver simply slowed down and moved over.

The Lady Lake Police Department strictly enforces the Move Over Law to help keep you and all public safety professionals safe. While on the roadway, please be alert, pay attention and remember the following:

- If an emergency vehicle is approaching from behind, put on your turn signal, yield to the right-of-way, slow down or pull over. Once the emergency vehicle has passed, use your turn signal and carefully re-enter the roadway.
- On a two-lane roadway, you are required to slow to a speed that is 20 miles per hour less than the posted speed limit. If the speed limit is 20 miles per hour or less, you must slow down to five miles per hour.
- If you are driving on an interstate or roadway with multiple lanes of travel in the same direction and you approach an emergency or law enforcement vehicle parked along the roadway, you must vacate the lane closest to that vehicle as soon as it is safe to do so.
- When arriving at an intersection where an emergency vehicle is approaching from the cross street, come to a complete stop and wait until all emergency vehicles have safely passed before continuing.

If you are a driver who violates the Move Over Law, you can be charged with a moving violation, which results in a fine and points on your license. More importantly, by violating this important law, you would be putting both yourself and a dedicated “first responder” at risk.

On behalf of the men and women of the Lady Lake Police Department, I urge you to help protect those who are sworn to serve and protect you. Always remember to make way, slow down and MOVE OVER when approaching an emergency or law enforcement vehicle - it’s the law.

Chief McKinstry
Lady Lake Police Dept.
Master Gardener | **Birds & Butterflies**

**Attracting Birds & Butterflies to Your Landscape**

To be successful at attracting birds, butterflies and other wildlife, you must decrease the use of pesticides. Let your garden become a haven for wildlife and the birds and beneficial insects will take care of the pests.

Every one thinks if they put up a bird feeder, the birds will come. Not necessarily true here in Florida where there is often fruit, seeds and insects to feed on. It is important to note that you may incur the wrath of your neighbors, many of whom feel bird feeders attract mice and rats.

Black-oil sunflower seeds will attract the most birds. Don’t waste your money on a seed mixture of millet, oats and other fillers. The birds will not be interested and that unwanted seed will quickly spoil. There are a wide range of feeders so for help picking out the right one for your yard, check out: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/uw192.

The best way to attract birds is to plan a natural habitat of Florida natives and Florida-friendly plants that offer food, water and shelter. For berries, try beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*) which cardinals, catbirds and thrashers love. The cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*), our state tree, has fruit that attracts blackbirds, blue jays, mockingbirds and robins.

Dense shrubs such as Florida-friendly podocarpus (*P. macrophyllus*) provide cover from predators and a nesting area. For a large tree, consider a wax myrtle (*Morella cerifera*) which will provide fruit and shelter.

A bird bath placed within sight of your window will provide hours of enjoyment as they frolic in the water. Clean it every few days with a textured sponge to prevent mosquitoes and algae from growing. Never use bleach or chemicals to clean a bird bath.

What about those birds that keep flying into your windows? This can be a deadly problem for the birds and source of great angst for the homeowner. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology (http://www.allaboutbirds.org/Page.aspx?pid=1184) has many suggestions for preventing window collisions but the best solution is a screen. Birds see the reflection of the surrounding landscape in the window. They do not see the glass. A screen will prevent the reflection.

To successfully lure butterflies to your garden, you must have both host and nectar plants. To have butterflies, you need to provide food for the larvae (caterpillars). Monarchs feed on milkweed and be sure to ask for a native milkweed (*Asclepias* species) that has not been treated with pesticides. Gulf fritillaries feed on the purple passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*), atalas feed on coonties (*Zamia pumila*) and zebra longwings, our state butterfly, feed on the corkscrew passionflower (*Passiflora subrosa*).

Adult butterflies are attracted to red, orange, pink and purple blossoms. They particularly love salvias, liatris and pentas. Butterflies need water too. A shallow dish with some wet sand will give them a place to “puddle.” Also place stones in the sun for them to warm themselves.

Next month: Establishing a Monarch Waystation.

Kathy Porter
UF/IFAS Sumter County Master Gardener
352-689-6870 or 6864
Send questions or sign up for the Gardener’s Journal: askthemastergardener@ifas.ufl.edu

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**GOLF CART SAFETY CLINIC**

YOU ARE INVITED WEDNESDAY MAY 17 • 9 AM Colony Cottage Rec Center ALL VILLAGERS WELCOME

• VIEW THE NEW VHA GOLF CAR SAFETY VIDEO
• SAFETY TIPS
• CART MAINTENANCE
• INSURANCE INFORMATION
COME JOIN US FOR COFFEE AND GOLF CART DRIVING TIPS

**SUBMARINE VETERANS MEETING**

Held on the third Wednesday of each Month at 1:00 PM
American Legion Post 347 Grand Hall, CR-466 & Rolling Acres Rd., Lady Lake, FL

**JOIN THE CONVERSATION WITH THE VHA**

IF YOU ARE A VHA MEMBER AND YOU WISH TO BE HEARD ON CURRENT ISSUES - JOIN OUR MEMBER EMAIL LIST. SEND YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL ADDRESS TO:

membership@thevha.net

PUT THE WORDS CURRENT EMAIL ADDRESS IN THE SUBJECT LINE SO YOU CAN BE INCLUDED IN OUR MEMBERSHIP SURVEYS ON SIGNIFICANT ISSUES.
When Ranchers Play, They Learn: Youth Soccer

Play is big part of our four-pillar teaching philosophy, and soccer is just one of the many ways that our boys and girls get out and play. Soccer is one of the most popular sports in the entire world. In the United States, it is the second-largest youth sport, trailing just behind basketball. It is played by millions of youth, some of whom are on our campuses.

Julian, Kyle and Zoie are three of our Safety Harbor residents who took part in a community youth soccer league this past season. While they were learning the basics of corner kicks, goals and the dreaded handball, they were also learning valuable life lessons about confidence, teamwork and friendship, all the while gaining the benefits of being outside and active.

Soccer is a great confidence-builder. Soccer is an active game. Running up and down the field, passing the ball back and forth, there is no time to be afraid of stumbling over a kick or missing a goal. For Kyle, the fast-paced nature of the game has helped him overcome a fear of failure. Even professional athletes know you aren’t going to make every pass or score in every game, but with soccer, there is always another chance to try. Soccer helps reinforce that you are going to make mistakes from time to time, but if you have confidence, you never give up. This is an invaluable skill that the Youth Ranches teach and time on the soccer field only strengthens.

For Julian, the principle of teamwork has helped him to grow on and off the field. More than many other sports, the entire team is often involved in soccer. Julian on the field is working with every other player, pushing hard toward the goal. The team must maintain a proper formation. If one player is off, it could create a hole for the other team to use to steal the ball or score a goal. It has helped Julian to be aware of his teammates and focused on working as a group. In soccer, as in life, we are stronger together.

For Zoie, one of the best benefits of team sports like soccer is the ability to make new friends. Our youth often come to us with troubled pasts and struggle to meet and make new friends. Sports like soccer can help. Lasting relationships can be built as players become teammates and then become friends. Zoie shares the wins and the losses, along with all of the emotions that come from the experience. Soccer is a shared life experience that brings children like Zoie, Julian and Kyle together as a place where new friendships are made.

Soccer is also great for the health of our Ranchers. Children need to be active to avoid poor health from today’s more sedentary lifestyle. By being active while playing soccer, children not only improve their health, but studies have shown that active youths also improve in school performance; a sound body does help lead to a sound mind. Brain function has been shown to improve from being active, and soccer is a great opportunity for that.

At the end of the day, our Ranchers are having fun and building lifelong skills by playing soccer. For the Youth Ranches, that is what it is all about.

Josh Blackmon, Grants/Staff Writer
Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, Inc.
Hospital Auxiliary Works To Improve Patient Experience

Changes, big and small, to improve a patient’s experience during a hospital stay, continue via The Villages Regional Hospital Auxiliary Foundation. Some of the changes are more visible to visitors and patients, but all are important in helping the Auxiliary Foundation pursue its mission.

A change you cannot miss seeing is the Gift Gallery and Café. Last fall it doubled in size, which along with the expanded thrift store, Ye Olde Thrift Shoppe, will result in increased revenue for the Foundation to use to purchase needed items as determined by the Patient Care Committee.

Recent purchases by the Patient Care Committee, currently operating with a $100,000 budget, include less visible but very important items such as the Xenex disinfection robots, LED lighting systems for the operating rooms and specialty recliners for the emergency room. Also purchased were oxygen tank holders for wheel chairs and a platform gurney scale.

Another revenue source for the Auxiliary Foundation and ultimately for patient care is the events hosted by our event partners designating the Foundation as a recipient of the money raised. Three recent benefit concerts provided a lot of fun for those attending as well as raising money for the Auxiliary Foundation.

In April, Dr. John Williams, orthopedic surgeon and Director of Total Joint Replacement at the Advanced Orthopedic Institute of the Villages, rocked the house as John Truth and Reflexx, a Bob Marley tribute band at the Seabreeze Recreation Center.

Dale Cebert, president of Cebert Wealth Management, presented his ninth annual Honky Tonk Charity Concert. He played to a packed house at the Lake Miona Recreation Center in March.

The Auxiliary Foundation was also a recipient of the proceeds from The Cabaret Showcase of Talent in January. The community events all vary in theme, but they have one thing in common; the public participates and the Foundation benefits.

Another visible addition to the hospital is the state-of-the-art touch screens in the lobbies. They highlight Foundation activities, partners and accomplishments. If you are interested in seeing what’s happening at the hospital, public tours are available. To schedule a tour contact Diedre Rosemond at 352-751-8871.
This month, Brother Bill Blackburn has adapted some thoughts from Cycling Savvy to remind us how to ride safely, healthy, and happily as the summer months approach. Of course, every month is “summer,” here in The Villages, so the guidance really applies all year.

1. **Ride on the road:** Think about where each of these motorists is looking before crossing the sidewalk. While bicyclists can legally ride on the sidewalk in Florida, we discourage the practice. Sidewalk cycling increases conflict for cyclists, motorists and pedestrians. Sidewalk cycling is not only inconvenient and slow; it can actually increase your risk of being hit by a car because it aggravates turning and crossing conflicts. The sidewalk also presents many more hazards such as poles, posts and branches.

2. **Know and follow the rules:** Bicycles are vehicles as defined by Florida traffic law. The rules of the road are for everyone. They exist to make us all predictable to one another. Bicyclists who violate the rules are not only far more likely to be hit by a car; they are disruptive and breed animosity among fellow road users. The five basic rules are:
   - First come, first served.
   - Always ride the same direction as traffic.
   - Yield to traffic before entering a road.
   - Yield to overtaking traffic when changing lanes.
   - Obey all traffic control devices.

3. **Integrate in the intersections:** Cooperate with traffic to graduate.
   - Always use the lane that serves your destination.
   - Turn left from left turn lanes.
   - Never ride straight in a right-turn-only lane.
   - When approaching an intersection in a wide lane or a bike lane, merge left into the main traffic flow or lane.
   - Remember, you can always become a pedestrian by dismounting and using the relative safety of a crosswalk to cross a busy intersection.

4. **Ride Big:** In Florida, we have a THREE FOOT Passing Rule, which means that a motorist is required by law to pass a bicycle with at least three feet of clearance. Despite the law, most close passing is a result of the motorist thinking he can squeeze past without changing lanes. Make sure a driver can clearly see that his car won’t fit within the same lane. Most roads have lanes that are not wide enough to be safely shared by cars and bikes operated side-by-side. You are allowed the full use of a lane that is not wide enough to share. Communicate that the lane is not wide enough for a motorist to squeeze past you by riding far enough left that there clearly is not room for the width of a car between you and the lane line.

5. **Communicate:** You are part of the system; you need to be predictable to others. Communication makes you predictable. Signal turns and lane changes. Motorists do not want an accident any more than a bicyclist.

When motorists know what you want to do, most of them will try to help you out! This is very true.

6. **Be mindful of your surroundings.** Develop a high situational awareness. As seniors, our focus tends to become more and more stove-piped. It is as if we develop blinders that force us to see straight ahead and prevent us from peripheral awareness. This is especially important for us when we leave the bike lane. Note that the markings on the roadway are static while traffic is dynamic. As a result, bike-specific markings sometimes put you in the wrong place. You MUST take your cues from the whole environment. Never let paint think for you.

   - Make sure you are visible to crossing and turning traffic. This often means leaving a bike lane and moving to the left side of the general use lane.
   - Never ride within 5ft of a parked car. This area is called the “door zone.” A suddenly-opened car door can be deadly. Some bike lanes are striped entirely within the door zone.
   - Passing a queue of stopped traffic on the right can expose you to many crash hazards.
1. Put your check and this form in an envelope marked “VHA Membership.” Deposit in a VHA drop box at any Villages postal pick-up station.
2. Send your check and this form by mail to: The VHA, 1104 Main Street, The Villages, FL 32159
3. Online by credit card at www.TheVHA.net. Click on yellow box “Join or Renew your VHA Membership Online.”

The answers to these questions and many others will be answered by representatives of the following agencies:
- Sumter County Sheriff’s Office
- Town of Lady Lake Police Dept.
- Sumter County Property Appraiser
- Sumter County Tax Collector
- Veterans Services
- Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches
- The Villages Regional Hospital Auxiliary
- District Government
- Seniors Vs. Crime
- Serving Health Ins. Needs of Elders (SHINE)
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- Community Improvement Council (CIC)
- Sumter County Master Gardeners
- Friends of the Library
- Sumter Landing Bicycle Club
- United Health Care

If you cannot join us on May 9, please feel free to join us later as your time permits. New Resident Nights are held the second Tuesday of every month, 7 pm at Colony Cottage. The next meeting is Tuesday, June 13, 2017.

Be sure look for the VHA monthly newspaper, The Villages Voice, which is delivered the first Wednesday of each month as an insert to The Daily Sun. The Villages Voice is filled with informative articles about our community, as well as upcoming VHA events. Be sure to check out the list of Merchant to Member benefits you will enjoy as a VHA member. Visit our website at www.TheVHA.net where you can keep abreast of the latest VHA news and read current and back issues of The Villages Voice.

We invite you to join the VHA, the largest residents’ organization in The Villages.

We welcome you to The Villages and we look forward to meeting you in person soon,

Kathy Porter
Membership Chair
Tel: 352-259-8196
Email: VHAoffice@TheVHA.net

Fred Briggs
President
Tel: 717-805-8500
Email: president@thevha.net

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**HELPING HANDS | NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS**

**A VHA Community Service Program**

Currently providing over 500 pieces of donated durable medical equipment to Villages Families; Helping Hands has a number of Electric Power Wheelchairs & Electric Scooters on hand.

The equipment needs and availability vary from day to day. If you are in need of any of the items listed, or wish to donate items, please contact us.

352-753-4650
helpinghands@thevha.net

**ITEMS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE FOR USE OR ACCEPTED AS DONATIONS**

- **BED RAIL**
- **POWER SCOOTER/CHAIR**
- **WALKER**
- **WALKER KNEE**
- **WALKER W/SEAT**
- **XL**
- **GRABBER/PICKUP TOOL**
- **WHEELCHAIR**

- **CANE**
- **CANE QUAD**
- **SHOWER STOOL**
- **SHOWER CHAIR**
- **SHOWER BENCH**
- **TUB TRANSFER BENCH**
- **TRANSPORT CHAIR**

- **SHOWER BENCH**
- **COMMODE CHAIR**
- **COMMODE RAISER**
- **CRUTCHES**
- **WALKER**

- **IV POLE**
NOTES FROM WELCOME WEDNESDAY

**How to Stay Informed:** Although I send out a recap of Welcome Wednesday information almost every week by email, you and your neighbors can really stay on top of what’s going on in The Villages (including but not limited to Welcome Wednesday newsletters) just by going online to www.districtgov.org and in the bottom left corner of the homepage, sign up for E-Notifications. You can sign up for as much info as you want; from boil water notices to schedule updates & closings of streets, rec centers, golf courses; job postings; public safety; recreation; messages from the District Manager….etc.

**Saddlebrook Recreation Center** renovation should be complete and reopened by June 2017.

**Wall and Fence Matrices:** Wonder who is responsible for maintaining walls and fences in your neighborhood and throughout The Villages. A matrix showing this information is on the District website, www.districtgov.org. Go to the homepage, click on the the title “your district” to get the drop down menu for the area you are inquiring about, then click on District Facts quick link and the matrix is listed on the bottom of the page. It clearly shows who is responsible for painting and maintaining villa and other walls as well as fences.

**The Enrichment Academy:** What was previously known as The Lifelong Learning College is now kicking off its first year with classes starting in October 2017. Instructor applications are now being collected: districtgov.org or info@theenrichmentacademy.org, or 352-674-1800.

**Sheriff Siemer Update:** Sumter County Villages commander Siemer reports that there have been a rash of golf cart thefts, particularly Yamaha brand, especially along Hwy 441. Those that are easier to steal (keys in them, no anti-theft devices installed) are most prevalent thefts, but some are being stolen without even starting them up so the key situation does not matter. The Lieutenant suggests people consider the variety of anti-theft devices being sold locally (gps, “the club”, brake pedal locks, etc) or at least be sure to park in well lit populated areas.

**Water Shortage:** Due to the lack of rainfall and the Phase 1 Water Shortage issued by the Southwest Florida Water Management District, the Villages District Property Management has discontinued plant replacements, with the exception of palm trees and annuals. Goth palm trees and annuals are irrigated with low volume irrigation.

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**BIKE continued from page 9**

Sometimes it’s better just to wait in the queue.

7. **Understand how traffic flows:** If you understand traffic flow, you can anticipate and place yourself in a position which makes things easier for yourself and your fellow road users. In The Villages, we present Safe Cycling Classes in conjunction with the League of American Bicyclists, University of Florida and Florida Department of Transportation to teach you in detail about how traffic controls and road features influence traffic flow.

**8. Want respect? Act respectfully:** One road - Many Users. All of us are traffic. Be considerate of your fellow road users. But also demonstrate respect for yourself. Control your space by default and help motorists pass you when appropriate. Offer a friendly wave when others are respectful of you. When motorists arrive before you at a red light, stop behind them. Don’t pull to the front of the queue and make them have to get around you after the intersection.

9. **Let it go; don’t escalate harassment:** You will be passed uneventfully by thousands of considerate citizens for every one jerk who yells or honks. So, when someone does honk or yell at you, let it go. Never lose your temper, shout obscenities, or use vulgar gestures. Smile and wave (with all five fingers), or pretend you heard nothing. They will simply move on with their negative self and you can remember the nice person who smiled and waved you through a lane change a few minutes before.

10. **Keep it healthy and fun!** Bicycling offers a higher trip quality than most other forms of transportation. That is true whether you ride on quiet streets or share the road with motor traffic. Interacting with other road users is a dance you lead. The better you are at communicating and operating predictably, the better your dance partners will be. Those of us who ride mindfully, with a friendly attitude toward our fellow road users, seldom experience close calls or hostility.

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Joan Testa
VHA North Area Vice President

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**Brother Bill Blackburn is a retired agricultural entrepreneur (aka, Farmer) with a MS Degree in Agriculture from Auburn University. He is a veteran of the US Air Force. He is a snowbird who owns and lives in his Villages home in the winter and cuts Kentucky Blue Grass (it’s actually green grass) in the summer. He is an avid bicyclist who enjoys equally both the rolling hills of Kentucky and the flatter riding in Florida.**
EATS AND SWEETS

AMELIA’S RESTAURANT AND LAKE SHORE LOUNGE
At the Waterfront Inn, 1105 Lake Shore Dr., Lake Sumter Landing
352-753-7535
25% discount Breakfast, Lunch or Dinner
(Not valid with any other coupons, discounts or specials)
Excludes alcoholic beverages. Not offered on Holidays

BAMBOO BISTRO – ASIAN FUSION
700 N US Hwy 441, Lady Lake, FL 32159 | 352-750-9998
Free Chef’s Special - Appetizer Sampler.
$6.00 value with $25.00 purchase. Dine in only.
One per visit with VHA Membership Card. Not valid with other offers.

CHICKEN SALAD CHICK
996 Bichara Blvd., La Plaza Grande
Lady Lake, FL - 352-775-9379
www.chickensaladchick.com | 10 % Off Total Order thru 2/4/2017

CHINA BUFFET
Southern Trace Plaza, 3435 Wedgewood Lane, The Villages, FL 32162 - 352-751-6866
10 % Off any order

EDIBLE ARRANGEMENTS
3509 Wedgewood Lane, The Villages, FL 32162 | 352-391-1334
$3.00 Off Purchases Valid on orders over $25.00.

FIREHOUSE SUBS
13757 U.S. Hwy. 411 – Lady Lake, 352-430-3870
Free Cookie with Purchase of Medium or Large Sub
Not valid with any other offer. One benefit per member.

FLIPPERS PIZZERIA AT SPANISH SPRINGS
Everyday 4 pm – 6 pm, get a FREE Cheese MyPie pizza with the purchase of any Large Specialty Pizza.
(Not valid with any other coupon or promo except the FREE Wine or Beer with purchase of an Appetizer)
Everyday 4 pm – 6 pm, get a FREE glass of Wine or Beer with the purchase of an appetizer.
(Not valid with any other coupon or promo except the FREE Cheese MyPie with purchase of any Large Specialty Pizza)
We DELIVER or CATER to most of The Villages.
Call store at 352-750-1919 for specific delivery routes.

HAAGEN DAZS
1001 Lake Shore Drive – Lake Sumter Landing | 352-751-0261
10% Discount

HONEY BAKED HAM COMPANY & CAFE
524 N. Highway 441/27, Lady Lake
Best Buy Shopping Center | 352-259-3900 | ddeadmarsh@yahoo.com
Buy One Sandwich or Boxed Lunch - Get 2nd 50% off (equal or lesser value)

JOHNNY ROCKETS
976 Old Mill Run – Lake Sumter Landing | 352-259-0051
10% Off Meal

KILWIN’S OF SPANISH SPRINGS
1108 Main Street – The Villages | 352-630-4704
10% Discount on All Items – Except Daily Specials.
Show VHA Card before purchase.

MOE'S SOUTHWEST GRILL
U.S. Hwy. 441 South – Rolling Acres Plaza - 352-430-3610
Buy one entree - get one free with purchase of two beverages every Saturday. Not valid with any other offer.
One benefit offer per family membership.

PANDA EXPRESS
869 North Hwy, 27/441 – Home Depot Plaza | 352-751-2507
10% Off - Not valid with other coupons or specials.

PEACHWAVE FROZEN YOGURT
249 Colony Blvd. - The Villages, FL 32162
www.peachwaveyogurt.com - 352-750-2238 - 10% off any order

PEACHWAVE FROZEN YOGURT
4058 Wedgewood Ln. - The Villages, FL 32163
352-674-1495 - 10% Discount on any order.

SONIC DRIVE-IN
11211 SE 178 PL – Walmart Shopping Center, 352-347-2860
1/2 Price Drinks, Slushes, Teas & Sodas - 2pm – 5pm Daily
Valid at the Summerfield location only.

**THE SPICE and TEA EXCHANGE**
The Brownwood Paddock Square
3638 Kiessel Road, The Villages, 352-633-4780
www.spiceandtea.com
10% off any purchase over $25 with VHA Card.

SWEET TOMATOES
508 US 441/27, Lady Lake; 352-751-2500
20% discount on meals up to 4 adults.
$8.00 Sundays all Inclusive
Not valid on beverages, cookies, kids pricing, or to go a la carte.
Cannot be combined with other offers. Valid only at Lady Lake location.
Must show current VHA Membership Card at time of purchase.

SERVICES FOR YOU

24 Hr. Cart Club, Inc.
352-330-1911 - www.24hrcartclub.com
3 Months FREE with Sign-up. Valid on initial sign-up only.

BELLA TAN
13940 Hwy 441 – Suite 502 - The Villages, FL 32159
352-658-1442 / 352-259-1470
10% Discount off any tanning package, spray tan or lotions.

COMPASS SELF STORAGE
4417 E. County Road 466
Oxford, Florida, 34484
352-399-6893 | www.compassselfstorage.com | First Month Free

DRY CLEAN CITY
13745 Highway 441 - Lady Lake
$5.00 discount off $30 Dry Cleaning or Laundry.
Must present membership card for discount.

FLORIDA MEDICAL HEARING CENTER
8732 SE 165th Mulberry Lane – The Villages, FL 32162
floridamedicalhearing.com | 352-205-7804
Free Hearing Evaluation. Buy one package of batteries, get one free

FORT KNOX SELF STORAGE & TRUCK RENTAL
13634 U.S. Hwy. 441 - Lady Lake | 352-750-4647
Rent a 5x5x10 Standard Unit, Get the Second Month for $1.00.
Valid on new contracts only.

HEARING AIDS FROM DIGITAL HEARING SYSTEMS
347 Colony Blvd. - The Villages | 352-259-8824
BUY ONE (1) package premium batteries, get 2nd one free-per visit.

H & R BLOCK
208 S. Hwy, 27/441 – Lady Lake | 352-750-3669
17860 SE 109th Ave. – Summerfield | 352-347-6736
522-B N Hwy. 27/441 – Lady Lake | 352-259-5708
$15 Off Tax Preparation. Valid at these offices only.

LINT FACTOR LLC
Air Duct Cleaning
Dryer Vent Inspection & Cleaning
214-460-7723 | www.lintfactor.com
20% off (not valid with any other offer) Must present membership card.

THE SALT ROOM
480 N Hwy 27/441 – (Located in Kohl’s Plaza) - Lady Lake, FL 32159
352-750-9909 | www.saltroomvillages.com
15% Discount off all full priced services.

The Merchants to Members Committee reviews and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors as to the suitability for partnering with commercial enterprises.


days to do

CAPTAIN MIKE’S LAZY RIVER CRUISES
On the Withlacoochee River Southwest of Ocala on Hwy. 200, just in back of Stumpknocker’s Restaurant.
Call for Reservations, 352-637-2726 | www.lazyrivercruises.com
$2 Off Any Person, 2-Hour Tour Only.

FLETCHER MUSIC
1560 Bella Cruz Dr., Spanish Plaines Shopping Center • 352-751-4971
6 Weeks of Keyboard lessons for $20 (includes book)

JIM’S GOLF SHOP
676 N. U.S. Highway 441/27
Free golf swing analysis on our state-of-the-art launch monitor. Must present VHA membership card.
Visit our website at: www.jimsgolfshop.com

TREE TOPS GOLF
175 S. Rolling Acres Road - Lady Lake, FL 32159 • 352-259-2313
Golf at Live Oaks Miniature Golf
Mondays: Softball Cage, Buy 2 Tokens-Get One Free.
IMPROVING YOUR HOME

BONE DRY ROOFING, LLC
42116 E. Lakeview Drive, Altoona, FL 32702
352-669-6070 | www.boneddryroofingfl.com
Free Estimates. $50 off glass skylight or upgrade to off ridge vents
Offer Expires 12-31-2016

CHEM DRY OF THE VILLAGES
(Independently owned and operated)
15519 N. Hwy 441, Suite 302; Eustis, FL 32726
352-728-8626 | www.championchemdryfl.com
4 Rooms & Hall $149
(each room 200 sf or less - not valid with any other offer).
15% Off Area Rugs or Tile Cleaning
(not valid with any other offer) Offers Expires 12-31-2016

CORAL'S CASUAL PATIO & FIREPLACE
528 N. Hwy 27/441 - Best Buy Plaza
Lady Lake, FL 32159
352-430-2159
10% off any wall art

DESIGNER FLOORS BY NICKE I TILE
1067 Canal St., Lake Sumter Landing
352-259-5800 | Kim@Nickeltile.com
Free Cleaning Kit with Purchase
3-19-15 thru 3-19-17

ENTRY POINT BY PERRY DECORATIVE GLASS
1124 Bichara Blvd. - La Plaza Grande
perrysdecorativeglass@gmail.com
www.entrypointbyperry.com | 352-751-0883
10% off any non-sale items
(can not be combined with any other offer)
March 15, 2016 to December 31, 2016

FOXY INTERIORS, INC.
Interior Decorating and Staging
(we come to your home)
407-314-5076 | www.foxyinteriors.com | marie@foxyinteriors.com
10% off any service

KELLY & SONS, INC.
Residential & Commercial Plumbing
320 U.S. Highway 27/441 Lady Lake, FL 32159 | 352-753-5301
10% off labor on your next service call (1 hour minimum).

THE KINGS GALLERY
Spanish Springs Town Square, 352-259-6998
20% Off all Artwork every Wednesday
(this offer not to be combined with any other offers)
Now featuring Kameleon Jewelry – FREE compact case with $100 purchases.

**PICTURE PERFECT TILE SPECIALIST**
2125 Lindsey Loop, The Villages, FL 352-350-0456
Free Color Grout of your choice.

THE SOLAR GUYS
“Solatube”® Tubular Skylight
352-307-7077 - Call for free estimate
Buy 1 - Save $80 | Buy 2 - Save $200 | Buy 3 - Save $390
On Solatubes & Attic Fans. 10% off Window Films & Garage Door Insulation
(Not Valid With Other Offers)
Must show proof of VHA Membership at time of sale.

SABRINA GULF COAST WINDOW CLEANING
526 4th Ave. E., Bradenton, FL - 941-565-0054
sabinawindowcleaning.com
10% off window cleaning (full service) - new customers only

STORM STOPPERS
Hurricane Window Protection
524 W Winter Park St | Orlando, FL 32804 • 407-423-5959
Toll Free: 877-575-7788
Receive a $50 Gift Card with whole house purchase or referral

TERVIS
Spanish Springs Town Square
1109 Main St., The Villages, FL 32159 - 352-750-0035
10% off total purchase

UNDERGLASS 3M PRESTIGE & ULTRA WINDOW FILMS
330 Hwy. 441/27 Lady Lake
352-753-5267
Free Windshield Strip-3M or 10% OFF any 3M Film, Home or Auto.

IMPROVING YOUR LOOK

BAGS, BELTS AND BLING
13940 Hwy 441 – Suite 502 - The Villages, FL 32159
352-658-1442 / 352-259-1470
10% Discount off any regular priced Boutique items.

BERMUDA BAY CLOTHING
Spanish Springs
1112 Main St., The Villages, FL 32159 | 352-205-8201
Wonderful Wednesdays - 10% off all purchases
April 1, 2015 through Dec. 31, 2016

CUSTOM APPAREL AND GIFTS
3451 Wedgewood Lane, The Villages, 32162
352-750-1600 | villageapparel@yahoo.com
VHA members 10% discount on all screen printed items.
For a limited time, in honor of New VHA logo
10% discount on all new VHA embroidered shirts.
MUST SHOW VHA MEMBERSHIP CARD

DI'S DAZZLE BOUTIQUE
1008 Canal Street – Lake Sumter Landing
352-753-4161
10% Off Every Wednesday.

GOTTA GET YOUR NAME ON!
1124 Bichara Blvd. - La Plaza Grande
Custom Embroidery and Monogramming
5% off Shirts, Logos and Monogramming
Karen D. Andrews • 352-391-9333 Phone and Fax.

JEWELRY DESIGN
La Plaza Grande
1040 Bichara Blvd., The Villages, FL 32159
50% off all Watches (Seiko, Citizen, Esa Movado, Bulovo)

NAILS BY METHANEY
Located inside Cosmera Hair Studio
Best Buy Plaza
576 N. Hwy 27/441, Lady Lake, FL 32159
10% Discount for New Clients

PLAZA JEWELERS
16770 S. U.S. Hwy. 441, Baylee Plaza, Summerfield
352-307-3846
20 to 40% Savings Off the Already Low Retail Price & All Watch Batteries $4.00.

LODGING & RELAXATION

COMFORT SUITES
1202 Avenida Central, The Villages, FL 32159
10% Room Discount
Not valid on Leesburg Bikeweek. Call in advance for reservations.

HAMPION INN & SUITES
1127 N.E. 63rd Drive, Lady Lake, FL 32162 • 352-259-8246
adso.tampa@libertygrouphotels.com
10% of best available rate 5/1/16 thru 12/31/16
20% of best available rate 5/1/16 thru 12/31/16

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS
1205 Avenida Central, Lady Lake, FL 32159
352-750-3888 | HIExpress.com/TheVillagesFL or HIExpressfl@gmail.com
12.5% Room Discount with VHA Card - No Blackout Dates
Meeting Space Available

LA HACIENDA HOTEL
352-750-6839
1201 Avenida Central - The Villages, FL 32159
$69.95 thru 12/31/16
Not valid on Leesburg Bikeweek. All reservations based on availability.
Call in advance for reservations.

SHERATON SAND KEY RESORT
1160 Gulf Boulevard - Clearwater, Florida, 727-595-1611
10% discount Fri - Sat • 15% discount Sun - Thurs.

TOWNE PLACE SUITES BY MARRIOTT
25% discount - hotel rooms valid for members, friends and family members
(blackout dates may apply).
1141 Alonzo Ave - The Villages, FL 32159
352-753-8686 | JSwedenborg@JHMHotels.com • www.marriott.com/lects

THE WATERFRONT INN
1105 Lake Shore Dr., Lake Sumter Landing • 352-753-7355
May 1, 2016 thru Sept. 30, 2016 – 25% off
Oct. 1, 2016 thru Dec. 31, 2016 – 20% off
Must Show VHA Card

MISCELLANEOUS

COZCO HANDICRAFTS
1121 Main Street – Spanish Springs, 352-430-0386
10% Off – Excludes Sale Items.

LAKE SUMTER APPRAISALS
William B. Mayfield | State Certified Residential Real Estate Appraiser
FL. Lic. # RD8052
P.O. Box 861, The Villages, FL 32158 | www.LakeSumterAppraisals.com
Full Appraisal - $350.00

PLANTATION FLOWER DESIGNS & GIFTS
Florist, Home Decor & Gift Shop,
352-751-6825 or 866-315-1101
10% Discount on purchases over $40.00.
Offer not valid with any other offer or on wire outs.
Must show VHA Membership Card
plantineflowerdesigns@gmail.com | www.plantineflowerdesigns.com
3535 Wedgewood Lane, Southern Trace Plaza

SHERIFFS RANCHES THRIFT STORE
27900 Hwy 27 – Leesburg, FL • Hours • Mon.-Sat. – 9am-5pm
352-787-0633 • Lmills@youthranches.org
25% discount with membership card.
May not be combined with any other offer.

WHOLE EARTH PET SUPPLY
1556 Bella Cruz Dr.
Lady Lake, FL 32159, 352-391-5806
10% off total purchase (not including discounted items)

SPORTS HEAVEN
Team Logos & Novelties
992 Alvarez Ave., The Villages, FL 32159 | 352-775-4477
15 % off total purchase

THE VILLAGES FLORIST, INC.
930 Bichara Blvd., La Plaza Grande
352-753-4222 | thevillagesflorist930@yahoo.com
Not valid on gift cards, August 10, 2016 thru December 20, 2016

**WILD BIRD CENTER OF THE VILLAGES**
520 N. US Hwy 27/441, Lady Lake, FL | 352-775-8509
20% off entire purchase, not combined with other offers,
Not valid on gift cards, August 10, 2016 thru December 20, 2016

WOOF GANG BAKERY AND GROOMING
3682 Meggison Rd., The Villages, FL 32163 - Brownwood | 352-775-4654
One FREE bag of Woof and Dog cookies with your first purchase of one of our premium pet foods valued at $7.95

The Merchants to Members Committee reviews and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors as to the suitability for partnering with commercial enterprises.
Understanding Veterans Aid & Attendance Benefits

This workshop will explore a little-known benefit available to U.S. Armed Forces veterans who were on active duty during a period of war. It’s titled “Pension With Aid and Attendance,” and it could be a life-changer for many men and women who require home care or care in a health care facility and require the assistance of another person (for bathing, dressing, medication monitoring and other activities of daily living).

The Pension With Aid and Attendance benefit is available to veterans and their spouse, and also to surviving spouses and to spouses of a healthy veteran in need of care.

Kim Lanning, representing Caring Avenues, will provide education on this important benefit and will help attendees understand how to take advantage of the benefit to improve their lives.

The session will begin at 10:00 am and is scheduled to conclude by 11:30 am, although Ms. Lanning and Foundation staff representatives will be on-hand afterward to respond to questions and provide any further assistance anyone might need.

RESERVATION DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, JUNE 16, 2017

Veterans Corner | Pre-Need Burial Eligibility Determination

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has implemented a pre-need burial eligibility determination program to assist anyone who would like to know if they are eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery. VA is promoting pre-need eligibility determinations to encourage Veterans and their eligible family members to plan in advance to use VA burial benefits that Veterans have earned through their military service. Planning in advance for a Veteran’s or loved-one's final resting place can eliminate unnecessary delays and reduce stress on a family at a difficult time.

Eligible individuals are entitled to burial in any open VA national cemetery which includes opening/closing of the grave, a government-furnished grave liner, perpetual care of the gravesite, and a government-furnished upright headstone or flat marker or niche cover all at no cost to the family. Veterans are also eligible for a burial flag and Presidential Memorial Certificate.

Burial in a VA national cemetery is open to all members of the armed forces and Veterans who have met minimum active duty service requirements, as applicable by law and were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. Members of the reserve components of the armed forces who die while on active duty under certain circumstances or who die while on training duty are also eligible for burial, as are service members and former service members who were eligible for retired pay at the time of their death. Spouses, minor children and, under certain conditions, dependent unmarried adult children are also eligible for burial even if they predecease the Veteran.

The VA will review pre-need burial applications and provide written notice of a determination of eligibility. VA will store the pre-need application, supporting documentation, and the decision letter to expedite burial arrangements at the time of need. We encourage you to keep the decision letter with supporting documentation with your important papers in a safe place and to discuss your burial wishes and final arrangements with your loved ones or other representatives. Submission of a pre-need burial eligibility application does not obligate the Veteran or family member to burial in a VA national cemetery.

Applicants may indicate a preference for a VA national cemetery on the application form, but a pre-need determination of eligibility does not guarantee burial in a specific VA national cemetery or a specific gravesite. VA assigns gravesites in cemeteries with available space once death has occurred and the burial is scheduled.

At your time of need, your next-of-kin, funeral home or other representative responsible for making your final arrangements should contact the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at (800) 535-1117 to request burial. VA will locate your pre-need decision letter and validate our determination. Because laws affecting VA burial eligibility and individual circumstances may change, upon receipt of a burial request, VA will verify pre-need decisions in accordance with the laws in effect at that time including bars to receipt of burial benefits.

Rick Blair is a Sumter County Veteran Service Officer, dedicated to assisting all Veterans and their families in realizing the benefits and privileges to which they may be entitled under Federal or State law by reason of their honorable service in the Armed Forces of the United States. For assistance, he can be reached at VA@sumtercountyfl.gov.
Watch the UPS and Fed-X trucks traverse your street. Have you ever wondered why they always travel the same direction each day? What’s the reason? The driver probably entered your street by making a Right turn. When the driver departs your street a Right turn will most likely be used. In fact, 90% of the time UPS/Fed-X drivers make Right turns. Why? There are 10 times more cross-path crashes involving left turns than right turns. Making right turns means less waiting time at intersections resulting in fuel savings. UPS saves 10M gallons of gas/year by designing routes with right turns instead of left turns. Besides, right turns save you time due to not having to wait for on-coming cross-traffic. Suggestion: if you travel a regular route, like routine trips to Publix or Winn-Dixie, consider changing your route to allow you to make right turns in lieu of left. Your new route could save you time, fuel, and avoids turning through on-coming traffic at intersections.
**TOWN HALL continued from page 1**

Q: Why are residents required to recycle material and commercial establishments which generate much more recyclable material than any individual resident are not?

A: Janet Tutt - Residents are not required to recycle, it is an option provided for the good of the environment. Many of the larger stores do have recycling in their waste disposal plan. Some of the smaller businesses create very little recyclable material.

Q: Can an additional stop sign be placed at tunnel M-11? There is no stop sign coming out of the tunnel going South toward Colony Plaza. Golf Carts coming from Colony Plaza area can either go through the tunnel or continue on toward Sarasota Golf Center and have no stop sign in either direction. There have been numerous close calls at that intersection caused by right-of-way confusion and failure to obey the one stop sign that does exist.

A: Sam Wartinbee - This intersection was reviewed by the Engineers and it functions correctly as designed. No additional signage is needed. Golf Cart drivers should slow down, obey the signs and yield when required.

Q: Is there any way that Residents can access the Villages Tee Time System electronically without having to pay the $8.00 @ month to be a member of thevillages.net?

A: John Rohan - No, the only access other than thevillages.net is through the tee time phone system.

Q: Can gutters be placed at the Alhambra Postal Center? Water coming off the roof is wearing the concrete along the Drip Line and will eventually lead to repairs that might be prevented if gutters are installed.

A: Sam Wartinbee - This has been discussed in the past and the AAC has opted to not install gutters. This may be addressed by residents at the AAC Meetings.

Q: Local Contractors routinely place signs on property and fail to remove them after work is done. These are advertising signs and not permit signs. How can we get this stopped so rules are enforced?

A: Janet Tutt - These are prohibited by Deed Restrictions, but Districts #1 and #4 have chosen to not enforce those restrictions. In all other areas it is the property owners’ responsibility to remove the signs. This problem may be reported to Community Standards who will then contact the Property Owner.

Q: Bonita postal station has been recently landscaped and many of the plants have died. Can they be replaced?

A: Sam Wartinbee - The landscape is not dead. The plants are alive, but have not flourished due to the lack of rainfall and water conservation requirements.

Q: District 4 has a problem with signs that are degrading appearances of the area. How can this situation be improved?

A: Sam Wartinbee - Street signs are changed as needed. Please report any signage problems to the District and they will be addressed with your District 4 Supervisors.

Q: Will there be training courses for instructors at The Enrichment Academy on how to teach and meet the requirements of students with special needs?

A: John Rohan - Yes there will be training provided during orientation to all Instructors and The Enrichment Academy Personnel regarding how to meet the requirements of special needs students.

Q: Are there any plans for an additional grocery store to be added with Villager access on CR 42 since parking is so crowded in the Publix parking lot?

A: Dr Lester - There is a process in place attempting to bring another grocery store to that area to relieve the congestion. Read The Daily Sun to obtain accurate information updates on progress.

Q: Winter residents are asking: When will the Villages Survey be issued and can the Resident Survey be issued at an earlier time to better accommodate Snow Birds?

A: Dr Lester - The survey will be issued next month and all residents can complete it online so when it is conducted should not be an issue.

Q: Why isn’t the preserve at the 17th and 18th hole of Tierra Del Sol cleaned up? The area has dried up and the plants are dead or dying and the golf balls spread all over are an eyesore.

A: Sam Wartinbee - This area is a preserve and the District along with an Environmental Consultant and the Southwest Florida Water Management are working on a long term plan regarding the management of the area. The golf balls are not retrieved as a matter of policy and because it is a preserve.

Q: How can residents show their support for PWAC being the advisory group to SLCDD since its members are our elected officials, instead of creating another unnecessary level of bureaucracy added to our District Government responsibilities.

A: Janet Tutt - Continue to support the process and attend PWAC and SLCDD Meetings along with letting your District Supervisors know that you support PWAC filling that role.

Q: Where can Residents find additional information regarding The Enrichment Academy beyond the article that appeared in the Daily Sun on 13 April.

A: John Rohan - Go to districtgov.org and select the Recreation Department on that page. You will find access to The Enrichment Academy Website. We are now accepting instructor applications which are available online.

Q: Residents are concerned about potential traffic issues that may occur if land near Rio Grande Ave is purchased and developed as a recreation area. How can they best express their concerns?

A: As of now, the final decisions have not been made regarding this area because obtaining the land has not been resolved. There are many owners and it will need the support of outside government agencies to allow that to happen. Any final plan will give consideration to traffic flow and/or issues that pertain to the area.

Q: It has been reported that the Sumter County Sheriff’s Department has received a new 3 wheeled Segway type vehicle. How will that unit be used in The Villages.

A: Lt. Siemer - Yes, a new vehicle similar to a Segway has been procured and will be used for patrolling Sumter Landing and possibly for Parades.

Q: Does the Sumter County Sheriff’s Department monitor stop sign violations where golf carts ignore stop signs where they cross Villa Roads or Entrance/Exit Roads such as the entrance to the Haciendas of Mission Hills or Hope Lutheran Church? Golf Carts and bicycles routinely roll through those stop signs or do not stop at all.

A: Lt. Siemer - Yes, I will notify my traffic control officers and they will more closely monitor those areas. All vehicles are required to come to a full stop at all stop signs and may be ticketed if they fail to obey traffic laws.

Q: What is the procedure for hiring letter carriers? There seems to be many issues with mail delivery including gift cards being stolen.

A: This is an issue that should be addressed with the area Postmaster.

Q: Bonita postal station often has mail delivered as late as 6:00 PM. How can this service be improved?

A: This is an issue that should be addressed with the area Postmaster.