



POA Bulletin

POA4US.org

SEPTEMBER 2020

FREE COPY Issue 46.09 | Circulation 58,500

POA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

With the spike in cases of the Coronavirus and continued closure of recreation centers to Villages Lifestyle Groups, it is difficult to say when we will be able to resume our monthly General Membership Meetings.

Stay connected through our website at POA4US.org.

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Residents of Sumter County Vote for Change!

The residents of Sumter County spoke loud and clear for change on the Sumter County Board of Commissioners by choosing Craig Estep, Gary Search and Oren Miller over the three incumbent Commissioners who voted for the 25% increase in the Sumter County property tax millage rate last year.

The three candidates knew they were fighting an uphill battle, with very little financial backing and going up against the powerful local Republican machine and Developer. How did they do it? They stood at every postal station they could, met and talked with every resident they could, and told people what they would do to represent them.

The incumbents, on the other hand, went to fundraisers, and spent tens of thousands of dollars each on mailers and paid advertising in The Villages Daily Sun and Fox News. They took their power for granted, relying on what the Sumter County Republican Club referred to as "smart" Republicans (see article on page 12) to buy into their propaganda that the 25% tax increase last year was just a reset.

This was an important election for many reasons. It sends a powerful message to the other two Commissioners and to the county administration that voters want better accountability and a sound plan for the County that looks at growth and taxes in a sound manner.

There are other areas of Sumter County that need and deserve attention as well. Roads that need to be improved and infrastructure that needs to be updated.

It was also important that voter turnout was 42.9%, during the summer when so many residents are away from The Villages. People cared how they were treated last year, and they didn't like it. In fact, they were outraged. Estep, Search and Miller won every precinct in The Villages by large margins.

So was the POA who immediately launched the Fair Government for Sumter County initiative to encourage residents to continue to protest the actions of the currently elected Sumter County Board of Commissioners, and develop strategies to elect officials who will be responsive to and engaged with the property owners in Sumter County. In July, the POA endorsed Estep, Search and Miller.

Vote for Change continued on page 2

The Property Owners' Association, Inc. (POA) is the original property owners' group in The Villages. Established in 1975, the POA operates with complete independence from the Developer of The Villages. Membership is open to all property owners and residents of The Villages. The POA is committed to acting as a watchdog to ensure that the Developer and local government are responsive to the needs, interests, and rights of residents.

The POA Declaration of Independence

The POA is free of any outside influence. This is the only way we can assure our members of absolute autonomy to act on their behalf. From the very beginning in 1975, we recognized this need for independence, and we've cherished and nurtured it ever since.

Vision The Property Owners' Association, Inc. (POA) is a champion for the rights of residents of The Villages. Guided by member input, investigation and determination, the POA brings attention to and acts on issues that may impact property values and quality of life.

Mission Statement The POA provides
1) a forum for discussion of issues; 2) research and analysis; 3) programs of interest; and, 4) is a conduit for objective and accurate information. Specific attention is given to resolving housing, community and local government issues.

Values

Independence	Honesty	Fairness
Objectivity	Respect	

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 POA postings represent the opinions of the writers. Care is taken to ensure that facts reported herein are true and accurate to the best knowledge of the POA and are taken from reliable sources. The POA assumes no liability for any information published, opinions expressed, or delivery to any person or location. The POA does not endorse or recommend the products or services of any advertiser or discount partner. All publication rights are reserved. Publication or reprinting of any material contained herein is by written permission only. The POA reserves the right to remove and/or discontinue any advertisement or advertiser from its *POA Bulletin* at any time at its sole discretion.

Vote for Change continued from page 1

Craig Estep had this to say about the victory. "On 8/18/2020 there was key election for Sumter County Commissioner. There were three candidates supported by the POA. All three POA endorsed candidates won by a substantial margin. But they were not the real winners of this primary...the people were. Yes, by voting in Craig **Estep**, Oren **Miller**, and Gary **Search (EMS)**, it was the people of Sumter County who came out the victors. The **EMS** team looks forward to the next 4 years of open, honest, and transparent government in Sumter County.

People worked hard and the candidates had a strong message. The POA congratulates Craig Estep, Gary Search and Oren Miller for running a clean and honest campaign. Gary Search currently has a challenger in the November election. The two write-in candidates, Jerry Prince and Pete Wahl, have withdrawn their names, paving the way for a smooth transition for Estep and Miller. ■



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CDD 4 to Finalize Rules for Improvements on District Property

Community Development District (CDD) 4 has a unique situation in that it is the only CDD that owns the roads and rights-of-way in its District, however, some of the terminology and requirements for making improvements in a public right-of-way or easement apply to all homeowners.

CDD 4 intends to finalize rules for improvements on its District-owned rights-of-way at its September 11 meeting and residents of CDD 4 are encouraged to attend.

A workshop held on August 7 allowed for thorough discussion by the public and supervisors of CDD 4 to help move the Board to final actions. The District provided important definitions and examples for the Board to consider.

The Difference Between a Right-of-Way and an Easement

A Right-of-Way is land in which the state, the department, a county, or a municipality owns the fee or has an easement devoted to or required for use as a transportation facility. The homeowner does NOT own this piece of land, therefore does not fall under purview of Community Standards.

However, it does fall under the purview of the entity that owns it. In the case of CDD 4, that District owns the Rights-of-Way.

An Easement is a legal term that means a person is granted a right of passage for a specific purpose to a small portion of land owned by someone else. The homeowner owns this piece of land, therefore falls under purview of Community Standards. An easement is most often given to a utility company such as SECO, a water company or a cable company to access equipment, make repairs and read meters.

Each homeowner's property unit is controlled by its Declaration of Restrictions, which generally state, "No building or other improvements shall be made within the easements reserved by the Developer without prior written approval of Developer. Easements and rights-of-ways in favor of the Developer are hereby reserved for the construction, installation and maintenance of utilities such as electric light lines, sewer drainage, water lines, cablevision, telephone, recreation facilities, and telegraph lines or the like."

The boundaries of these easements and rights-of-way are defined by specific footage in the width along the rear lines, width along the front lines, and width along both sides of the dividing lines

CDD 4 continued on page 6

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CDD 7 Loses Another Supervisor, Leader in PWAC Protest

In a bombshell just after the Community Development District (CDD) 7 Board of Supervisors met in a special meeting on July 30 to discuss its future involvement in the Project Wide Advisory Committee, one of the leaders of the effort to negotiate fairer participation abruptly resigned from the Board.

In a letter to District Manager Richard Baier and the Board dated August 3, Ron Ruggieri announced his resignation, saying, "As we approach the 19th anniversary of 9/11, an incident that I was directly involved in and relive, along with the current Covid-19 crisis, makes me pause and rethink my family priorities. I feel at this stage of my life it is more important than ever to reduce my outside interests and re-focus." He went on to say that he would not be able to devote enough time or attend the majority of meetings and would be resigning effective immediately.

Mr. Ruggieri's resignation comes on the heels of the recent resignation of Mark Gallo who moved out of the area and was replaced in July by newcomer Steve Lapp. Now the Board is faced with finding another new Board Supervisor as it struggles to hire a new attorney and sort out its differences with its PWAC participation.

At its special meeting on July 30, the Board voted to terminate the contract with attorney Mark Brionez, who had advised them that he had a conflict of interest in representing CDD 7 in its efforts regarding PWAC as he also serves as

attorney to other parties to the PWAC agreement. He also sent them a \$10,000 invoice for regular services as well as his investigation into the PWAC issue for which Board Supervisors felt they had not received any useable information. Mr. Brionez has since been rehired as the CDD 7 attorney while it conducts a search and agreed to negotiate a significant decrease in the charges.

Mr. Ruggieri had served in a leadership role in helping CDD 7's efforts to negotiate a fairer participation and representation in PWAC. He provided historical information on the original resolution that created PWAC and its many amendments that have, among other things, extended the life of the agreement by another 20 years and gave the Sumter Landing Community Development District (SLCDD) – controlled by the Developer – complete control over "Exhibit A" of the PWAC agreement which defines what items PWAC pays for. He said several times that he had at least three suggestions that could be implemented without costing any money. All he was looking for was a meeting to discuss the issues.

CDD 7 Board Supervisor Jerry Vicenti said, "I personally will miss him and what's more important is the approximately 9,500 residents I feel will miss him. Most of the residents of District 7 have no idea how important he was to our District."

Now it seems that CDD 7 is back to square one. The Supervisors have agreed to approve the FY 20/21 budget and will approve PWAC invoices monthly until a direction is determined. ■



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CDD 4 continued from page 4

of every building homesite. These definitions can be found in the individual homeowner unit's Deed Restrictions online at DistrictGov.org under Community Standards in the Departments section.

The Issue for CDD 4

CDD 4 owns the rights-of-way in its district, and as such, also has liability for anything that may occur in the right-of-way. For example, if a structure is built in the right-of-way, like a concrete landscape wall and someone runs into it, the District could be held responsible. A structure is defined as "a man-made framework, feature, or construction that is built with identifiable elements giving stability and form and able to resist strains and stresses, which is in excess of ___ inches from bottom to top." CDD 4 is considering making 4" the maximum height.

Based on the discussion at the workshop, the CDD's attorney will provide three versions of a policy for consideration at the September 11 meeting that may include a period of time (i.e. 12 months) for residents to bring a violation into compliance, and will identify what is and is not included.

A major aspect of the issue is that properties in CDD 4 have existed for many years and improvements have been made over time, some even by the Developer when the homesite was built. District Manager Baier emphasized that no improvement that would be in violation can be grandfathered. It will be an onerous process for residents and the District to clean up all of the violations that likely exist.

The CDD 4 Board of Supervisors will meet on September 11 at 1:30 P.M. at Savannah Center. Residents are encouraged to attend.

Earlier this year, in Response to a question from District Manager Richard Baier, Sumter County Administrator Bradley Arnold said in an email "Per Sumter County Code Section 20-87, only utilities and driveways would be the only appurtenances permitted in the county's maintained rights-of-way following the receipt of an application and review and approval of such. Stonework and stone edging and hardscape landscaping such as fountains would not meet the requirements of Section 20-87 for consideration of permitting within the maintained rights-of-way."

As a result, the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) has said if asked to approve pavers, there will be a note that it is only approved on a resident's property, not in the right of way. If the resident has put in pavers and the county must access the right of way, the resident would have to pull up the pavers and put them back down when the work is finished. If the county removes them, they will only replace with concrete.

Residents have also reported they are being cited by SECO for not leaving a large enough pathway around that utility's easement for meter reading and access to equipment. New management at SECO is apparently taking a hard line on enforcement, leaving homeowners with few options. ■

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AAC Caves In to Developer Ultimatum

Residents packed the meeting rooms and hallways at Savannah Center for the Amenity Authority Committee's (AAC) meeting on August 12 to express opposition to a change in the Developer's remaining 286 amenity units that had been designated in 2015 for residents of independent living facilities (ILFs) or assisted living facilities (ALFs.) The Developer requested they be designated as age-restricted units for a proposed apartment complex at the former Hacienda Hills Country Club site on Morse Boulevard.

After hours of public comment, AAC member Don Deakin disclosed that each member of the AAC had been invited to a private meeting **IN MAY** with Mr. Gary Lester, the Developer's Vice President of Community Relations, and were told they had two choices: approve the change or they would build a parking garage for the hospital. Mr. Deakin said he was told "this is non-negotiable; there will be no compromise."

District Manager Richard Baier confirmed that the Developer was very, very clear, saying, "The Developer said, 'I am not going to go back and forth with the AAC.'"

Last year, the Developer requested the AAC purchase the Hacienda Country Club and

restaurant building at fair market value, an idea that residents had no interest in. The AAC turned down the request.

This time around, despite pleas and objections from the hundreds of residents in the room, the AAC members voted 4-1 to accept the Developer's request, saying there was really nothing they could do. **Don Deakin was the lone vote against the request and the only AAC member who asked any pertinent questions, including offering a motion that the vote be tabled until there is more information.**

So why did the AAC acquiesce so easily? A couple of months ago, when proposed changes to the Silver Lake Executive Golf Course were

resoundingly rejected by residents, the AAC listened and acted on their behalf. They even conducted a survey! AAC Chair Ann Forrester proudly proclaimed that they had listened to the residents. They spent more time looking at the steps leading into the new resort style pool at the First Responders Recreation Center and the proposed new shade structure at the Mulberry Dog Park than they did on this issue so critical to hundreds of residents on the north side of CR466.

Why not ask residents if they preferred to have an apartment complex or a parking structure on that site? They might have been surprised by the answers! The units were already approved for ALS or ILS residents, and the Developer could have built that type of complex too. Maybe the residents would have preferred that to apartments. The point is, **there was no resident input.**

The Developer's representative to the AAC, IV Chandler, did not even attend the meeting, nor did anyone to represent the project. As is so often done in The Villages, no details were given about the proposed amenities, nor does the Amendment provide any parameters of what would be acceptable to current residents in that area. How large and what capacity will the proposed pool have? What specifics were given about the sports courts and walking paths? District Manager Baier's repeated reply was, "that is up to the Developer. It is private property and not under the purview of the AAC." That may be true, but it IS within the purview of the AAC to decide whether what they were exchanging brings any real value to the residents.

AAC Member Carl Bell agreed, saying in an interview after the meeting that the AAC had no choice about whether apartments or anything else is built on that property, only whether there could be additional amenities available for all residents of The Villages. He feared that if the AAC didn't act at the meeting on August 12, the offer for additional amenities would have been off the table. "Mr. Lester was very clear that the Developer was not going to negotiate with the AAC. The only choice we had was for additional

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ACC Caves continued from page 7

amenities for the residents,” he said. Mr. Bell said he has a great deal of empathy for the residents in that area but said “I don’t have a vote” on what goes on that property. That, he said, is in the hands of Sumter County officials who control zoning and permitting.

Mr. Bell also said that the Developer has other property and predicted he will likely come back at some time to the AAC or other boards and ask for additional amenity units. The only choice that the AAC or the other boards will have again is whether they want to increase amenities for other residents.

“Am I happy about what is going on; no I am not,” Mr. Bell insisted.

The question for residents and for the AAC is whether the trade-off for 500 new residents in exchange for amenities that as yet are only broadly defined was worth it. Amenities that have been committed to are a resort style swimming pool, sports and activities courts, walking paths and open space. The Developer will also construct the new postal station (because it has to) and pay its portion of postal box fees and charges. Yet, the District will have to absorb the cost for maintenance and upkeep of the facility itself. Will

the Developer be charged for upkeep?

The pools that were promised at Soulierre and Philips were smaller than any other neighborhood pools built for residents. Are the amenities being constructed with only the 500 potential apartment dwellers in mind or will it be the size of the newer resort style pools?

What the Developer got is access to ALL of The Villages amenities for his new apartment dwellers, and the residents are left to guess at whether they received anything of value.

Just after the AAC opened the Amenity Unit Pandora’s box, Ryan McCabe, The Villages Operations Manager, told The Villages Daily Sun that Katie Bell’s would be turned into apartments and that amenity units shouldn’t be a problem now that the AAC changed the status for them to choose how they wish. He said it was only rumor that the units would all be used at the Hacienda Hills site, and that they are looking at several areas to serve residents who want apartment-type living.

It is true that the Amendment passed by the Resolution did not say the units would be used at Hacienda. The ultimatum was apartments or parking garage, and that was verbal. Nothing in the Amendment is specific, so once again, the answer is, “The Developer can do what he wishes on his private property.” **And now they can make apartments wherever they wish in the VCCDD territory, thanks to the AAC.**

The Developer will retain all amenity fees, which is another change to the agreement. Previously the Amenity Fees (with the Amenity Fee Prevailing Rate set at \$162) would have gone to the Recreation Amenity Division (RAD) fund with the AAC. That could amount to more than \$550,000 per year if all the units are rented. The Developer will contribute \$4.08 for fire safety per apartment unit and \$10.27 for Community Watch services to the District, regardless of occupancy. Will the \$49,000 collected annually by the District cover those costs and any other hidden costs?

ACC Caves continued on page 9

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ACC Caves continued from page 8

District staff, in its analysis and memo to the AAC, recommended approval of the change, stating, "This public-private partnership further enhances the community, and provides a benefit to the residents of the Village Center District Territory and The Villages as a whole. By amending the agreement for utilization of the amenity privileges, residents and guests of the community gain additional amenity opportunities at no additional expense. Additionally, enhancements to District property will be achieved if the Hacienda Parcel is developed. Staff recommends the Amenity Authority Committee (AAC) recommend approval of the First Amendment to the Agreement between the Village Center Community Development District and The Villages of Lake-Sumter, Inc."

Instead of sugar coating its analysis and recommendation, the District perhaps should have said, ***"This is private property and the Developer can construct whatever he wants***

to on the property — an apartment complex, parking garage or any other structure — that is within the zoning guidelines or approvals of Sumter County. The only item the AAC can consider is whether to grant the requested change in designation of the Amenity Units that will allow any constructed amenities to be available to all residents of The Villages. It is up to the AAC to determine if what they are being asked for adds value for the residents."

Clear language such as this would help residents understand what is really on the table for discussion and what is not.

Red Flags

The development of this new apartment complex along with the recently opened Lofts of Brownwood complex raises questions not only about future development, but also how and where else the Developer has property or might tear down properties in favor of more lucrative projects. What other leverage does the Developer have to build multi-unit apartments and who

ACC Caves continued on page 15

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Sumter County Republican Club Slams POA, Fair Government in Email

Until the primary election on August 18 the definition of “Fair Government” in Sumter County apparently meant being in lockstep with the “official” County Republican Club (the “Club”) and the Developer. If an organization or person questioned the actions of the “Club’s” sanctioned candidates or dared to run for office against one of them, they were labeled a “propaganda organization, anti-Republican and anti-Developer.” At least that is what the president of the “Club,” (and a write-in candidate) Jerry Prince, said in an email to its membership last month in a last-ditch effort to ensure victory for the incumbent Sumter County Commissioners in the County primary. He was no doubt outraged when the POA endorsed another group of candidates and suggested that anyone registered as a Democrat or Independent could temporarily change their party affiliation to Republican to ensure their ability to cast their ballot after Mr. Prince and former District Manager Pete Wahl filed as write-in candidates in order to “close” the Primary Election for Sumter County Commissioners to Republicans only.

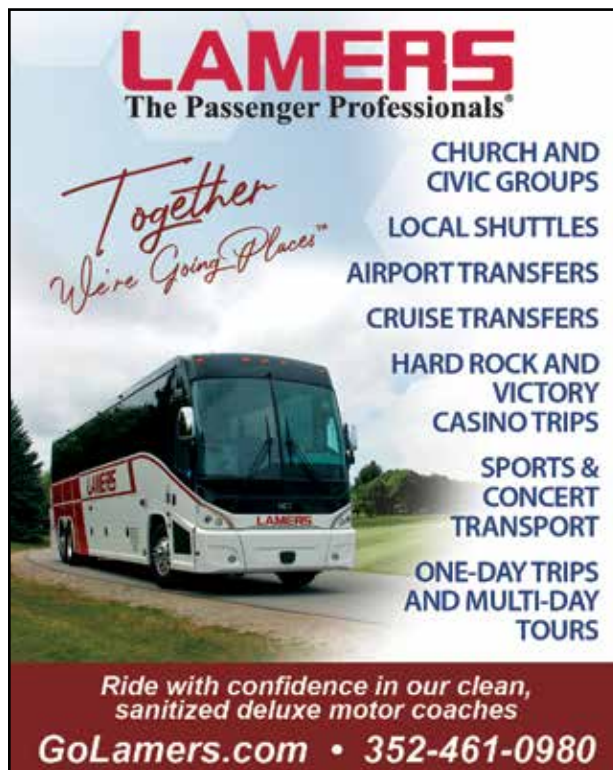
He brought to the forefront a little-known oddity in Florida voting law that if there were no candidates from another party running for the office, any party affiliation could vote. However, another little-known oddity allowed Prince and Wahl to file as “write in” candidates

which would also keep the vote closed to only registered Republicans. They will appear on the November general election ballot but did not on the primary election ballot. What he didn't count on was another nuance that allows voters to change their party affiliation within a certain

number of days of an election (in this case the deadline was July 20) and change back after the election on August 18. To be fair, this primary should have been about the ability of all to vote on the list of candidates, as it would have been until the intention and actions of Mr. Prince and Mr. Wahl's undermined that. Hence the reason for the POA calling attention to the other nuance in Florida voting that allows changing party affiliation – i.e., the only counter towards making this primary about the ability for all county citizens to vote on the best candidate for the districts up for election. That said, the POA acknowledges there was pushback from some of its members who apparently thought this suggestion was also an underhanded move and we accept that criticism.

The overwhelming majority of voters in Sumter County had a different idea of Fair Government though when they voted for change and elected all three challengers to the incumbent Sumter County Commissioners. It was a stunning victory and no doubt a stinging blow to members of the “Club.” (see page 1 for the POA's take on the election.)

Republican Club continued on page 13



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Republican Club continued from page 12

This article is about the POA and its commitment to the TRUTH and FAIRNESS, contrary to what the Sumter County Republican “Club” had to say about it. The email from Mr. Prince gave the POA a great opportunity to emphasize its true values and beliefs.

“Fair Government for Sumter is nothing more than a Democrat and Property Owners Association (POA) propaganda organization. They, as well as the POA, have endorsed three anti-Republican, anti-Developer candidates for County Commission.”

Yes, indeed, the POA launched the “Fair Government for Sumter County” initiative last year after the sitting Sumter County Commissioners held two public hearings and failed to answer a single question about or offer any alternatives to the 25% INCREASE in the County’s millage rate before voting unanimously to pass it. After the action took place, they and others in the “Club” insisted it wasn’t really a 25% increase, with the other Mr. (Commissioner) Printz suggesting it was just a “reset” of historically low taxes to begin with. If it looks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck, it is a duck! **And it was advertised as an**

increase. Did the whole property tax bill go up 25%? No, there are other taxing units that make up the entire tax bill, such as the schools and cities where a resident lives. But the County’s increase represented an average of \$200-\$300 more in county property taxes for most residents.

The “Club” President went on to say **“No amount of fake news about big increases can fool smart Republican voters – we know that our taxes have come down for almost 20 years – THAT IS A FACT. We also know that our COMMISSIONERS ARE LOWERING TAXES AGAIN. THAT TOO IS A FACT,” said Mr. “Club” President.**

The POA believes you don’t even have to be a “smart” Republican to know a tax increase after it has been advertised as such. We do applaud the Commissioners for rolling back 4% of last year’s 25% increase for the upcoming fiscal year.

Finally, Mr. Prince said, **“The POA does not speak for the majority of the Homeowners in The Villages. They are consistently negative about our community and the Developer. I have never seen any positive recommendations come out of this organization - only complaints and criticisms. Most Villagers are tired of their negativism and the last thing we need is their**

sky-is-falling, blame-the-big bad developer attitude running our entire County...”

The POA has never claimed to represent the majority of residents in The Villages...we are “a champion for the rights of residents of The Villages.” The POA is not consistently negative about our community and the Developer... in fact we would truly enjoy an open working environment with the Developer and local governments on ensuring the needs, interests, and rights of residents are addressed.

What the POA does is speak and print the truth, ask tough questions about actions that may affect a homeowners’ property value, and provide a forum for residents to bring issues to the forefront. The POA Bulletin gives information monthly about what has happened at Community Development District (CDD) board meetings, at the Amenity Authority Committee (AAC), and the Project Wide Advisory Committee (PWAC) meetings and helps educate residents on significant changes that are occurring in the community. For example, The POA Bulletin helped explain the analysis that took place for more than a year on the change to the new Energy from Waste (EfW) trash pickup/disposal that is going into place on October 1st, and not a negative word

Republican Club continued on page 14

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Republican Club continued from page 13

was spoken about this change even though it means a higher monthly payment for residents.

For those residents who are newer to The Villages and may not be familiar with the backstory, the Developer is the one who broke ties with the POA many years ago because it began asking hard questions and bringing issues to their attention. The Developer's response was to create an organization they financially support and ensures it runs in lockstep with their vision. The POA was also responsible for the over \$40 Million settlement in 2008 and the creation of the Amenity Authority Committee (AAC) to gain control of resident amenity fees and facilities north of CR 466 which were in terrible disrepair prior to the lawsuit. That settlement and the landowner elected AAC, with its authority, are helping ensure the standards residents expect of facilities are met and that resources are appropriately allocated. In fact, there is a multi-million-dollar improvement on the drawing board for the Paradise Recreation Center that the AAC

will begin addressing in the upcoming fiscal year; and, settlement funds helped purchase the former church building and land where the new First Responders Recreation Center will be built.

The POA's VISION is to be a champion for the rights of the residents of The Villages. It is guided by MEMBER input, investigation, and determination to bring attention to and act upon issues that may impact property values and quality of life.

There is not a single word about being anti-Developer and anti-community. To the contrary, the POA is proud to represent its members and proud of The Villages community and wishes to do so in collaboration with District government AND the Developer. As issues arise, such as a couple of years ago when thousands of residents contacted the POA about cracked ceilings in their lanais, the POA couldn't get a response from the Developer's representative to discuss the issue or get local contractors to agree to be on a list to do repairs for fear of losing their contracts with the Developer.

The POA does not believe the "sky is falling" or that it "blames the Big, Bad Developer" on a regular basis. The POA does believe the community has and continues to grow larger than anyone ever anticipated and with that growth comes challenges. Things are changing – an apartment complex already opened in Brownwood and another is now planned at the Hacienda site. People rightfully ask questions and when there is a lack of information – or worse, when there are ultimatums, people become disenchanted and fearful. If a problem or issue is widespread and affects a lot of people, the POA is going to investigate and ask questions.

The POA Board of Directors thinks much greater things can be accomplished together than in conflict.

Its door is always open to the Developer and his representatives to work for the common good of homeowners and the community.

Republican Club continued on page 17



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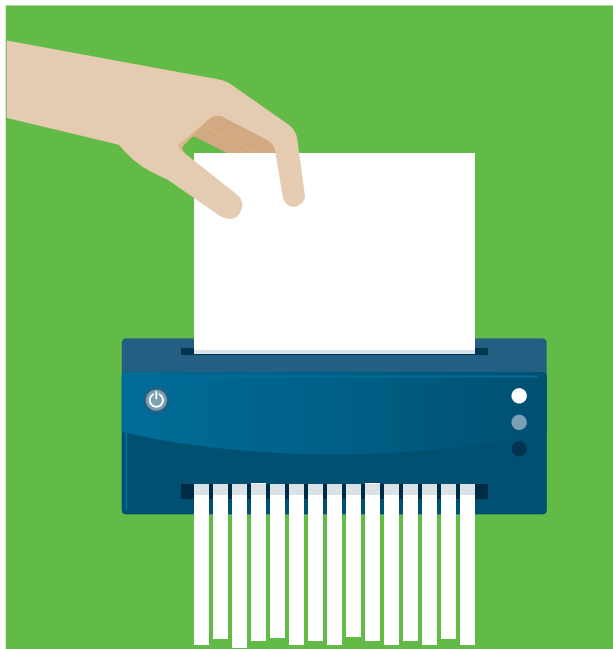
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on 7 Mile Road in Wildwood

TIME:

9 A.M. – Noon

**FREE Ticketed event
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and in the *POA Bulletin*.

ACC Caves continued from page 9

will have the final say? What are the zoning procedures that allow for good planning and resident input? Who has the authority to give him more amenity units?

Here are some additional red flags:

- While not against the Florida Sunshine laws, there is something that is not right about meetings being held with individual committee members or District supervisors. This is not transparent government. If an issue is so complex that elected officials need a separate meeting to understand and ask questions, then all that information should be disclosed in the public setting for residents.
- According to Mr. Deakin, those secret meetings were held with Mr. Baier and Mr. Lester **IN MAY** so there was plenty of time to address these issues and concerns and get resident input. ***Instead, they were asked to keep the meetings and details to themselves.***
- Think about that and decide what kind of transparent government we really have in The Villages.
- Where was the Developer's representative to the AAC? The **ONLY** person with specific information about the project chose not to show up but signed the Amendment in advance of the meeting.
- If the only answer to any question about the project itself was "It is up to the Developer," the very least the AAC members could have and should have done is table the vote until questions could be answered and concerns addressed. But then, they had three months to do that and didn't.

Members of the Amenity Authority Committee did NOT exercise their authority and let the residents it pledged to represent down in a big way, but the Developer put them between a rock and a hard place. Violate the pledge of secrecy and risk losing additional amenities for residents. Table the vote and risk losing additional amenities. The Developer proves time and again who has the upper hand. There was no process and no opportunity for resident input. Secret meetings and ultimatums.

Resident-elected officials are unwilling to say, "maybe this isn't such a great deal for

the residents. Without more information, we cannot make an informed decision and therefore cannot grant this request."

It is time for members of the AAC, Project Wide Advisory Committee (PWAC) and the CDD Boards of Supervisors to recognize that the leverage they have is granting amenity privileges. Let them make an ultimatum of their own: No more Amenity Units without complete plans. CDD Boards should reject requests to accept acreage for apartments after the fact, as CDD 9 did in Brownwood. What makes these apartment buildings appealing to renters and financially for the Developer is to have access to all the amenities in The Villages. Can the AAC vote on what will be built on a private property? No, but they can withhold the financially beneficial Amenity Units and let the chips fall where they may. ■

Join the POA today
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Night Bloomers

THE FANATICAL GARDENER

by Anne Lambrecht Fanatical Gardener mrsanneo4@gmail.com

Have you ever seen a flower blossom at night? It is truly a spectacular sight. There are many different kinds of night bloomers and many are white in color and scented to attract night pollinators such as moths and bats. And sometimes, if our days are overcast, the bloom may come out early or stay late into the daytime.

Several kinds are fine for our gardens:

Moon flower (*Ipomoea alba*) is a night blooming morning glory, sometimes called tropical white morning glory or moon vine. It is native to subtropical regions of South America, Mexico, Florida, and Puerto Rico. These plants have large, beautiful, heart-shaped leaves growing on huge, robust vines that need a large trellis to support them. My daughter in North Carolina uses the thick vines as a shade on her south-facing front porch. You can readily get the seeds and plant them in the spring.

Four o'clock (*Mirabilis jalapa*) are bushy flowering perennial plants for full sun. It is an unusual plant in that it may produce flowers of different colors on the same plant—including white, yellow, and a variety of pink, red, and magenta colors. And can you guess that Four o'clocks start to bloom around 4:00 in the afternoon! They are easy to grow and will reseed in your garden.

Tropical water lilies (*Nymphaeaceae*) are a great addition to any medium to large pond. They first open at dusk and close about 10:00 am the next morning. They have a large leaf spread and the most beautifully fragrant blooms. The water temperature should be at least 75 degrees F before they are placed in the pond. Tropical water lilies have larger, flashier flowers that will rise several inches out of the water and are more prolific and fragrant than hardy water lilies. Mine are a deep magenta pink but they also come in a variety of colors.

Night-blooming jasmine (*Cestrum nocturnum*) is a member of the Solanaceae family, which means it is actually a nightshade and is not the jasmine most folks have in their gardens. This night blooming flower has white star-like blossoms with hints of green and has a strong fragrance mostly at night during the summer from July through October in cycles that last about a week.

Evening Primrose (*Oenothera biennis*) This primrose plant is one of the few native wildflowers in North America. As the name suggests, the yellow evening primrose blooms at night. It produces lovely yellow flowers from May to July.

Here we should mention the nightshade family (*Solanaceae*)--not because any of them bloom at night--but because they are in a very special group of plants, called **Nightshade**, most of which are poisonous. The family includes eggplant, mandrake, belladonna, capsicum (paprika, chile pepper), potato, tobacco, tomato, and petunia.

An interesting member of this poisonous family, and one that many of us gardeners have (because they are wicked cool), is the *Datura*, commonly known as jimsonweed and known as devil's trumpets (not to be confused with angel's trumpets, which are placed in the closely related genus *Brugmansia*). Just one look at the round prickly seed pod and you know to stay away!

Night-Blooming Cereus (*family Cactaceae*) is a genus of cacti including around 33 species of large columnar cacti from South America. From the

Latin word *cereus*, meaning a wax taper (candle). The flowers bloom just once during the night. And some of these species, such as *Selenicereus grandiflorus*, bloom only once a year, for a single night. Other names for one or more cacti with this habit are queen of the night, and Honolulu queen. The Dragon fruit is in this grouping. These plants were grouped together because of certain common traits. Not all of these plants are cactus, but they fit the description of *Cereus* (tapered candle) referring to the blossom. This inclusion-by-lack-of-exclusion makes for a very messy and unsatisfactory grouping because it's hard to find them specifically.

There is also a group of night blooming cereus that is flat and succulent and more common, called Orchid Cactus. I have some of these and if I were a night owl, I would definitely see it. It is so disappointing to see the withered flower in the morning knowing no one was there to see her beautiful blossom. ■



Night Blooming Cereus

Republican Club continued from page 14

Communication as was sent by Mr. Prince to the “Club” members accomplishes nothing. Elected officials who are consistently unresponsive to their constituents also accomplishes nothing in the name of the “common good.”

Villagers and Sumter County residents just sent a strong message for change. The POA hopes this is a signal that a more collaborative, community-wide dialogue can begin, and we can all start to work for the good of all.

Editor’s NOTE: *The Editor of the POA Bulletin is a registered Republican and former elected official in local government from her home state of Indiana. She has a degree in Journalism from Indiana University’s School of Journalism. She believes she is a pretty “smart” Republican, but more importantly, believes that ALL people, regardless of their political party affiliation, have the right to express their opinions, ask questions, and vote for people they believe will represent their values and needs. That is what Fair Government is all about.*

In every communication in its POA Bulletin, even after the POA Board endorsed candidates for Commissioner, the POA continued to “encourage the fair and respectful treatment of ALL candidates,” and encouraged “residents to do their own due diligence before making their decisions to vote.” ■



POA Launches New Website and Member Database **POA4US.org**

The POA launched its new and improved website and modernized its database to give members easier access to their membership records, submit questions, and stop/start Bulletin delivery including signing up for e-delivery.

Go to **POA4US.org** and follow the steps from one of the icons toward the bottom of the page. You can choose from **JOIN POA, POA Member, POA Bulletin Delivery.**

IF YOU ARE A MEMBER, under POA Member, click the highlighted text that says “Verify Your Account.” You will be prompted to set up your own password. Once you receive a confirmation email, you will be able to access your account. Your account page will allow you to know when your membership expires, select your Bulletin delivery preference, change your email, etc. **You will now do these steps instead of sending an email to the POA.**

IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER, to manage your Bulletin Delivery, you can create a guest account by clicking on the *POA Bulletin Delivery* icon. Or, click on **JOIN POA**, to become a member.

If you have any difficulty you may contact our help desk by emailing helpdesk@poa.org and someone will get back to you.

The new website is a work-in-progress and we will be adding features as we go along. Please, log on and explore! ■



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SCAM Blackmailers Demand Bitcoin

SENIORS VS CRIME

As many of you know, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) uses the information it gets from people who report scams to keep close watch on trends. They want to be able to alert you to new or emerging scams in order to protect you.

Bridget Small, a Consumer Education Specialist with the FTC, has sent out an alert on a rapidly growing scam that tries to blackmail you and demands payment in bitcoin. She advises that reports of Bitcoin blackmail scams have taken a big jump in the last few weeks. Seniors vs. Crime can confirm that we have received several reports of this scam since 'The Lockdown' began.

Typically, you will get an email stating the blackmailers hacked into your computer and recorded you visiting adult websites. They claim to have taken videos of you on these sites in 'compromising' poses or positions. To prove they are real they often have one of your passwords (usually a very old one). They then threaten to distribute the video to your friends and family within hours, unless you pay into their Bitcoin account.

STOP! Don't pay anything. Delete the message.

It's a scam!

Obviously, you know you didn't visit those sites nor post pornographic pictures on them. **If you never did anything they absolutely cannot have pictures of you doing it.** It's a scare tactic to rush you into sending them the bitcoin money before you think it through.

Based on the timing of this email (there have been a few reports of text message scams also), you may get one of these messages because your email was exposed in a recent data breach.

The scammers may say they have access to your computer or webcam, or installed clever software to defeat you. That's balderdash! But they may really know one of your old – or recent – passwords, and they include it in the message to prove it. When you see that, you know it's time to update your password on that account, and consider updating other passwords, too.

If you need assistance with understanding any aspects of coronavirus scams, contact the nearest Seniors vs. Crime office in The Villages for advice or assistance. Seniors vs. Crime also has a Speakers Bureau that will gladly come to your club, church or group to speak about scams. To schedule a presentation, contact any of their offices. There is never a charge for their services. Seniors vs. Crime can be reached at:

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The Marion County Sheriff's Office in The Villages
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The Sumter County Sheriff's Office in The Villages
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The Wildwood Police Department Annex at
Brownwood in The Villages – (352) 753-0727

Volunteers' at all four offices are ready, willing and able to assist you. To keep up with the latest scams, LIKE 'Seniors vs. Crime Region 4' on Facebook. Hablamos Español. Por favor pregunte por Yolanda. Martes a Viernes: 10:00 A.M. a 2:00 P.M., (352) 689 4606. ■

CDD 5 to Begin Trial to End Anonymous Complaints

The Community Development District (CDD) 5 Board of Supervisors, in 3-2 vote got the ball rolling to end the anonymous complaint process. A public hearing and final vote will take place at the October meeting. The public hearing will be advertised.

The anonymous complaint process has caused a lot of controversy over the years, particularly as it relates to trolls who sweep through a neighborhood and file numerous complaint violations at a time. Residents believe these complaints are being filed by people who are not their neighbors and have no right to make a complaint.

District Manager Richard Baier reminded the Board that the complaint process is defined in the Deed Restrictions. However, there have been other situations where a CDD Board has elected not to enforce a particular rule, such as when CDDs 1 and 4 decided not to enforce the sign rules. After a few years, the CDD 4 Board recently reversed its decision and began enforcing the rule again.

The same situation could occur with anonymous complaints. The CDD 5 Board wants to have a test period for 6 – 12 months to see how taking names and addresses from people taking complaints would affect the complaint violation system. It can re-evaluate at any time to change the process back. ■

For Up-to-Date Information from **District Government** and to sign up
for E-Notification: **DistrictGov.org 352-753-4508** *Customer Service*

DISCOUNT PARTNERS

Another benefit for POA members is this Discount Partner program.

Most vendors will ask you for your current POA Membership card to receive the offered discount. If you have a favorite business who is currently not offering a POA Discount, tell them about our program. Please say "thanks" to our Discount Partners for their participation.

The up-to-date list of Discount Partners can always be found on our website poa4us.org. Click 'Discount Partners' on the left menu.

Sign Up for POA Bulletin Email Delivery at POA4US.org

JOIN YOUR NEIGHBORS! There is so much going on in The Villages you don't want to chance missing any updates in your *POA Bulletin* if you are away. You'll have no more worries about stopping and starting driveway delivery when you go away! You'll get it earlier than driveway delivery and don't have to worry about it blowing away. Help us reduce the costs of producing the *POA Bulletin* and do a good thing for the environment.

If you are a Member, make sure you have verified your account, log in and select your Bulletin delivery preference

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You don't have to be a POA member, but for only \$10 a year you will be supporting the ONLY true property owners' advocacy group in The Villages! Champions of Residents' Rights Since 1975!



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

2018 Elaine Dreidame

POA Hall of Fame

2017 Myron Henry

2016 Frank E. Carr

2013 "Class Action Five"
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Bill Garner
Joe Gorman
Rich Lambrecht
Irv Yedwab

2012 Joe Gorman

2011 Pete Cacioppo
Betty Cunningham

2009 Dorothy Morehouse-Beeney
Vinnie Palmisano

2008 Ray and Lori Micucci
Win Shook

2007 Rose Harvey
Dorothy Hokr

2006 Charlie Harvey
Carol Kope
Frank Renner

2005 Sadie Woollard

2004 Russ Day
Eva Hawkins
William Rich, Jr.
Glen Swindler
Jean Tuttle

The Property Owners' Association

8736 SE 165th Mulberry Lane,
PMB 111, The Villages, 32162

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	Bill Schikora	552-1059
	Sal Tornante	350-2218

POA STAFF

Membership	Bill Schikora	552-1059
IT Tech	Vicki Alkema	941-587-4150
Bulletin Editor	Deb Butterfield	219-508-6863
POA Email	1presidentpoa@poa4us.org	
POA Website	poa4us.org	
POA Phone	352-418-7372	



We have over 850 likes and over 930 follows!

Type POA of the Villages FL in the search on Facebook and you will find our page. Click LIKE, and then, suggest our page to all of your friends and neighbors that live in The Villages! Meeting and relevant information will be posted on a timely basis. *Please continue to send questions or comments via email or call the POA at 352-418-7372.* ALL content will be monitored by the Administrator and posts containing opinion or debate will be removed.



STOP/START DELIVERY – NEW PROCESS!

Go to **POA4US.org**. If you are a POA member, sign into your account to change your Bulletin Delivery preference. If you are not a member, create a Guest Account by selecting POA Bulletin Delivery.

COVID-19: Facts...Focus...Future

As a physician by training, my wish is for everyone to “live long and prosper.” Let’s evaluate this virus. Think of a mere particle whose closeness to you can cause irreparable destruction... with just one breath. Its invisibility does not provide comfort, but rather enables entry by deception.

A virus is not alive: it depends on hijacking your normal cells’ ability to replicate. Think of it as a pirate ship sneaking into a port. Flying no flag of recognition, the renegade slips into our vulnerable harbor, only to plunder. (Step #1). If there was a way of identifying pirate vessels

while still far at sea, it could be sunk long before ever docking. But if our response is delayed, the viral ship gains a foothold. By not accurately focusing our cannons, the body’s own immune counter-offensive destroys much of the homeland. We magnify collateral damage to ourselves that becomes overwhelming. This “cytokine storm” may be fatal for multiple body organs...and ultimately for us. (Step #2).

The COVID-19 virus has an outer fat layer surrounding a protein. If the fat layer is disrupted, the protein is exposed and disintegrates. Our response must be rapid...and controlled. By doing so, we actually resolve both Steps #1 and #2.

Alpha lipoic acid is a natural anti-

inflammatory and anti-oxidant whose published medical results have been documented for forty years. It is not a prescription; but, it is inexpensive and safe when used as directed, and can address both steps at the same time. It is not a cure-all: rather, offering a natural balance for our immune response. The health impact goes well beyond treating a virus.

The Robert Boissoneault Oncology Institute constantly seeks ways to protect you. We are far more than just superior cancer specialists. We are human...and humane...specialists. Visit our web page to gain more knowledge about alpha lipoic acid, RBOI, and to maximize your health.

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Written by:
Norman H. Anderson M.D.
Radiation Oncologist | CEO