

The Unique Villages Public Safety Department

by Richard Baier, District Manager

In 1998, The Villages was comprised of approximately 9,000 residential homes located within the geographical boundaries of Lake County, Sumter County, and the Town of Lady Lake. The Villages was roughly 9,500 acres, growing at a rate of 1,200 homes per year, with an estimated population of 15,300 residents. During this time, the Lake County Fire Rescue Department, a combination of paid/volunteer staff, provided fire protection services to Lake County and the Town of Lady Lake portion of The Villages.

The response from Lake County Fire Rescue would primarily be from their station located on Hermosa Street in Lady Lake, with the next closest unit responding from Lake Square Mall in Leesburg, FL. Lake County Fire Rescue provided basic life support (EMT) patient care, with minimum staffing of two firefighters on a 24-hour basis.

Fire protection services for the Sumter County portion of the Villages was provided by the Oxford Volunteer Fire Department out of two unmanned stations; one located at the intersection of CR466 and Morse Boulevard and the other station located at CR466 and US-301, with backup provided by other volunteer districts in Sumter County.

Emergency Medical Services were provided to Lake and Sumter Counties by Florida Regional EMS. Each ambulance was staffed with one Paramedic and one EMT, providing paramedic care and treatment to patients requiring transport. At that time, there was one EMS transport unit station in The Villages, with the next two closest units stationed in the City of Fruitland

1,040 calls for service, with the total number of calls for service increasing each year.

Over the past twenty years, the community and population have experienced a tremendous amount of rapid growth. The Villages is the largest single-site residential real estate development in the United States, currently spanning 90 square miles and is the national number one

master-planned community with an estimated population of over 134,000 residents. The Villages Public Safety Department has transformed and grown with the community.

Over the past two decades, VPSD has gone from a rural community and department to a suburban community and department. The fire stations are uniquely nestled in the neighborhoods and offer quick response times to all calls. The Villages Public Safety Department service area covers 90 square miles, with 150 firefighters operating out of nine fire stations. The Department has current daily staffing that consists of 50 firefighters and includes two Battalion Chiefs, with a goal of at least 70 percent of the on-duty firefighters being additionally

certified as Paramedics.

The Villages Public Safety Department provides ISO (Insurance Services Office) Fire Protection Class 2

Continued on page 6



Park and the City of Wildwood.


It was during this time that The Village Center Community Development District (VCCDD) introduced a "Proposal for Improved Public Safety" to provide full-time fire protection and paramedic services to the growing community and rapidly increasing population, with the ultimate goal of reducing response times to emergency calls for service and standardizing the level of response within The Villages.

On October 6, 1998, a special meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the VCCDD was held for consideration and approval of the proposal for improved public safety, and with a unanimous vote, the Board authorized staff to move forward with the proposal: The Villages Public Safety Department was formed!

The Villages Public Safety Department (VPSD) began operations on October 1, 1999, with one station, one Fire Chief, and 12 Firefighters/Paramedics. During the first year of operation, the department responded to


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GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY, JULY 12, 2021 • 7:00 P.M.
COLONY COTTAGE
REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER



Do you want to understand the origins and services of your local Villages Fire Department? Please join The Villages Fire Chief, Edmund Cain and The Villages District Manager, Richard Baier, for this important presentation as Sumter County embarks on their Fire and EMS Study Committee.

ALL VILLAGES RESIDENTS WELCOME!

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As Mr. Rogers would say "It's a wonderful day in the neighborhood". Yes, and it is true here in The Villages. You, the residents of Florida's Friendliest Hometown, make it so. Through your generous donations of equipment and cash you make The VHA Helping Hands Neighbor Helping Neighbor program a place for people to reach out to when they are in need of Durable Medical Equipment (DME). Most of all, let me not forget to thank the volunteers of Helping Hands; without them we would not have had the opportunity to take over 3,000 calls in the first 6 months of this year and assist those in need of DME.

As we work to meet the needs of our community at times we must stop and look at the needs of our organization. You, our community, have always stepped up and assisted us in meeting those needs. So, I am asking for your help. If you can assist, these are our primary concerns:

- Office volunteers on Mondays. Primary task is to meet the residents in need of DME and complete the computer paperwork required to keep records of that equipment. Knowledge of Microsoft Excel would be a great help and be available a couple Mondays a month for two hours in performing this task.
- Drivers to shuttle equipment from storage to the office Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Good driving record required and repetitive lifting of equipment up to 40 lbs. in and out of Helping Hands Van.
- VHA Helping Hands currently uses Office 365 products, primarily Excel, to keep records of transactions. We are looking for someone who could assist us in building a database within Office 365 and Access.

Please remember:

- For our residents, the phone line remains open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday. The equipment request line is (352) 973-2284. Leave a message if we fail to answer. We will return your call.
- We now have an email address for those wishing to use email rather than call in your request. That email is vha.helpinghands.officemail@gmail.com. When using this service leave your name, phone number, and equipment you are requesting. We will respond to your request.
- Requested equipment can be picked up, or returning equipment can be dropped off at our office, Monday thru Friday between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
- All returned equipment should remain outside the door until sanitized by office staff. If possible, please have your ticket number or copy of your receipt when returning equipment. That will expedite the return process.
- Our location is 1104 Main Street, ½ block from the Spanish Springs Town Square in the breezeway next to Kilwin's Ice Cream, Fudge and Chocolates.

In closing, we can always use more volunteers who might consider joining our team. Call us at 352-973-2284, or email vha.helpinghands.officemail@gmail.com.

VHA Helping Hands is a not-for-profit corporation (501 c3) recognized by the laws of the state of Florida.

God Bless, stay safe and thanks for the opportunity to serve.

Bill Gottschalk

President

The VHA Helping Hands, Inc.



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For contact information go to
www.thevha.net



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Or email us at:
vha.helpinghands.officemail@gmail.com

VISION

Keeping the Dream Alive

MISSION

The Villages Homeowners Advocates (VHA) is a lifestyle organization whose members are committed to championing the needs of Villagers through:
• Positive, constructive dialogue • Problem solving • Education • Philanthropic efforts

VALUES

The VHA is committed to excellence and driven by the following values:
• Integrity • Honesty • Accountability • Independence

VHA OFFICE

1104 Main St., Spanish Springs

VHA MAIN PHONE:

352-753-4650

VHA WEBSITE:

www.thevha.net

The VHA News & Notes

NEW RESIDENT NIGHT

JULY 13 AT 7:00 P.M.

LA HACIENDA REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER

PRESENTERS MAY INCLUDE, AND INFORMATION/HANDOUTS WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM:

- Honorable Paul Militello, Sumter County Judge
- Sumter County Sheriff's Office & other local law enforcement
- Sumter County Property Appraiser
- Sumter County Tax Collector
- Sumter County Clerk
- District Government
- Serving Health Ins. Needs of Elders (SHINE)
- Seniors vs. Crime
- SECO
- UF Health The Villages® Hospital Auxiliary Foundation
- Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches
- Sumter Landing Bicycle Club
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- Friends of the Library
- The Enrichment Academy
- The VHA – The Villages Homeowners' Advocates

NEXT NEW RESIDENT NIGHT WILL BE AUGUST 10 AT COLONY COTTAGE REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER

Upcoming EVENTS

FOR JULY AND AUGUST

NEW RESIDENT NIGHT:

TUESDAYS: JULY 13 at 7:00 p.m.
at LA HACIENDA REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER; **AUGUST 10**
at COLONY COTTAGE REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER

GOLF CART SAFETY CLINIC:

WEDNESDAYS: July 21 and August 18 at 9:00 a.m. at COLONY REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER

GENERAL MEETING –

THE VILLAGES PUBLIC SAFETY:
JULY 12 at 7:00 p.m. at COLONY REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER

“COMMUNITY WATCH: WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO...AND DON'T DO”:
July 19 at 7:00 p.m. at Everglades Recreation Complex

THE VHA VOLUNTEER SOCIAL:
JULY 21 at 1:00 p.m. at LA HACIENDA REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER

THE VHA QUARTERLY TOWN HALL MEETING:
JULY 20th with question deadline of JULY 14th

THE VHA BINGO:
TUESDAY, JULY 27 at 6:30 p.m. at LA HACIENDA REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER



THE VHA COUNTRY WESTERN HOEDOWN:
JANUARY 29, 2022

AN EVENING WITH THE DEVELOPER AT THE SHARON:
MAY 11, 2022



Contact Us

To become a member or renew, simply go to

www.thevha.net

or

VHA deposit boxes are available at every Postal Station.

Our mailing address:
The VHA, 1104 Main Street
The Villages, FL 32159

- ☐ New Membership
- ☐ Renewal
- ☐ \$25/Household for 2 years
- ☐ \$100/Household for Lifetime

Name: *(All in Household)*

Street Address:

Zip:

Name of Village/Villa:

Mailing Address: *(if different than The Villages)*

Phone:

Email:

- ☐ I would like to volunteer

AREA AND REGION NEWS

NORTH AREA

North of 466

Jan Palmer – Editor of The Voice



After a trip to New York State for a family wedding and our own 50th Anniversary party, I have decided that life in The Villages is a bit like living in a protective bubble. Nothing brings that perspective to bear more than time spent away in a state that is just emerging from the pandemic lockdown, has political scandals and crime rates through the roof, and is economically challenged and still in a bit of a daze. We had a wonderful time, but are glad to be back home.

Some of the differences we noted? We stayed in five hotels since we drove up and moved around once we got there. Our breakfasts were minimal; the first hotel handed us a bag with oranges, bottled water, and granola bars for the next morning to eat in our room. The pool and hot tub were drained. We went to Wal Mart to pick up a few essentials and they had no plastic bags. In fact, we ended up carrying our items out without a bag because they had none to offer. We soon learned to take a bag with us. The base price for items we regularly get down here was quite a bit higher, and so was the sales tax.

There wasn't much to do with our grandkids either, but we did take our grandsons bowling. I kid you not; it cost us almost \$100 for the four of us to bowl three games each, rent them shoes, and buy a couple orders of French fries and sodas. I couldn't help but compare that to all the entertainment options we have here for them when they visit, including renting a bowling lane for \$10 an hour, plus other specials that are offered at both of our bowling alleys.

Every once in a while, I am tempted to find fault with things here. Aren't we all? But honestly, nitpicking is a habit we can fall into gradually, and sometimes the cure is as easy as getting out of our bubble and seeing what others have to deal with.

On a less philosophical note, as we headed home on 466A we came across a car accident with first responders just arriving on the scene (see photo on front page). No one seemed to be hurt, but we have noticed that we need to be more vigilant and practice defensive driving here more so than "up north". Watch out for each other on the roads, use your turn signals, stay focused on driving, take the AARP Safe Driver course, master those roundabouts, and don't drink and drive.

Jan Palmer
Editor, The VHA Voice

Editor's Note: While we try to publish the most accurate information available to us at the time of publication, due to circumstances beyond our control some events may need to be cancelled or postponed. Please confirm with the source of the information provided if there is any doubt about whether or not an event is still being held as planned.

CENTRAL AREA

Between 466 and 466A

John Dean, Vice President

vhajohndean@gmail.com – 207-557-0371



Greetings,

My neighborhood just had a trivia night which gave me the idea for this month's article. By the time you read this, it will be July 5th, but I still wanted to take this opportunity to renew and/or review some of the facts surrounding the Fourth of July.

- The actual vote of the Continental Congress was on July 2, 1776. John Adams wrote that July 2nd should be remembered in history but on July 4, 1776, Congress officially adopted the Declaration of Independence, and it was not signed until almost a month later. When the Declaration was officially approved on July 4, John Hancock, and Charles Thompson (president and secretary of the Continental Congress) signed the draft that day. But the official copy wasn't signed by all 56 signers until August 2, 1776.
- The main author was Thomas Jefferson.
- The first celebration of the 4th of July was in Boston, MA in 1777
- The original flag had 13 stars representing the 13 original colonies. As states joined the union their star was added on the next July 4th.
- Benjamin Franklin wanted the turkey to be the national bird. I am glad that the eagle was selected. A turkey just would not look the same at the top of a flagpole.
- Two former presidents of the United States died on July 4th of the same year; John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, on July 4, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the Fourth of July. Later, President James Monroe died on July 4, 1831.
- Calvin Coolidge was the first (and so far, the only) president to have been born on the Fourth of July. He was born on July 4, 1872, in Plymouth, Vermont, and went on to become president in 1923.
- Today, the United States has a population of more than 332.5 million, but on July 4, 1776, there were only 2.5 million people living in the United States. That means the population has grown by 13,200% since the first Independence Day.
- The Philippines declared independence from the United States on July 4, 1960
- One last bit of trivia that I did not remember – the real name for the Statue of Liberty (a gift from France) is Liberty Enlightening the World.



Now Here Is Some Interesting Food and Drink Trivia:

- While many of us enjoy a red, white, and blue cocktail on the Fourth of July, George Washington may have been the first to start the tradition. On the second anniversary of the first Fourth of July, America was still fighting for independence in the Revolutionary War. George Washington ordered a double ration of rum for his soldiers (along with an artillery salute) to celebrate the holiday on July 4, 1778.
- Today Americans eat 150 million hot dogs and drink 70 million cases of beer each 4th of July.

I hope that you enjoyed your holiday and that you have recovered from all those hot dogs and beer – and maybe even a double ration of rum.

Stay safe and healthy,
John Dean

SOUTH AREA

Between 466A and SR44

Mike Dollard, Vice President

mjdollard@hotmail.com – 585-315-8338



As activities come back to life in The Villages, The VHA is glad to announce that Bingo is back on the schedule. The next scheduled Bingo Night is July 27th at La Hacienda Regional Recreation Center. If you have never been there, La Hacienda is in the Spanish Springs area. In my opinion, La Hacienda is a beautiful building, built back when each center and country club was custom built.

If you would like an email alert about this and future Bingo Nights, just email me at VHABingo@outlook.com. If you have not been to one of The VHA Bingo Nights, each game has a cash prize. The best part is that the profits go to The VHA Community Foundation and are used to fund donations to various nonprofits in The Villages area.

In CDD 9 news, the board adopted the 2021-2022 budget. This budget does call for a 20% cut in the maintenance fees that are billed on your property tax bill in November.

The other part of the CDD billing that is on your tax bill is for the "bond" payment. To clarify a prior comment that I made – if you have paid off your bond none of this applies to you as you are not billed this charge. If you have not paid off your bond, then you are billed annually for the bond payment. Your charge for this will drop this year because one of the bonds that makes up this "bond" payment was refinanced at a lower rate. Lower interest means a lower payment is due.

There are actually three bonds, issued at different times over several years, which make up this charge. In 2022



AREA AND REGION NEWS

the next bond that can be refinanced is up and if there is a re-fi at that time then your billing may drop again. The third bond is small and may not be refinanced. Each bond had a 10-year call window – they could not be called in and refinanced until 10 years had passed since being issued. Bond 1 hit the 10-year mark, Bond 2 hits it in 2022.

On July 12 we will have a general meeting at Colony Regional Recreation Center with speakers addressing the ambulance issues in the county.

Mike Dollard

FAR SOUTH AREA

South of SR44

Andrew Bilardello, Vice President
andy@bellicus.net – 561-644-1358



The Far South will be playing host in July to all residents of The Villages when The VHA presents an informative and educational meeting regarding:

COMMUNITY WATCH

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO...AND DON'T DO

July 19, 2021 at 7:00 p.m

Everglades Recreation Complex

Open to all residents

From the District Website: Community Watch is a division of The Villages Public Safety Department. We are on-duty 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Our mission is to provide a safe community for our residents and visitors by being the watchful eyes of the community. Although we are not a law enforcement agency, we work very closely with the local law enforcement agencies that service The Villages community. As an “observe and report” agency, Community Watch plays a vital role in deterring crime and assisting law enforcement to solve crimes when they happen.

Although our primary responsibility is to be the “watchful eye”, Community Watch has evolved into so much more as our community has grown. Community Watch serves the residents and visitors of The Villages by providing assistance in four disciplines:

- Patrols • Dispatch / Communications Center
- Gate Attendants • Gate Operations

We hope to see you there!

Your VHA Far South Team

LADY LAKE NEWS

Lynn Davis

Lynna527@aol.com – 352-250-7782



New Restaurant Coming to Lady Lake: Chipotle Mexican Grill is coming to Village Crossroads where Sweet Tomatoes used to be on Hwy 441/27. Specializing in tacos and Mission burritos that are made to order in front of the customer, Chipotle will be opening this fall.

Lady Lake Public Library:

- “The ABC’s of Dementia” workshop series was just completed at the library. To continue to raise awareness of those living with, or who have succumbed to, Alzheimer’s or other forms of Dementia, they have on display famous Americans who have or had it. It

will be in the library for the month of July.

- **SHINE** (Serving the Health Information Needs of Elders) will be starting their classes in July on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month from 2:00 -4:00 p.m.
- “**Author’s Round Table**” On the 4th Wednesday of each month at 2:00 p.m. is for both budding and published authors. Sign up is required: 352-753-2957.
- **The Fiction Book discussion** is held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month in Rm 207 from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. The book selected for July is “Olive Kitteridge” by Elizabeth Strout. Sign up is required 352-753-2957.

Lady Lake Commons: Coming to Lady Lake Commons (where Miller’s Ale House, Goodwill, etc. is located) is a retail establishment and a drive thru bank. Both of these should be completed before the end of the year.

Lady Lake Museum: Newcomers to the area may not know we have a Museum. It is located behind the Log Cabin on Hwy 441/27. Those interested in the Vietnam War Era will be impressed with the Vietnam War Exhibit that is now being displayed.

Have a safe and healthy Summer,
Lynn Davis



SHINE OFFERS MEDICARE HELP

With the Villages opening its pandemic restrictions, SHINE is resuming its Medicare counseling at various Recreation Centers. Beginning in July, 2021, SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) volunteers will assist clients with Medicare-related questions including drug, Medicaid, Medicare, Advantage, and Medigap plans. The service is free and unbiased, and reservations are not taken.

Counselors are scheduled at the following locations to assist area residents for one-on-one counseling on the indicated days:

- Eisenhower Recreation Center, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. 1st & 3rd Wednesdays.
- Chula Vista Recreation Center, 3:00 - 5:30 p.m. 1st & 3rd Fridays.
- Lake Miona Recreation Center, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. - 2nd & 4th Tuesdays.
- Lady Lake Library, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. - 2nd & 4th Wednesdays.

Also, “Understanding Medicare”, a group presentation geared toward those turning 65, will be made at 1:00 p.m. on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, at the Manatee Recreation Center.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 800-963-5337.

Continued from page 1

services to the residents and visitors from all nine fire stations. VPSD is one of 112 fire departments (out of a total of 517) within the State of Florida and is one of 1,597 countrywide (out of a total of 41,117) classified as an ISO 2 fire department. Insurance companies use the ISO rating to set home insurance rates.

The fleet is comprised of five engine companies, five non-transport rescues, two quick attack vehicles, three ladder trucks, and one heavy rescue pumper: all apparatus are additionally equipped, staffed, and certified in compliance with Florida State requirements to provide first-response ALS non-transport emergency medical services. The department also deploys a Florida State certified/recognized Type 1 (heavy) Technical Rescue Team, which acts as both a local and regional state asset comprised of firefighters who specialize in High Angle Rope Rescue, Vehicle Machinery Rescue, Confined Space Rescue, Trench Collapse Rescue, and Structural Collapse Rescue.

Last fiscal year The Villages Public Safety Department responded to 26,711 calls for service, a 2,468%

increase from the total number of calls during the first year of operation in 1999. They also provide a wide range of programs for the public including AED programs, family and friends CPR training, and a smoke detector program.

The Villages Public Safety Department is unique and will continue its growth and development synonymous with the community they serve. They are ready, and with purpose and resolve, to deliver on their mission statement with an unwavering commitment to the public they serve.

VPSD Mission Statement: *With respect and dignity, the Villages Public Safety Department will work to prevent harm, and respond to unprevented incidents in an efficient and effective manner with the best resources provided by the community, and be nice.*



THRIFT SHOPPE CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



Time is getting closer for the completion of the expansion of Ye Olde Thrift Shoppe in Lady Lake nestled under the oaks at 110 W. Lady Lake Boulevard. Projected opening is in August, but the shoppe has been and continues to be open during the renovations.

The Thrift Shoppe's humble beginnings started in 2008 in one historical landmark building, and now excitement is mounting for the all-volunteer shoppe team and the community with an increased capacity of over 6000 sq. ft in retail space with plenty of room allocated for parking and donation drop off.

Lots of people like the excitement of saving money while finding a treasure to enjoy and know

the money is going to a worthy cause. Proceeds from all sales at the Thrift Shoppe provide much needed medical equipment for the hospital, student scholarships, and the expansion of the hospital's cardiac unit.

The new expansion is designed to look the same as the average mainstream retailers, but with one significant difference between the two industries: resale offers high quality goods to consumers at prices that are much lower than the manufacturer's suggested retail price.

According to Green Story, an organization that helps consumers choose a more sustainable option and make greener choices, the purchase of one used item instead of a new one can reduce its carbon footprint by up to 82%. If everyone would purchase just one used item in the next 12 months, it would save 11 billion kilowatts of energy, 25 billion gallons of water, and 449 million pounds of waste.

The shoppe is always on the lookout for residents who would like to volunteer. There are a wide variety of positions available and if you're interested, please give Beth Malak a call at 405-802-2703 to learn more.

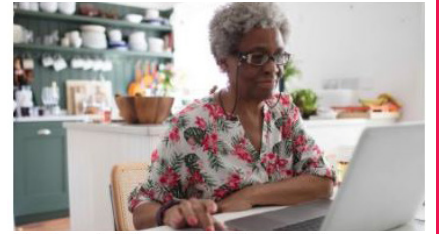
Donations are accepted Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. If you have furniture or large items, you can call 352-571-9785 to arrange for a pick up.

Be sure to follow us on Facebook @YeOldeThrift-Shoppe to stay up to date on our great weekly specials.



THE ON-LINE REFRESHER COURSE CONTINUES TO BE OFFERED:

The AARP Smart Driver course is recognized as an approved accident prevention course for drivers age 55 and older by the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. Insured



Refresh Your Skills Online

Take AARP's Smart Driver course from the comfort of home, and you could reduce your insurance bill

drivers, age 55 and older, may be eligible for an appropriate reduction in automobile insurance premium charges good for three years after completing this course. Please check with your insurance company or agent for any additional requirements for eligibility.

For information and to register, go to:

<https://www.aarpdriversafety.org/>



AMAC Foundation

Supporting & Educating America's Seniors

SUDDEN DEATH: ARE YOU PREPARED

Mondays, July 12, July 19, July 26, 2021

10:00 a.m. - Noon

Pinellas Library, 7375 Powell Road

This seminar has been structured to guide you through the process of creating your "Survivor Notebook," the repository that will help your loved ones cope after your passing. Conducted in three separate two-hour sessions, we will walk you through identifying what needs to be considered, assembling the material as we go in an accessible format, and we'll be developing an approach to maintaining the material so that it is always current. You will leave with a physical roadmap that will be of immeasurable value to your family.

There is no cost for this workshop series, **but attendance is limited so you must register to attend.** Light refreshments will be served at each session. Notebook materials will be provided.

Parkinson's Disease Webinar in Partnership with VITAS Healthcare

Wednesday, July 14, 2021 • 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Understanding the basics of Parkinson's Disease, focusing on physical and behavioral changes, medications, and caregiver support. This seminar will be presented by Dr. Ramon L. Rodriguez Board Certified Neurologist, Movement Disorders Specialist from Neurology One.

Exercise Alternatives for Pain Management in Partnership with VITAS Healthcare

Wednesday, July 21, 2021 • 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Lady Lake Library

This hands-on seminar will focus on ways to manage pain through low impact exercising. We will also delve into the science behind Tai Chi and Qi Gong and the importance of balancing mind, body, and spirit. A Physical Therapist will join us to explain exercising and arthritis and joint health, while VITAS Healthcare experts will discuss various physical exercise alternatives.

Check the AMAC Foundation website
www.AmacFoundation.org for further details.

TO REGISTER FOR ALL AMAC EVENTS: Contact the Foundation office at 888-750-2622 or via email at info@amacfoundation.org.

SCAMMERS TARGET LOVED ONES OF COVID-19 VICTIMS

**Seniors
VS.
CRIME**



According to Seena Gressin, an attorney with the Division of Consumer & Business Education at the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), government imposters may have hit a new low with a scheme that targets the grieving survivors of people who died of COVID-19 by offering them help paying for their loved one's funeral expenses.



A real government relief program will refund up to \$9,000 for funeral expenses that people have paid since January 20, 2020 for loved ones who died of COVID-19. Survivors can apply for benefits by contacting the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at 844-684-6333. The number is toll-free and multi-lingual services are available.

The program is open to American citizens, nationals of U.S. territories, and non-citizens legally admitted to the United States, regardless of income. If you apply, you'll need to show documents including receipts for your expenses and a death certificate that says the

death happened in the United States or its territories and was likely caused by COVID-19.

The program just began April 12, 2021, but even before it started, FEMA said it had reports of scammers contacting people and offering to register them for assistance.

Here's what you need to know:

- FEMA will not contact you until you have called FEMA or have applied for assistance. Anyone who contacts you out of the blue and claims to be a federal employee or from FEMA is a scammer.
- The government won't ask you to pay anything to get this financial help. Anyone who does is a scammer.
- The government won't call, text, email, or contact you on social media and ask for your Social Security, bank account, or credit card number. Anyone who does is a scammer.
- Don't give your own or your deceased loved one's personal or financial information to anyone who contacts you out of the blue. Anyone who does that and asks for that information is a scammer.

FEMA's Funeral Assistance FAQs have information about the documents you need to apply for funeral expenses. The FAQs also tell you what to do if the death certificate didn't identify COVID-19 as the likely cause of death, as sometimes happened early in the pandemic.

If you doubt a caller claiming to be from FEMA is telling the truth, hang up and report it to the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362 or the National Center for Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721. Tell the FTC too, at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/report-fraud).

If you need assistance with understanding any aspects of scam phone calls, 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 the offices. There is never a charge for their services. Seniors Vs. Crime can be reached at:

- The Fruitland Park Police Department Annex in the Moyer Recreation Center in The Villages – (352) 674-1882
- The Marion County Sheriff's Office in The Villages – (352) 753-7775
- The Sumter County Sheriff's Office in The Villages – (352) 689-4600, Extension 4606
- The Wildwood Police Department Annex at Brownwood in The Villages – (352) 753-0727

During this pandemic, our offices are closed for walk-in complaints. Please call before you come to our offices. Hours may vary or may require appointments. You can also file online, or by calling 1-800-203-3099. Our staff will call you back and you can file your complaint over the phone.

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 Face Book. Hablamos Español. Por favor pregunte por Yolanda. Martes a Viernes: 10:00 a.m. a 2:00 p.m., (352) 689 4606.

BIKE • FRIENDLY • COMMUNITY • CORNER



"In days of old, when knights were bold and cycles were quite limited,

"They would don their armor and mount their steeds for rides that were primitive.

"Sometimes the knights encountered dragons and foes that challenged their mettle,

"After which they would give thanks for the metal that saved their kettle."

Today's Road Knights don special equipment (armor) as protection from the dragons and foes (e.g., pedestrians, dogs, golf carts, landscapers, trucks, etc.) we encounter in the pursuit of healthy living. Let's review:

- Gird firmly and comfortably in your riding shorts. They have a padded chamois to wick away perspiration, reduce chafing, and provide shock

WEAR YOUR ARMOR

absorption against bumpy roads.

- Don next a brightly colored jersey. We want to help the dragons and foes see us. Seniors have declining vision. Distracted drivers have no vision until they look up from their cell phone texting.
- Lace your feet into sturdy shoes. If a foot slips off a platform pedal, you can crash. If wearing flip-flops, you can lose a toe. Regular cyclists prefer clip-on shoes that truthfully keep their feet on the pedals.
- Place your properly fitted helmet on your head making certain that it will stay there if you get bucked off your mount. Remember that cycling is for our health, and we want to stay that way even knowing that dragons and foes are out to get us. That helmet of salvation can truly save your life.
- Turn on your lights of visibility even in daytime (front and rear) so that the dragons and foes can properly sense your presence. Remember, riding in the light is better than falling in the darkness.
- Examine your bicycle (Air-Brakes-Chain Quick

Check) to make sure that it is prepared to support you in your adventure. Keep your tires properly inflated, oil your chain, make sure your brakes stop you. High operational availability at the beginning of a ride helps yield reliability and a strong finish.

- Know the Rules of the Road, for they are the Bicyclists Bible of Survivability. It can protect you from the flaming attacks of the dragons and foes. Remember that your bike is a legal vehicle in Florida, and you are the driver.
- Hydrate. Carry a bottle of something to refresh you and keep you vertical.

Now that you have your full "armor" in place, you can mount up and venture out into bicycle land knowing you are as fully prepared as possible to ride, strive, and survive.

*by Rose Jordan
Operations Director
Bike Friendly Advocacy Council*

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE THEVHA.NET FOR INFO, MEMBERSHIP,
HELPFUL LINKS, VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, AND MORE**

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NEW RESIDENT NIGHT

**TUESDAY, JULY 13 AT 7:00 P.M.
AT LA HACIENDA REGIONAL
RECREATION CENTER**

**JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF GETTING TO KNOW THE
VILLAGES, INSIDE AND OUT. SEE DETAILS ON PAGE 3**

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING WITH THE VHA?

**IF SO, YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD
REPRESENTATIVES AND VHA VOLUNTEERS**

**JULY 21, 2021 @ 1:00 p.m.
for an**

ICE CREAM SOCIAL

AT LA HACIENDA RECREATION CENTER

THE VHA TOWN HALL MEETING JULY 20, 2021

The VHA will hold its quarterly Town Hall meeting on Tuesday, July 20, 2021 with representatives of The Villages management team and local law enforcement.

Questions will be asked on your behalf which are submitted to us beforehand. Answers will be published in the August edition of The Voice. The deadline for us to receive questions is July 14th.

Submit questions to us by:

- Contacting your VHA area representative
- Using the contact form in The Voice and depositing it in the VHA slot at your postal station
- Using our website email system
- Or sending a letter directly to: The VHA, 1104 Main Street, The Villages, FL 32159.

The VHA GOLF CART SAFETY CLINIC



**JULY 21 @ 9:00 A.M.
COLONY COTTAGE REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER
CAPACITY IS 50% SO GET THERE EARLY**

CLINIC TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Not a Toy • Golf Cars & LSV • Golf Cars vs. Others • Tunnels
- Intersections • Passing & Road Crossings • Bridges • Turns
- Circles (Roundabouts) • Parallel Parking • Pulling into a Parking Space • Sharing Parking with Cars • No Parking Zones • Insurance
- Legal concerns • Maintenance

NEXT MONTH: AUGUST 18 @ COLONY COTTAGE REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER

THE VHA BINGO

JULY 27, 2021

**6:30 p.m. (Doors open at 6:00)
LA HACIENDA RECREATION CENTER**

***\$10 for 2 Boards; \$1 each for
Additional Boards***

THREE 50/50 WINNERS

BYOB AND SNACKS

**FIRST COME
FIRST SERVED**

**In Support Of The VHA's Philanthropic
Efforts And Helping Hands**