

The VHA VOICE

THE VILLAGES HOMEOWNERS ADVOCATES: KEEPING THE DREAM ALIVE

The VHA FOUNDATION COMMITTEE

The VHA

The VHA HELPING HANDS

September 2022 • Vol. 28 No. 9



BE AN INFORMED VOTER: TAKE ADVANTAGE OF MEETINGS AND RESOURCES TO MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT



There is an air of certainty that the proposal will be approved, but some concerns and questions may still remain for voters as to whether or not the individual price tag will be worth the improvements promised. New equipment has already been acquired, and more have been purchased with delivery dates in the near future. So how exactly will things change, and what will it cost individual home owners, and what formula exactly is being used to determine that cost?

The Villages Homeowner's Advocates has scheduled two informational meetings, **OPEN TO ALL RESIDENTS OF THE VILLAGES**, to answer those questions, and any others you may have:

**SEPTEMBER 14, 2022
@ 7:00 P.M.**

**LAKE MIONA REGIONAL
RECREATION CENTER
1526 BUENA VISTA BLVD.**

OCTOBER 24, 2022 @ 7:00 P.M.

**EZELL REGIONAL
RECREATION CENTER
769 MARILEE PLACE**

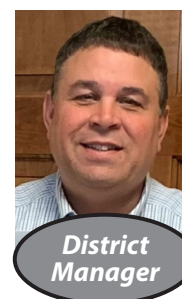
NOTE: Both meetings will feature Chief Edmund Cain of The Villages Public Safety Department, and District employees who will be able to give you a personalized, good-faith estimate of how, and if, it will affect your out-of-pocket costs.

In addition, please read the article by our North Vice President, Karl Arps, on Page 4, and the front page accompanying article by the District Manager, Kenny Blocker, regarding upcoming VPSD Open Houses, and how to access valuable information on the District website at: www.districtgov.org

The Villages
Community Development Districts

DECISION TIME

by Kenny Blocker, District Manager



On November 8, 2022, there will be a referendum on the General Election ballot for Sumter County residents living within and near The Villages to decide if The Villages Independent Fire Control & Rescue District will provide Fire and EMS services pursuant to Chapter 191, Florida Statutes.

This implements a series of community decisions developed and made over the last several months involving a community consensus arrived amongst your elected officials from the community development districts, the Sumter County Commission and administration, and many opinion leaders in our community. The Legislature and Governor have agreed to allow this evolution in service. The next step is for the electors to review—YOU DECIDE!

As a Sumter County resident living within and near The Villages, your decision will be voiced by voting on the November 8th referendum. To ensure that every eligible voter has all of the necessary information and can read about what this means for them, we have created a page on the District website that has answers to frequently asked questions we've received. In addition, we have put together two educational videos to provide additional clarification. **To access these informational resources, go to our home page at www.districtgov.org and click on The Villages Independent Fire Control and Rescue District in the Quick Links box.** If you have any questions, please contact the District Administration office at 352-751-3939.



Want to learn more about your Villages Public Safety Department? Come join us on September 20, 2022, from 1-4 p.m., for the Fire Station

Continued on page 3

After months of discussions and assessing the need to do something about the quality and wait times for ambulance service, the final step in the proposed solution is in sight. The District, Chief Edmund Cain of The Villages Public Safety Department, The Daily Sun, and The VHA have all done their part in informing Villages residents of the need and the process. Now, after receiving approval from the State of Florida to form The Villages Independent Fire Control and Rescue District, it is up to voters to decide whether or not that solution will be implemented.

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VISIT US ONLINE AT WWW.THEVHA.NET

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VHA WEBSITE: www.thevha.net

The VHA President's Message



In 1991 The Villages Homeowners Advocates (originally called The Villages Homeowner's Association) was founded to meet the need for a positive problem-solving homeowner's organization. That means 2021 was our 30th Anniversary! And now, here we are in 2022, doing our best to continue to advocate for The Villages residents, but on a much larger scale and for many more residents.

We continue to work on behalf of The Villages community through educational programs, offering needed durable medical equipment through our Helping Hands program, and advocating for philanthropic organizations. We provide a host of opportunities to volunteer and get involved in a variety of programs, events, and leadership positions.

We also offer assistance on how to approach and resolve issues at hand. While we do our best to remain neutral politically, when needed we aim to inform residents on all sides of an issue so they can make an informed decision. As such, we are having two informational meetings regarding the upcoming vote to establish The Villages Public Safety Department as an Independent Fire Control and Rescue District.

The voting in the primary has concluded, candidates have been chosen, and now we have the General Election on November 8th. Included, along with electing officials, will be the referendum for the Special Independent Fire District.

VHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Phil Walker, President
Fred Briggs, Past President
Mike Dollard, Treasurer

Karl Arps * Russ D'Emidio
Peter Moeller * Greg Panjian
Vivian Stephens * Chuck Wildzunus

For contact information go to
www.thevha.net

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Jeff Rattner, Secretary/Treasurer
Mary Inwood * John McDonald
Deborah Hagey * Phil Walker

For contact information go to www.thevha.net Or email
us at: vha.helpinghands.officemail@gmail.com

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.

To be sure you are well informed about this important vote and are aware of the cost and scope of what we consider an improvement in the services provided, the informational meetings detailed below will feature Chief Edmund Cain and representatives from the District Government to provide facts, figures, and what your personal estimated cost will be. **Please Join Us:**



SEPTEMBER 14th at

Lake Miona Recreation Center @ 7:00 p.m.

OCTOBER 24th at

Ezell Recreation Center @ 7:00 p.m.

**THESE VPSPD INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS
ARE OPEN TO ALL RESIDENTS**

WHY ATTEND?

- TO GET THE LATEST INFORMATION ON THE FIRE DISTRICT PROPOSAL.
- BECAUSE DISTRICT EMPLOYEES WITH THEIR COMPUTERS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO HELP RESIDENTS ESTIMATE THEIR PROPERTY TAX IMPACT.
- YOU WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS.

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

Regards,
Phil Walker
The VHA President



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

Upcoming EVENTS

SEPT/OCT
2022

SEE BACK PAGE FOR DETAILS ON MONTHLY VHA PROGRAMS



THE VILLAGES HOMEOWNER'S
ADVOCATES

GENERAL MEETINGS:

SEPTEMBER 14, 7:00 p.m.

AT THE LAKE MIONA REGIONAL
RECREATION CENTER

OCTOBER 24, 7:00 p.m.

AT EZELL REGIONAL
RECREATION CENTER

Informational meetings regarding
the Upcoming Vote to establish The
Villages Public Safety Department as an
Independent Fire And Rescue District.

ALL VILLAGES RESIDENTS ARE INVITED.

**GOLFING IN THE
VILLAGES
SEPT. 26 @ 7:00 p.m.**

**EZELL RECREATION
CENTER**

NOT A GOLF TOURNAMENT, NOT AT A
GOLF COURSE...THIS IS SIMPLY YOUR
OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN THE ROPES
ABOUT HOW "THE SYSTEM" WORKS HERE:
HOW TO SCHEDULE TEE TIMES, OPTIONAL
UPGRADES, FEES, GOOD GOLF GUIDANCE,
GENERAL INFO, AND ALL THINGS RELATED
TO GOLFING IN THE VILLAGES FROM THE
PROS WHO MANAGE "ALL THINGS GOLF".

MONDAY, OCTOBER 17 @ 7:00 p.m.

**VHA SOCIAL EVENT
AT EVERGLADES
RECREATION CENTER**

BE THERE OR BE SQUARE

CASH PRIZES, FRIENDLY COMPETITION, AND TONS OF FUN INVOLVED.
WATCH FOR DETAILS IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF THE VHA VOICE.



**THE VILLAGES
HOMEOWNER'S ADVOCATES
QUARTERLY TOWN
HALL MEETING**

OCTOBER 18, 2022

The VHA Officers and Neighborhood Representatives will meet with representatives
from the Developer, District Government, and local law enforcement to ask questions
you submit. The deadline for sending us your questions is October 5, 2022.

Submit questions to us by: Contacting one of your VHA Area Representatives listed on
Page 2. Using our website email system at www.thevha.net. Sending a letter directly
to: The VHA, 1104 Main Street, The Villages, FL 32159.

DISTRICT MANAGER cont'd from Page 1

Open House at Station #47 located at 4856 S. Morse
Blvd. There will be Fire Truck demonstrations and
Fire Station tours, free blood pressure checks, fun
free giveaways, and light refreshments.

Can't make it in September? We also have
meet and greet events planned at the following
Market Nights in October from 5:00 – 9:00 p.m.:
Lake Sumter Landing on October 19, 2022, and
Brownwood Paddock Square on October 20,
2022. Stop by and visit with The Villages Public
Safety Department staff. They will be happy to
answer any questions you may have.

Membership: \$25 for 2 years,
or \$100 for lifetime

Don't wait!

Join now, and be a part of
our growing community!



☐ NEW MEMBERSHIP ☐ RENEWAL

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

VILLA/VILLAGE: _____

OTHER ADDRESS IF ANY: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

MAIL TO:
THE VHA, 1104 Main St.,
The Villages, FL 32159
OR JOIN OR RENEW ONLINE AT:
WWW.THEVHA.NET

The VHA News & Notes

NORTH AREA



North of 466
Karl Arps, Vice President
karl.arps@gmail.com - (920) 285-1382

On August 17, I attended the Open House held by The Villages Public Safety Department at Station 40 on Parr Drive. I sent an email to all the North Area Neighborhood Representatives to tell them about what I learned. That email follows:



I just got home from attending the first Villages Public Safety Open House at Station 40 on Parr Drive. It was very impressive. With my daughter, who is an experienced paramedic, we toured the entire facility and spent most of our time studying the new Ford F-450 ambulance. This is a very high-end truck, with power-assisted gurney lift, air lift box for leveling on sloped drives, pumps and ventilators and room for large numbers of EMT/Paramedics in acute cases.

We were able to speak with Deputy Chief James Goodworth (shown left with me) and Chief Edmund Cain to learn a lot about the impact of the proposed Special Fire District. Here are some key takeaways:

- Both Chief Cain and Deputy Chief Goodworth “cut their teeth” in emergency medical service, merging EMS with firefighting as their careers progressed. As they add full EMS service to The Villages Public Safety Department, we are fortunate to have management that understands the duties and difficulties of emergency medical intervention and transport.
- Currently, under the existing contract with AMR, there are nine ambulances serving all of Sumter County, including The Villages. The Villages Public Safety Department has received three units as of today, with three more due this month, and three to six more in September. If any are delayed, the manufacturer will provide “loaners” to bring the total to twelve. Sumter will continue to provide a fleet to serve the rest of the county, so the result will be a lot more ambulance coverage for the same total area.
- One of the new ambulances will be based at the existing stand-alone paramedic station at Springdale postal station, replacing the old first-response truck. For District 4 residents, we will now have both a Villages and a Marion County ambulance based within mere blocks.
- As reported in The Daily Sun, a new cooperative agreement has been signed with Marion County, so the added Villages EMS capability should have little impact on our taxes or fees. It should improve the service in that the closest truck will be able to serve us AND transport us to the appropriate emergency room, as needed.

• Another of the ambulances will be based at the Paradise fire station. For folks in the historic section of The Villages, this means that service should come from the nearer of The Villages EMS or a Lake County ambulance.

• Again, as reported in The Daily Sun, there is a new agreement with Lake County, so the added EMS capability, by itself, should not have much effect on taxes or fees.

• Initially, for the next year, a cooperative agreement with Sumter County will be in place, and as a result, for the upcoming year the added Villages EMS capability should not significantly affect taxes or fees. In all three counties, the costs will of course be affected by inflation, but NOT by the new services.

It behooves us to attend The VHA General Meeting on September 14 (which is open to ALL Villages residents) to learn all we can about the long-term effect on taxes for Sumter County and fees for Districts 2 and 3 in the North Area. If I lived in Sumter County, I would vote “Yes” for the independent Villages Fire/Rescue District, and I believe the upcoming Open Houses and The VHA meetings will help make that clearer for everybody.

There will be another VPSD Open House on September 20 at Station 47, 4856 S. Morse Boulevard. In addition, The VHA will hold an open meeting on October 24 at Ezell Recreation Center featuring Chief Edmund Cain. If you live in Sumter County, I urge you to inform yourself so you can vote wisely.

Karl Arps

CENTRAL AREA



Between 466 and 466A
Ellie Decker, Vice President
ellenmdecker@gmail.com - 913-530-7439

Hi Neighbors! This month's article is about Community Watch and our Law Enforcement.

To help keep us safe, we have Law Enforcement Agencies like the Sheriffs and Police Departments, locks, dogs, neighbors, security systems, camera systems, lighting systems, the 2nd Amendment, 911, and more ex-military, and more ex-law enforcement, than most communities in the country, outside of a military base. In addition, we have Community Watch. I appreciate all of the above.

The Villages Community Watch is a wonderful organization. They are on duty 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. Community Watch has Patrols, Gate Attendants, Gate Operations, and Dispatch/Communications. Community Watch offers a House Check program, a Resident Out-of-Area Program, and an Adult Watch Program. To learn more about these programs call them at 352-753-0550.

To learn more about our local government, I have taken, and recommend, The Villages Orientation, and The Villages Resident Academy. You can sign up for Orientation by

calling Customer Service at 352-753-4508. And to register for the Resident Academy, go to www.districtgov.org.

Did you know that the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) is a Law Enforcement Agency? They are State Law Enforcement.

By the way, are you interested in becoming a Central Area VHA Neighborhood Representative, or a VHA Assistant Vice President? If so, please email me at EllenMDecker@gmail.com

Ellie Decker

SOUTH AREA



Between 466A and SR44
Mike Dollard, Vice President
mjdollard@hotmail.com - 585-315-8338

Why do governments have reserves? Because they don't go out of business. There is a difference between government accounting and commercial accounting.

That difference is that government keeps going on. This is where people snicker and say government is dumb and so forth. It got you this far, right? So, something is working. In The Villages you have pools, landscaping, recreation centers, and entertainment, so life isn't all that bad.

Commercial businesses come and go, they buy assets and depreciate them over time. If they decide to go out of business, or change drastically in some way, they can sell off or otherwise dispose of assets.

A government cannot do that – its assets deliver services to the residents (think of a fire truck or a highway) and they cannot simply sell it or let it fall apart. And, a government doesn't go out of business.

The assets of a government have to be maintained, at all times, and in good working order. If a water line keeps breaking or a bridge becomes unsafe the powers that be usually hear about it quickly. That is where reserves come in. That depreciation that exists in commercial accounting, and is just a book figure, should be an actual cash balance in fund (governmental) accounting.

If an asset is at the end of its useful life, either as a factor of time or from unexpected failure, there should be cash on hand to replace it if the governing board had the foresight to plan properly. By the way, if a government suddenly needs a very large tax hike because they can't pay for the failure of an asset you know that there may have been some bad planning along the way.

In summary, governments have reserves because they don't go out of business and have to always be sure that they can keep things running smoothly.

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I would add a clarification here about Sumter County. The 25% tax hike of a few years ago was not because of an asset failure. I read the financial reports and it seems that most of the spending was an increase for new budget items, an expansion of services. I wasn't all that disturbed by it; taxes were very low to start so 25% of next to nothing is very little.

Moving on, The VHA continues to have monthly Bingo with cash prizes. In September we are at La Hacienda Recreation Center. Admission is \$10 and that gets you two game boards, if you show your VHA membership card you get an extra board free. Additional boards, 50/50 tickets, and last game \$100 prize blotter sheets are also available for sale.

Mike Dollard

FAR SOUTH AREA



South of SR44
Dave Fountaine, Vice President
dfountaine4760@gmail.com
- 716-816-8500

Our growth continues in the Far South. I ran into one of our newest social groups "The DeLunatics" from one of our new Villages here, the Village of DeLuna. They were having a great social meet and greet at Everglades Recreation. You could tell that many new friendships were being developed. These types of events serve to strengthen our community. Consider joining one of your village social groups and make some new lifelong friends!

For some new residents, driving in the many roundabouts may be a new experience. There is a great informational brochure on the district government website,

www.districtgov.org, that explains how to navigate roundabouts. You can find it under the "risk management" department. Even if you're not new to the community, consider reviewing the information to refamiliarize yourself with the best practices and navigation markings used in the roundabouts.

Another question that sometimes arises is "which side of the multi model path should pedestrians be on?". Florida Statute 316.130.4 states: 'Where sidewalks are not provided, any pedestrian walking along and upon a highway shall, when practicable, walk only on the shoulder on the left side of the roadway in relation to the pedestrian's direction of travel, facing traffic which may approach from the opposite direction'. Sounds like pedestrians should walk on the left side of multimodal paths facing traffic

At our neighborhood representative meeting, it was agreed that we will continue with monthly program meetings here in the Far South for 2023. Our August monthly program was well attended with many questions from the audience for Mr. Mike Harris, the Assistant Director for Landscape, Water Resources, Roads, and Infrastructure. Mike provided a wealth of information, and we really appreciate him spending an evening with us. **Our September program will be all about Golfing In The Villages (September 26th, at 7:00 p.m. at Ezell Recreation Center).**

We have a very important decision to make on November 8th regarding whether to establish an independent fire district. There is some significant misinformation being spread about costs associated with this decision. I urge you to seek the facts from those who have the facts. The Villages Public Safety Department will have an open house on September 20th at Station 47. Consider visiting and obtaining information directly from those who are educated and fully informed. The VHA is also sponsoring

two informational sessions concerning this decision. Our September 17th General Membership Meeting will be focused on this topic as well as the October 24th Far South monthly program meeting. Please visit www.thevha.net for more information. Another great source of accurate information is the district website. There you'll find financial information as well as answers to commonly asked questions concerning the Independent Fire Control and Rescue District.

Dave Fountaine

LADY LAKE



Lynn Davis
Lynna527@aol.com - 352-250-7782

Come out and enjoy a FREE Blues Concert on Saturday, September 24th from 2:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. at the

Lady Lake Soccer Complex, 250 Rolling Acres Road. Food, beer and wine will be sold at this event. Performances by Bobby Blackmon and Packrat's Smokehouse. The proceeds will benefit the Lady Lake Historical Museum and Lady Lake Area Chamber of Commerce.

With the school season now open the Villages Elementary School of Lady Lake is now back in session. Please be careful of the fact that there is more traffic on Rolling Acres Road especially in the designated school zones. The school hours are as follows: 7:45 a.m. - 8:45 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. Wednesday is early release 1:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. Please be patient, obey the speed limit with flashing lights and try to avoid this area, if possible, during those times mentioned.

Lynn Davis



The VHA Neighborhood Representatives Needed

The VHA Neighborhood Representatives are our "Boots on the Ground" for being aware of what is happening and of concern in each specific Village or Villa from the historic North to the Far South. They are ambassadors between

The VHA and their neighbors; vital and valued volunteers who share our vision for *Keeping the Dream Alive*. If you are interested in communicating what is going on in your neighborhood, are a friendly and welcoming presence, and willing to be a positive problem-solving advocate for your neighbors, WE NEED YOU! For more information on becoming YOUR neighborhood's VHA representative, contact your Area Vice President:

- North - Karl Arps karl.arps@gmail.com - 920- 285-1382
- Central - Ellie Decker ellenmdecker@gmail.com - 913-530-7439
- South - Mike Dollard mjdollard@hotmail.com - 585-315-8338
- Far South - Dave Fountaine dfountaine4760@gmail.com - 716-816-8500



WE HAVE RUN OUT OF SPACE FOR OUR HELPING HANDS PROGRAM

Our office in Spanish Springs, plus three large off-site storage units, are currently being used for The VHA Helping Hands durable medical equipment loan program inventory. Residents pick up and return equipment to this location, making it difficult for the program to function efficiently. We are estimating we will receive over 7000 inquires for DME loans this year alone.

Ideally, we are seeking a shared or stand-alone space of 2500 sq. ft. within The Villages. A location that is easy to get to from all points within The Villages, and Golf Cart accessible, is needed.

The VHA is a non-profit 501c3 lifestyle group that would consider any and all options. Please contact us at: **352-973-2284**

The VHA is your voice in The Villages. Join The VHA today and help The VHA help you.

MEMBERSHIP PHILANTHROPY: WHERE YOUR MONEY GOES

The VHA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



Have you ever wondered how your membership dollars are used? The Villages Homeowners Advocates assembled a team of willing and capable residents to form The VHA Foundation Committee with a mission to distribute philanthropic support to organizations and programs that benefit residents of The Villages, and empower our community through knowledge, commitment and caring.

The VHA Foundation Committee is chaired by Peggy Fiore of the Village Santiago. She serves along with Carol Duggan of the Village Santiago, and Gary Frigiola of the Village of Hawkins. The VHA Executive Vice President, Peter Russell, acts as The VHA Board liaison and non-voting member.

The VHA Foundation Committee has made several gifts within their first few months. A grant of \$500 was presented on June 30th to RaeAnn Bethel, the Village of Bonita, and Fran Inco, of the Village of Pennacamp for the Girl Scouts Alumnae Silver Trefoil Group of The Villages to purchase pajamas for their annual Pajama and Book Drive. The program provides over 600 homeless children in Marion, Sumter and Lake counties with a pair of pajamas and a book. You may have seen their collection boxes in the Recreation Centers of The Villages during the holidays. "Your donation will truly help those most vulnerable in our community," wrote RaeAnn Bethel in an acknowledgement note to the Committee.

More recently, a grant of \$1,000 was presented

to Andy Hendricks, a resident of the Village of Poinciana, to help Shared Harvest Community Garden purchase pressure-treated lumber to replace the frames on their 20+ year-old raised beds used to grow seedlings. A 100% volunteer-driven project, Shared Harvest Community Garden grows crops year-round to provide produce to local food programs such as the Wildwood Soup Kitchen, Fruitland Park, and the parishes of St. Timothy, Hope Lutheran, New Covenant United Methodist, and St. Theresa, to name just a few. Each year the gardens distribute about 25,000 pounds of produce. "That certainly helps keep The Villages and our surrounding neighbors 'America's Healthiest Hometown,'" commented Peter Russell.

The VHA is committed to five broad areas of need: Evaluation and support services to help The Villages' residents to remain in their homes as long as possible; transportation services; home-delivered meals; caregiver resources; dementia programs and services. If you are aware of worthy organizations in our community whose mission aligns with these commitments, they may be considered for a grant. Please ask them to contact Peggy Fiore at peg2730@hotmail.com with a written request. Grants are distributed in a range of amounts, beginning at \$100.

Consider making a gift to The VHA Foundation Committee to help support these efforts. The VHA is a 501(c)(3) foundation, and donations are tax deductible as allowed by the IRS. To donate, visit our website, www.thevha.net, send a check to The VHA Foundation Committee, 1104 Main Street, The Villages FL 32159, or contact Peggy Fiore at 347-539-0757.

Peggy Fiore

Chairperson, The VHA Community Foundation

LAWN SERVICE CONTRACTS

Seniors vs. CRIME



Lawn service companies provide services that eliminate time-consuming lawn maintenance activities such as mowing, edging, watering, and fertilizing, as well as the pruning and maintenance of trees and shrubs. Some companies require expensive and long-term lawn care contracts, so you should take the time to investigate and find a reliable company with a good reputation.

ASK YOUR NEIGHBORS. Talk with others in your neighborhood that have used lawn care services. Find out which companies have done a good job and why.

CHECK ON LICENSING AND COMPLAINT RECORDS. Before contracting with any lawn service, call any Seniors vs. Crime office and ask how many complaints have been filed against the company you have in mind. If the company does

chemical applications, other than fertilizer, verify that the company has a pest control license issued by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services by calling 1-800-HELP-FLA for any licensure and complaint history on any pest control business licensee. Also, check with your local BBB to see if any complaints have been filed against the company. Verify that the company is insured to cover any accidents that might occur while work is being performed.

READ YOUR CONTRACT CAREFULLY. See if there are any extra charges for special services, such as fertilizing, disease control, or re-sodding. The contract should specifically state the term of the service contract, frequency of the services performed, and the costs of contract renewal. The contract should also state whether or

SENIORS VS. CRIME cont'd on Page 7



Sumter County Sheriff's Office

SHERIFF WILLIAM O. FARMER, JR.

ALERT SUMTER AND CRIMELINE



Today, getting information from reliable sources is more important than ever before. For that reason, we utilize multiple methods to communicate important public safety information such as AlertSumter, our Sheriff's Office app, social media, and local media outlets.

Alert Sumter is a county-owned software application in which citizens can register to receive phone calls, texts, and emails. The Sheriff's Office uses this application as a reverse 9-1-1 to alert the public to emergency situations along with other important public safety notifications.

In 2018, the Sheriff's Office launched an app to offer additional communications options to our citizens. The app features sex offender information, our exclusive scam blog where citizens can share and view scam information, our 10 Most Wanted, news alerts, and more. When we put information out on Alert Sumter we also place the same information on our app and social media.

While we have multiple avenues to share information with you, we do want to encourage everyone to report information directly to us, or through the Crimeline tip line. Unfortunately, when



the public posts on social media about crimes, suspicious behavior, and other important criminal information, rather than reporting to the Sheriff's Office and making us aware, a crime may very well go unsolved. We are asking that you **"CALL IN BEFORE YOU LOG IN"**, report directly to the Sheriff's Office rather than just posting online what could be important crime information.

To register for Alert Sumter please visit www.sumterprepares.com. To download our app simply search Sumter County Sheriff's Office (Florida) in the AppStore or on GooglePlay.

Remember if you SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING, but please, CALL IN BEFORE YOU LOG IN. Our non-emergency number is 352-793-2621, we are available 24/7 and here to serve you!

Sheriff Bill Farmer

THE VILLAGES HOMEOWNERS ADVOCATES: DIFFERENT BECAUSE WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE



There is more than one organization in The Villages which claims to speak to the various needs and concerns of our residents and the community. Sometimes, we agree on what needs to be done, but more likely than not, the approach and problem-solving techniques used are vastly different. Here is how The VHA operates on your behalf that makes us different in a good way:

- ◆ It is The VHA that hosts New Resident Night and the Golf Cart Safety Clinic each and every month.
- ◆ It is The VHA that recruits and trains volunteers to represent your interests and field questions and concerns through Neighborhood Representatives and Vice Presidents who listen and act on your behalf.
- ◆ It is The VHA who hosts a variety of educational, recreational, and community programs; Cutting the Cord, Living to 100, info on various departments of The District Government, General Meetings featuring community leaders speaking on topics of interests and concern, monthly Bingo and other social events, and quarterly Town Hall meetings.
- ◆ It is The VHA that provides FREE loans of Durable Medical Equipment to all Villages residents, and their guests, through Helping Hands as one of several philanthropic efforts.
- ◆ It is The VHA who funds a Foundation Committee to distribute grants to worthy organizations, and who recognizes volunteers as a valuable resource at our Annual Volunteer Awards Event.
- ◆ It is The VHA whose mission is "Keeping the Dream Alive" by ensuring the Community Standards are upheld and property values and the lovely environment we invested in are maintained.

- ◆ It is The VHA who embraces their role as an advocate FOR residents rather than an adversary AGAINST those who have invested in and built this beautiful place we are privileged to call HOME.
- ◆ It is The VHA organization that was established in 1991 to give residents a positive and effective VOICE to work together with community leaders. With over 16,000 members, our influence is felt and respected.
- ◆ It is The VHA who relies on volunteer residents to accomplish our goals and mission, to be our hands and feet to SERVE the community, and our ears and mouthpiece to hear and respond to concerns.
- ◆ It is The VHA who has the best interests of The Villages residents as a commitment, and who, through a wide network of volunteers, has learned to respond to the heart and soul of The Villages from the historical North to the innovative Far South.

Our monthly edition of The Voice, delivered to your door as an insert in The Daily Sun, is how we connect with most of our members and The Villages community. We DO NOT distribute it any other way. Our website is up and running for those who do not subscribe to The Daily Sun at www.thevha.net. We also have a new FB page aptly named: [thevha4you](https://www.facebook.com/thevha4you)

The VHA relies on your membership dues and donations to continue into our 31st year of operation. Consider joining as a member, maybe even as a volunteer, to support our vision and goals. If your membership has lapsed, we would welcome you back! We have exciting and relevant programs and events planned for the future, and we can't do it without YOU.

SENIORS VS. CRIME cont'd from Page 6

not the services provided are guaranteed.

MAKE SURE THAT YOU ARE RECEIVING CUSTOMIZED SERVICE. Each lawn is different. Your lawn does not necessarily need the same treatment as your neighbor's. Ask to see evidence of specific and real problems before you agree to any treatment.

USE CARE IN THE AUTHORIZATION OF CHEMICAL TREATMENTS. If pesticides are going to be used on your lawn, find out what specific lawn problems are being addressed and inquire about the availability of less harmful chemical compounds or alternatives to chemical treatment. You are entitled to a copy of the pesticide label if you request it. If pesticides are used, find out what you need to do during the chemical treatment and for how long. How long should you stay off treated areas? What about your pet's safety? Florida law requires the posting of a sign at the time of application to notify persons that the yard has recently been treated.

FILE A COMPLAINT. You may file a complaint against a lawn service provider with Seniors vs. Crime at www.seniorsvscrime.com. Additionally, you may file a complaint with the Department of Agriculture and Consumers Services online at www.800helpfla.com

SENIORS VS. CRIME OFFICES

- Sumter Office – Open Mon. - Thurs.; 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. @ 352-689-4600, Ext. 4606
- Wildwood Office – Open Tues. - Thurs.; 10 a.m.- 1 p.m. @ 352-753-0727
- Marion Office – Open Tuesday; 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. @ 352-753-7775
- Fruitland Park Office – Open Wednesday; 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. @ 352-674-1882



Get A Complete Understanding Of Medicare And Its Components

Wednesday, September 21, 2022; 10:00 - 11:30:00 a.m.

Many folks aging into Medicare eligibility, as well as many already registered as Medicare beneficiaries, will benefit from this workshop on the program's structure, rules, and regulations. Our experts will cover:

- Medicare's Components
- Common Terms and Definitions
- Thoughts on Managing Health Care Expenses
- Your Medicare Options
- Medigap Plans and How They Work



Please note that we are offering this seminar as a FREE virtual (ZOOM) presentation. The session will be recorded for on-demand viewing. Closed captioning will be used for the convenience of the hearing impaired. Advanced registration is required via The Foundation office (888-750-2622) or email at info@AmacFoundation.org. The link to access the webinar will be sent the day before the event. **The deadline for registration is Monday, September 19.**



THE FOLLOWING SMART DRIVER "IN PERSON" CLASSES WILL BE AVAILABLE IN SEPT. 2022. PLEASE CONTACT THE NUMBER LISTED.

September							September
Wanda Smith	972-358-9757		09/06/22	Tue	09/07/22	Wed	Colony Cottage
Jack Haughn	352-603-1420		09/13/22	Tue	09/16/22	Fri	Laurel Manor
Chet Kowalski	352-430-1833		9/17/22	Sat	09/24/22	Sat	Paradise
Jack Haughn	352-603-1420		09/19/22	Mon	09/22/22	Thur	Savannah
Art Donnelly	631-792-2203		09/27/22	Tue	09/28/27	Wed	Rohan

**SMART DRIVER TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP
SEPTEMBER 29; 10:00 - 11:30 A.M.
FRUITLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
TO REGISTER: 352-360-6581**

For more info go to: <https://local.aarp.org/the-villages-fl/>

