

The VHA VOICE

THE VILLAGES HOMEOWNERS ADVOCATES: KEEPING THE DREAM ALIVE



MISSION

The Villages Homeowners Advocates (The VHA) is a lifestyle organization committed to championing the needs of Villagers through

- Positive, constructive dialogue
- Problem Solving
- Education
- Philanthropic efforts

VALUES

- Integrity
- Honesty
- Accountability
- Independence



THE VHA TOWN HALL TUTORIAL AND REPORT

The VHA's quarterly Town Hall is a forum to answer questions sent in by The Villages Homeowners Advocates members. Several community leaders make up a panel who graciously answer resident questions and concerns in the areas of public safety, how to resolve deed compliance issues, what's happening in the community, construction updates, the who-what-why-how-when types of curiosity inquiries, and the never ending and often implausible rumors that pop up.

In the past several years the format for publishing the Town Hall questions and answers has been through the monthly insert of The Voice in The Daily Sun, as well as on our website. Beginning in January of this year, we have changed the format of The Voice to a single page in The Daily Sun and are directing members and interested residents to "read more" by going to the website due to space restrictions on the printed page.

The website is easily reached with your phone by using the QR code on this page, or by going to www.thevha.net on your phone/computer. It is a vital resource for not just The VHA members, but Villages residents who are looking for programs, resources, and information that are useful for "Living the Dream".

This month the Town Hall panel guests included: Dr. Gary Lester, The Villages Vice President of Community Relations; Captain Robert Seimer, Sumter County District Commander for The Villages; Major Pat Breeden, Sumter County Undersheriff; and Brittany Wilson, Assistant District Manager for The Villages Community Development Districts, and via email Deborah Snyder, Sumter County Dept. of Public Works.

Twenty-nine questions were vetted and approved for prior submission to the panel for them to research and address at the Town Hall meeting. Those attending the Town Hall, which is open only to The VHA officers and neighborhood representatives, had a meet-and-greet time with the panel prior to the discussion, and were able to ask follow-up questions for clarification. The full report is on the website, with a brief summary provided below:

- **The Barnstorm Theater at Brownwood** continues to be a topic of concern, but will not be reopening until, and unless, the movie industry recovers in light of the popularity of streaming services and the continued decreased attendance at The Old Mill in Sumter.
- **When Will We Know:** Groundbreaking dates are not available at this time for: CVS in Magnolia Plaza or the hospital in Lake County. Meggison Rd. at CR 470 will be opening soon, and the completion of the mail kiosk at the former Hacienda Hills Country Club site is slated for December.

- **Rumors:** The Villages is NOT buying Coleman Prison. Multiple TV carriers are available in The Villages; not just one.

If you hear something that sounds like a rumor, check with The VHA by contacting your neighborhood representative listed on our website, or your Area Vice President.

- **Recycling:** There is no plan to reinstitute recycling as part of the waste pick-up which is now going to Covanta for waste-to-energy.
- **Low Pond Water Levels:** The four-month drought plus maintenance has affected pond levels being unusually low.
- **Indoor Pickleball Courts at Eastport** will require a paid membership which is yet to be determined.
- **Current Day Tee Times:** A team IS working on adding the ability to login and select current-day tee times for champion and executive golf courses with date TBD.
- **Maintenance For All Golf Courses** will remain as scheduled.

- **Traffic Questions:** Regarding bicycles and sharing the roads: This is an on-going educational process with the need for courtesy and common sense. Visibility concerns are being addressed with some golf cart tunnels adding "lights-on" 24 hours a day. Contact Capt. Seimer with any speed enforcement concerns. Traffic patterns and associated traffic light controls are determined by traffic study data in conjunction with FDOT and the Lake Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization's Congestion Management Project. For more info: <http://www.lakesumtempo.com/>
- **Public Bus Transportation** is not being considered in The Villages: There are multiple resources available for ride services, including some free ride services available through the counties. More info is in The Town Hall Report on The VHA website.

- **Signage:** There are no plans to increase signage in addition to what is already present for Newell, Lake County, or No Dogs on the Black Lake Walking Path. Beauty is often in what is NOT seen here, and signage is kept to a minimum.
- **EV Charging Stations:** A pilot program is under consideration.
- **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS/RESPONSES ON THE WEBSITE:** The Villages TV station; How and When Amenities Fees are Increased; Sprinkler Maintenance Schedules in the historic section; Marion County street conditions; private property oak tree maintenance; pool/table use at pools; neighbors not complying with community standards.



by Jan Palmer

NEW RESIDENT NIGHT

TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2023
7:00 p.m.

COLONY COTTAGE REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER
510 COLONY BLVD. THE VILLAGES 32162

PRESENTERS MAY INCLUDE, AND INFORMATION 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)
- Veteran Services
- Seniors vs. Crime
- UF Health The Villages Regional Hospital Auxiliary
- SECO
- Bicycle Friendly Advocacy Council
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- Friends of the Library
- The Enrichment Academy
- Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches
- The VHA - The Villages Homeowners Advocates
- The VHA Helping Hands

NEXT NEW RESIDENT NIGHT WILL BE: JUNE 13 AT COLONY COTTAGE REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER

WWW.THEVHA.NET

***WHO WE ARE/WHAT WE DO**

***MEMBER BENEFITS**

***JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE**

***PROGRAM GUIDE AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

***MERCHANTS TO MEMBERS DISCOUNTS**

***LINK TO OUR FB PAGE**

***FIND YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD REPRESENTATIVE**

***NEWS AND NOTES *TOWN HALL REPORTS**

***CONTACT INFO *VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

MAY EVENTS

an EVENING with the DEVELOPER

MAY 10, 2023 @ 7:00 P.M. The VHA will once again welcome The Villages Developer, Mark Morse, to the stage of The Sharon Morse Performing Arts Center for his annual chat with a new and exciting talk show format that will be entertaining and informative. **A few tickets are still available for The VHA members only. You must present your membership card in order to get free tickets at all Villages entertainment box office locations.**

Golf Cart Safety Clinic

EVENT DETAILS

- Colony Cottage Regional Recreation Center, 510 Colony Blvd. The Villages 32162 Corner of 466A and Morse Blvd.
- May 17, 2023, Wednesday, 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM

Open To All Villages Residents. TOPICS INCLUDE:

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

Sumter County Sheriff's Department Services

EVENT DETAILS

- Ezell Recreation Center, 769 Marilee PL
- May 22, 2023, Monday, 6:00 PM

Captain Robert Siemer, The Villages district supervisor for the Sumter County Sheriff's Office, will provide an overview of the many wonderful and unique services and programs the department offers to Sumter County residents. Hear about how you can take advantage of the many free and important services provided by the department such as free home security inspections, human scent presentation kit, peace of mind, and vial of life program. ****Doors open at 5:30 p.m.**** Pre-register at: www.thevha.net/registration/sumter-county-sheriff-services

The VHA BINGO

EVENT DETAILS

- Rohan Recreation Center - 850 Kristine Way
- May 25, 2023, Thursday, 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM

\$10 for 2 Boards (VHA Members/3 Boards with membership card) \$1/Extra Boards; **NO SPLIT POTS**; 50/50 + Buy a LAST GAME Sheet with a \$100 Pot. **Doors open at 6:00 p.m.**

BYOB and Snacks

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS:
www.thevha.net

Imagine this – you have worked hard to have a nice lawn. The first thing you do every day is make sure it is looking nice for your neighbors. They compliment you, and seem to enjoy your lawn, until someone, or some ones, begin to drop trash, deposit cigarette and cigar butts, leave dog poop behind, and let their dog dig up your lawn and landscaping. You decide to post on Nextdoor, asking your neighbors, in general, to please stop littering and to repair the damage their dogs have done to your lawn, and you even offer to provide the lawn repair mix and a rake to use if needed, but no one will own up to being the culprit. After a while, the grass is almost in need of total replacement despite your best efforts.

To add insult to injury, one day as you are outside working on your lawn, you hear several neighbors complaining that your lawn looks terrible, and you should be doing something to make it look better!

Sounds crazy doesn't it! Welcome to some of the challenges of maintaining golf courses in the Villages! This article may be controversial to some, but I hope that it is educational for others, and serves as a reminder of what we can do to help maintain our golf courses. As they sometimes say, "It Takes A Village", and this is especially true in regards to maintaining our many beautiful golf courses. It does take all of us!

Yes, there is a certain level of responsibility for the District Executive Golf Maintenance Department to properly maintain our golf courses, but it is not possible to maintain golf courses like ours (with the amount of play they have, the weather they face, and water restrictions they must follow) without the golfers doing their part to properly maintain the courses.

Along with general maintenance, it is necessary to renovate the courses following many years of sustained use. Your District Executive Golf Maintenance Director just briefed both the Amenity Authority Committee and the Project Wide Advisory Committee, as part of the Budget Workshop process, that we are increasing the cycle of full golf course renovation from the industry standard of 20 years to 10-13 years, which will ensure that our courses receive the full renovations required well in advance of the typical scheduled renovation cycle on a rotating basis amongst all of our 36 Executive courses. As part of the Capital Improvement Planning process,

A VILLAGER'S VIEW: A GOLF COURSE CONDITIONS PARTNERSHIP GUIDE

by Dave Fountaine

Executive Golf schedules full renovations, including new greens, tees, fairways and improved bunkers, as part of a long-term schedule to keep the courses sustainable. Smaller projects such as bunker sand replenishment, re-grassing tee tops, and drainage additions, extend the life span between full scale renovations. Currently, Churchill Greens and Belmont are under renovation with Hilltop and Briarwood on schedule to start shortly.

As some of the executive golf courses age, extended maintenance closures are scheduled for rest and recovery. With all the rounds played in The Villages, older courses need time to recover and give the maintenance teams time to execute vital tasks. It is amazing to see how courses recover just by taking a rest, something we can all relate to.

For those who have been golfing for a while and/or have golfed outside the Villages, you will often be reminded of player etiquette rules from the starters at the courses. These are uniform rules for golf courses everywhere.

- Repair your divots.
- Repair your ball marks on the green.
- Pick up your cigar and cigarette butts.
- Rake sand traps when you use them.
- Drive your golf carts only in designated areas.

When you're playing, please try to do your part to help maintain our courses. Maybe even fill in other divots that have been neglected and repair extra ball marks you find on the green if you have time. Try to stay in the rough as often as possible with your golf cart without slowing down the pace of play to help maintain the fairways.

The Good Golf Guide is an excellent resource for those of you who may be new to golf and are unsure of what you can do to really enjoy the game while also helping to maintain the courses in as best shape as possible. You can get your own copy at www.GolftheVillages.com. It lists 7 key considerations for Good Golf. One of the seven considerations is "Condition": "I will strive to leave the course in better condition than I found it".

If we all try to do our part, using proper golf etiquette, it can go a long way to helping maintain our wonderful golf courses so everyone can enjoy them even more!

DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT LOAN PROGRAM

Vist our website at www.thevha.net to view our current inventory, then call us at 352-973-2284.

We will schedule your pick-up from: THE VHA OFFICE
1104 Main St. Spanish Springs/The Villages®
Monday - Friday: 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

M2M: THE VHA MERCHANTS TO MEMBERS DISCOUNT PROGRAM

Visit our website at www.thevha.net for a complete list of vendors and service providers who generously offer VHA members discounts. Be sure to have your VHA membership card with you to receive this member benefit.