

The Villages is the best place to be during the holidays

How lucky are we that we are just about two weeks from Christmas and we are enjoying much warmer temperatures than the other parts of the country that are experiencing cold or snow?

Because of the weather, sometimes when you live in The Villages the only way you know the holidays are approaching is when the holiday decorations appear at the village entrances, recreation centers and town squares.

While we can't give you snow, The Villages is truly one of the most beautiful places to be during the holidays (and all of the other days, too). I'd much rather see the beautiful greens and flowers than the white slushy stuff any day!

I hope each of you enjoyed Thanksgiving and have made great holiday memories here in The Villages, whether it was shopping on Black Friday or attending the Christmas tree lightings at the squares. No matter what background or faith you come from, the holidays are a very special time to enjoy family and friends and to remember all the special gifts in our lives.

Residents of The Villages also know that the holidays mean increased traffic and an increased number of guests traveling throughout the community. It's during this time of year that we like to remind everyone to dig deep for their holiday cheer, and to remember that patience is definitely a virtue. It will keep you on Santa's "nice" list, and it's also the best way to maintain your sanity!

Whether you are traveling



JENNIFER
MCQUEARY
COLUMNIST

along the roadways and roundabouts or on the multimodal paths in your golf cart, you inevitably will come across someone who may not know exactly where they are, or where the road is that they are looking for. Please remember the season and provide a helpful hand and a smile!

If you haven't already done so, and you and your neighbors are interested in decorating your village sign walls, please be sure to review the holiday decoration policy on our website, districtgov.org.

As has occurred in many of your prior business lives, during this time of year the number of items that have to be addressed seems to be greatly reduced. This is also very true for the number of new business items your District boards have to address, and as a result of this, many of the boards have chosen to cancel their board meetings in December. This must have been their early Christmas present to the staff.

The Amenity Authority Committee and Village Center Community Development District held their meetings yesterday and only District 4 will meet Friday. Districts 1, 2, 3 and 5-10, Sumter Landing Community Development District and Brownwood Community Development District have canceled their

December meetings.

The District 11 board will meet Dec. 17 and the North Sumter County Utility Dependent District will meet Dec. 18. All boards will return to their regular meeting schedule in January 2015.

While I tease about the early Christmas present to staff, the supervisors really are demonstrating their fiscal responsibility to the residents. Because there were no pressing items on the agendas, the cost savings to each numbered district that canceled its meeting is approximately \$1,500. I wish I could figure out how to save that kind of money around the holidays.

Have you taken the opportunity to attend Welcome Wednesday yet? If you're not already aware, Welcome Wednesday is held weekly at 8 a.m. in the District Office at 984 Old Mill Run in Lake Sumter Landing.

Each Wednesday you have the opportunity to spend quality time with staff members, learn about ongoing projects and get all of your questions answered first-hand by District departments.

I know most of you won't be shocked by this, but not everything you hear at the pool or on the golf course is the actual story. Stop by our office Wednesday mornings and you can receive the rest of the story. We'd love to see you.

Now that I've provided you with an open invitation, please keep in mind that we have canceled the Dec. 24 and Dec. 31 Welcome Wednesdays.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of the residents a very happy

holiday season and let you know how very blessed each of us feels to be able to work in this wonderful community.

On a personal note, I would like to wish a very Merry Christmas to our family

here in The Villages, especially my parents, Tom and Kathy Farlow (Vista Sonoma Villas); my in-laws, Karen and Chuck Smith (Village of St. James); and our close family friends the Sealys (Village of

St. James) and the Stoefflers (Village of Buttonwood).

Here's to a happy, healthy and wonderful 2015! Thank you for joining me this week and I hope you'll come back again next week to Our Place.

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