

Be cautious when operating golf carts in the community



EDMUND
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COLUMNIST

I was out the other day taking a drive around The Villages and enjoying the nice spring weather. As I came down one of the roads, I noticed a few golf carts ahead of me. One of the carts had a fairly young group in it, well under the typical age of Villages residents.

Our population continues to expand rapidly, which correlates to an increased number of golf carts that travel throughout The Villages. Most of these folks have families and friends visiting who may have teenagers who are too young to operate a car, but legally can operate a golf cart under Florida Law.

With that in mind, I would like to address some simple tips and laws regarding the use of golf carts within The Villages.

Before you venture out in the community, please make sure all equipment on your golf cart is operational such as your horn, brakes and lights. It is also recommended that you check your backup alarm, tire pressure and all applicable gauges.

The following "Rules of the Road" apply when operating your golf cart:

- Must be 14 years or older to drive a golf cart
- Drive on neighborhood streets, marked roadside lanes and multimodal paths

Extra! Extra!

Join us on Wednesday for a special evening session of Community Development District Orientation. This evening session is being held for those who are not able to attend the regularly scheduled CDD Orientation held at 10 a.m. each Thursday. Join us at 6 p.m. at Lake Miona Recreation Center to learn about how the districts operate and other important community information about the people, services and other supporting entities that help make The Villages a premier community. No sign-ups or fees are required for this presentation. For information, call the Customer Service Center at 753-4508.

- Obey all traffic laws, signs and signals

- Golf carts are subject to Florida's open alcoholic container laws

- Speed not to exceed 20 mph

- Use hand and turn signals

- Yield to automobiles

- Come to a full stop at stop signs

- Never enter a roundabout in a golf cart

- Golf carts are prohibited from roadways with posted speeds of 35 mph or more

In addition, there are general safety measures you can take to make sure you have a pleasant experience on your golf cart.

All passengers, including pets, should have a seat provided for them. Please also make sure to secure children and pets.

The passengers should remain seated in the cart and keep all arms and legs in the golf cart.

Avoid making sharp, high-speed turns. If your cart has seat belts, use them. Use of hand-hold bars will help with reducing chance of ejection from the cart.

Remember to use caution when coming up behind pedestrians or people on bikes, especially if you are in an electric cart. They may not hear you approaching.

Just as if you were in a vehicle, you should be cautious of other golf carts, vehicles and pedestrians using the roadways or multimodal paths. You should be aware of vehicles turning right, across the multimodal path, and you should enter traffic safely when you wish to make a left-hand turn.

It is also wise not to text or speak on a cellphone while operating a golf cart. If you need to come to a stop, please safely navigate off of the multimodal path.

Overall, we would like everyone to have a safe and enjoyable experience whether you are walking, biking or using a golf cart in the community. Until next time, please keep these laws and tips in mind when you are out enjoying this beautiful community.

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