

# Let's be good stewards of our community and our country

With the upcoming celebration of this great nation's birthday (239 years young), I thought it would be fitting to choose one of our core values, stewardship, as the topic of this week's Our Place article.

When the District describes the meaning and importance of this core value to our community and employees, we state that the intent is to treat The Villages and all of its resources as ours to nourish and protect.

Just like our forefathers before us laid the foundation for our great country, our community also was founded on the concept of stewardship.

Stewardship is a very powerful word with broad meaning and implications not only for our country, but also for our hometown. The purpose of having core values such as stewardship – along with our other three that are equally as important, hospitality, hard work, and creativity and innovation – is to drive how we serve and manage our community.

Residents, employees and other community partners continually support, encourage, welcome and embrace stewardship. The opportunities abound daily to keep this core value in our line of sight along with our other daily responsibilities and activities.

The District plays an integral part by educating the community about the expectations for services we are responsible for supporting or providing. The examples are endless.

With more than 40 square miles of area, new and current stakeholders have an ongoing opportunity to help keep stewardship a vibrant way of life that is sustainable and perpetual.



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If our forefathers visited our community today, I honestly think they would be proud of the people who live and work here and how our community is managed and operated. I would love to share with them the instances in which we protect and nourish our hometown.

I would show them all the locations where stewardship displays its presence in our community, from the three town squares to recreation centers, golf courses, our homes, wetlands and preserves, environmental areas, water resources, parks and swimming pools.

Each area has its respective areas of stewardship. As community stakeholders, we work to assure these locations are there for you to enjoy today, tomorrow and in the future.

We have staff, residents, contractors and business owners facilitating these locations for the community, which makes us partners as well as stewards of The Villages. This requires understanding and support for our roles in maintaining this high level of stewardship.

Help us protect the wildlife and preserves by not feeding wildlife or entering their areas, by conserving our precious water supply, and by planting Florida-friendly, drought-resistant flowers and shrubs.

Don't throw plastic bags with dog waste down the storm drain. Always have your ID card accessible because you never know

when you're going to need it.

Take a few moments to explain to your guests the expectations for enjoying your amenities. Enjoy and respect the locations that more than 100,000 residents call home. Please call our Customer Service Department at 753-4508 if you have any questions or see something that needs attention.

We have the most wonderful locations anywhere, but it takes a team of people to make sure they are being protected and nourished. From a public safety perspective, the District governs two departments, The Villages Public Safety Department and Community Watch, which are actively involved 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

The District Executive Golf and Recreation Departments team up to create and implement excellent recreational opportunities that promote an active, safe, enjoyable and healthy lifestyle.

The District Property Management team is responsible for upholding the aesthetic, physical and environmental assets of the District that include, but are not limited to, keeping pools clean, District areas mowed, trees and shrubs trimmed, flowers planted, and making improvements and repairs to thousands of square footage of space and acres upon acres of property.

The Office of Management and Budget is responsible for the development, review, presentation and compliance of the District budgets in addition to the development of the capital improvement plans.

The Finance Department provides information and solutions while responsibly and

accurately managing District finances.

The Community Standards Department is committed to upholding the high standards of our community's residential architectural design, landscaping

and aesthetics through two divisions: Deed Compliance and Architectural Review.

The entire District team is doing its part to support its areas of stewardship for the overall benefit of our community.

I would love to see our forefathers enjoying Florida's Friendliest Hometown, driving golf carts around on our

multimodal paths. In their travels, they certainly would witness stewardship at its finest.

Just as liberty, freedom and the pursuit of happiness are the foundations of our country, stewardship is one of ours. It is not just a word, but a way of life for us. We live, breathe and embrace this concept. It is endless, ever-changing and evolving

to meet the growing demands and needs of our community.

As we celebrate the birthday of our great country, let us take a moment to be thankful for the freedoms we have to live, love and enjoy. Let us not take anything for granted, but look for ways to help make it better.

As stewards, we all can contribute positively and our

commitment to this core value will make each of us proud to be a part of this community for years to come.

That's all for this week at Our Place. Happy Fourth of July and God Bless the USA!

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