The Village is for the Birds
...and the plants...and the butterflies....and the beautiful weather...

Dan Schmidt (Magnolia Grand) snapped this picture after he and Ellen spotted these hooded mergansers enjoying a swim. These small ducks are rare visitors to The Village. They're smaller than mallards and quite distinctive. The hooded mergansers do live in Florida, and many migrate through our part of Florida in the winter. They generally stay in wooded areas.

Nature is to be enjoyed and protected, and here at the Village we have that opportunity in our own back yard,” says Magnolia Grand resident Susan Nassif.

The Village is the home, if only temporarily, of several dozen different birds. There are marked plant walks on campus. The Resident Garden blooms with colorful flora, lovingly tended by resident gardeners. Add to that North Florida’s usual temperate weather and you have a natural wonder surrounding us every day.

On Friday, February 16, Village nature enthusiasts met on the Magnolia Grand 3rd floor lobby to share their love of

“Birds, Blooms, and Butterflies”. This group of 20 included Susan Nassif and Nancy Klokke. Nancy has long had an interest in nature, participating in the Village Garden club and enjoying walking her dog during the day.

Susan loves the outdoors as well, and uses her tremendous artistic talent to depict birds in their habitat.

Nancy and Susan are putting together a bird watching brochure in which you will find a surprising list of over 50 birds that have been spotted at The Village.

Susan encourages all residents to take time to commune with nature.

“Watch the birds, stalk a butterfly, relax in the garden or walk the trail. Come and enjoy. The sights and sounds of nature are medicine for body and soul.”

Anyone who has spend time walking through our beautiful grounds knows this is true.
On Wednesday, January 10, The Village hosted the “Be Scam Smart” Seminar presented by the Florida Department of Financial Services. The DFS hosts “Be Scam Smart” workshops throughout the state of Florida to help inform, empower, and protect Florida’s seniors from financial scams and fraud.

Attendees found the session very informative and eye opening as they learned how to spot fraudulent behavior, common scams that target seniors, and how to fight identity theft. The DFS also supplied them with several resources to reference.

Last fall, Officer Earnest Graham of the Gainesville Police Department, presented in the Lake House Commons on how to recognize fraud.

“It’s unfortunate that the senior population is at a greater risk of being taken advantage of.”

Scam artists are aware of the high number of seniors in Florida and look to take advantage of them financially.

Officer Graham continues, “But the good news is that a little knowledge goes a long way to keeping yourself safe.”

The Village will continue to provide resources to help you stay vigilant and safe.

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On Friday, January 19, John Palmer of Magnifying America of Ocala demonstrated Low Vision assistive technology to a packed room of interested residents. From large screen magnifiers to talking watches, Magnifying America provides the latest in cutting edge Technology to those with vision challenges.

“This work is a passion of mine,” say John Palmer, president of Magnifying America. “And it’s very satisfying to bring the newest technology to people who need it. Some of it is truly amazing.”

The residents were particularly intrigued by the MyEye 2.0, a small camera system that clips onto the wearer’s glasses and instantly and discreetly reads printed text aloud, recognizes signs and different denominations of money, and even scans bar codes on products! The Village offers several low vision resources, including large print publications, a prerecorded weekly events phone line, and a low vision support group, which hosted this demonstration.
MIDNIGHT IN THE OMAN AIRPORT
On one flight between foreign work projects (between London and Johannesburg) the aircraft needed fuel and we stopped in the middle of the night at Muscat International Airport in Oman. We had to de-plane and wait in the transit lounge. While drinking coffee I looked around and saw four or five large groups of men, each of a different nationality. The waiter told me they were labor pool members returning to work after visits to their homelands. He said the groups included Filipino, Pakistani and Indian, and several not immediately recognizable nationalities. That explained the many planes from Saudi Air and Emirates Air on the tarmac! Apparently folks in that part of the world do little for themselves and rely on cheap foreign labor to do all the dirty work so to speak.

What was surprising was to see so many different groups in the middle of nowhere in the middle of the night. Such labor pools are common on major construction projects worldwide with groups frequently coming from North African or Eastern European countries as well. Cheap labor is the driver!

On a positive note, when consulting at the Akosombo dam in Ghana I was told that the energy demand in Accra has soared because Ghanaian labor pool members are starting businesses and buying electrical appliances with their foreign-earned wages upon returning home. The economy of Ghana benefits tremendously.

AN ABRUPT LANDING COLOMBIA
Flying out to a proposed site in Colombia north of Medellin we flew along the Porce River and over rough terrain to scout out a site for a new dam and hydroelectric generation station.

The pilot eased the chopper through the mist, crossed the river up the fairly steep opposite slope and headed for a grassy patch amongst the dense vegetation. Hovering over the grass about 8 feet off the ground he seemed twitchy and was hesitant to land.

After a bit he motioned for us to open the doors and jump! Out we went with briefcases, lunch bags, raincoats etc. Good thing the grass was thick and the ground soft and muddy. All landed OK, no broken bones. We then went down the slope, across the river, and up the other side of the valley to the exploration camp.

Later we learned that the local folks were not too happy with the thought of a dam that would affect their gold panning work in the river and they were prone to take a shot or two at strangers, i.e., us and a fat helicopter.

The electric company in Medellin offered generous social and economic benefits to the local folks, the dust settled, the project was built and now abundant electricity flows to Medellin over long transmission lines.

A SURPRISE IN AN ELEVATOR
GUATEMALA
Guatemala was in the midst of a violent prolonged Civil War in the late 1970s and early 1980s as was much of Central America. I was consulting for the Inter-American Development Bank on the construction of a hydroelectric project on the Chixoy River.

Guatemala City was definitely a wild and woolly town. It was not unusual to hear random gunshots and bombs exploding in the city, and from my hotel window I could look down and see car chases and exchanges of gunfire. Staying in the Camino Real hotel one evening between visits to the construction site I walked into the elevator on the sixth floor to go down to dinner. The car stopped on the third floor and four steely eyed guys came in, one holding a finger to his lips in the universal shhh signal while sticking a pistol in my stomach. I was instantly paralyzed and, of course, silent. Two of his friends had a tight grip on the fourth guy who looked terrified. Once in the lobby they departed quickly in a home-made armored car.

I went alone to the lobby restaurant and had to have a few drinks before I was able to handle dinner which I definitely enjoyed in solitude. Once home I resigned from the consulting job – Guatemala was not where I wanted to be!

The civil war did not affect the termination of the hydro project and it has been successfully producing energy for more than 30 years now.

Andy Merritt (the Cottages) was a consultant on hydroelectric projects as a specialist in dam foundations and tunnel design for 40 years. He worked for contractors, energy companies, The World Bank, The Asian Development Bank, and engineering design firms.
EVENT ROUND UP

Village 411 Fair: Get to Know The Village Departments & What They Do For You!
On Thursday, January 25, All Village departments had representatives tabling to meet residents, give out prizes, and answer any questions that residents may have about the many services offered at The Village. The Village even gave away a $500 rent credit!

ACTIVITY ROUND UP

FOR ART’S SAKE! Every Wednesday, from 2 to 3pm, it’s time for art! Twice a month, The Pencils, Pastels, and Oils Art Class led by Professor Raul Villareal (pictured here with resident artists) of Santa Fe College helps artists of every skill level gain proficiency and then mastery over several different artistic media.

Every other week, there is the Self Guided art time, which is just that: a time for the artist to hone their skills as they please.

Village People

by Mimi Baumstein

WOW! Talk about a family of professionals – then meet Constance and Everett Loury. Connie received her MBA from the Catholic University in Missouri. Her father was awarded membership in the Phi Beta Kappa Hall of Fame and since it was a post-mortem award, Connie gave the acceptance speech. Everett got his Law degree in Chicago at Kent College of Law.

It’s the second marriage for both, and has lasted 35 years so far. They met when they were employed at the Internal Revenue office. However, they dated for four years before she final gave in!

Everett’s son is a professor at Brown University and his grandson is a psychologist. Two other family members are attorneys and another writes for a magazine. Connie was a teacher of accounting and management at Park University. She only accepted the job after being assured that it would not interfere with her daily golf game.

Being avid golfers, they retired in 2004 to a Del Webb community in South Florida. Connie is proud of her two holes in one and received a lovely statuette from the club there. Unfortunately, Everett can’t play any more do to cancer and spinal stenosis. The couple spends their time here taking care of his medical condition. Connie says she married ‘for better or worse’, and spends her time caring for Everett.

The Lowry’s have lived in ten states. They have made 10 trips to Hawaii to play golf. The now enjoy their cozy apartment in Cypress and are delighted with their friendly neighbors. Second to golf, Connie’s other passion is her lovely porch full of beautiful plants.

Stop by and say “hello” to Everett and Connie.
LOVE

On February 14, our maintenance fellows performed their annual Valentine's Day carnation give-away.

The beautiful flowers served as a token of our affection for our lovable residents.

Village Presenters

In January, we started our Village Presenter Series. These ongoing presentations, lectures, and performances are brought by talented and knowledgeable experts on a variety of topics and across several fields, who also happen to be residents of The Village.

On January 18, Harry Hughes presented on “The God Particle” in the Community Room. The “God particle” is the nickname of a subatomic particle called the Higgs boson. The Higgs boson, or “God particle,” is believed to be the particle which gives mass to matter.

Bonnie Zimmer also presented in January, bringing her beautiful pictures of the 50th state in a presentation called simply, “Alaska”.

In February, Paula Welch presented on the 2018 Olympic Winter Games and delved into fun facts about the Olympics and Pyeongchang, South Korea, where the games have been held. Paula was on the United States Olympic Committee and on the United States Olympic Board of Directors. Currently, she is on the United States Olympic Endowment Committee.

We are so grateful to all of our residents who are so willing to help enrich the lives of those in this community. If you would like to present, contact Resident Services!
Here Come The Dogs

The doors to the Lake House Commons opened and in bounded two of our newest friends. Full of life and energy, Frank and Champ eagerly looking for hands to sniff and new friends with which to play. Following Frank and Champ is Cindy Lauckert is a puppy raiser with Southeastern Guide Dogs.

In January, Cindy, along with her two working dogs, presented on what it means to be a service or therapy dog. The residents enjoyed the presentation and the question and answer time but really loved the ‘meet and greet’ time with Frank and Champ.

“So beautiful,” said one resident, while petting a now calm Frank, “Reminds me of my dog from when I was a child.”

Cindy and other puppy trainers will bring dogs twice monthly for a pet the pup time.

“The dogs give love unreservedly,” says Cindy. “And the time calms both the dog and the one who is petting the dog.”

“My dogs like to work,” Continues Cindy, “and I can’t think of a better job.”

Working in the Village Marketplace

The Village Marketplace is the go-to spot for lunch sandwich or a quick snack on-the-go, and various other sundries that residents may need. But the Marketplace also has something else that everyone needs daily, a friendly person with a smiling face behind the counter.

Janice Clark, Resident Services Supervisor, oversees the Marketplace. “We have 19 resident volunteers. And they have told me how fulfilling the time is for them.”

It’s no mystery why the volunteers commit time to working behind the Marketplace counter.

“It’s the people,” says Gail Long of Lake House, “I like people and the Marketplace is a great place for me to meet people.”

Flo Caldwell agrees, “I get to interface with allot of residents and associates and learn all sorts of things about them.”

It’s easy to become a Marketplace volunteer, says Gail, “Patsy Cosway told me a should consider working at the store. So I signed up with Janice and was trained by Anne Warne (another resident volunteer).”

There are so many ways to be involved in the life of the Village by serving your neighbors and working at the Marketplace seems to be a popular one.
Happy 100th, Harry! - The Village celebrates all of our precious centenarians. Pictured here, Harry Kimmel and family, young and old, come together for his 100th birthday party!

The Village offers thematic craft classes. Pictured here, crafters make beautiful Valentine's wreaths from ribbon and construction paper.

Check the calendar for our next crafty opportunity.