

RRVV

NEWSLETTER

Issue No 31 September 2013

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Residents of Retirement Villages Victoria Inc.

Reg No.0048146R ABN 20341655161

FROM THE PRESIDENT

This has been a lively time in the Retirement Village Sector in Victoria. Some operators have changed their directions (AVEO will now concentrate on its Retirement Village activities whereas Stockland will start to move away from its Retirement Village activities).

The Regulatory Impact Statement on proposed new regulations in the Sector for Information disclosure for prospective Residents and for the standardization of Contracts has been issued by Consumer Affairs and submissions from stakeholders received. These are being reviewed by CAV staff prior to a proposal to the Minister to introduce new Regulations later this year. Not only did RRVV actually participate in the original discussions with CAV and Industry representatives over the first part of 2013, but many other interest groups and individual Residents made submissions on the RIS. This means that there will be a wide range of ideas to be considered and, hopefully, enshrined in the new Regulations when they are introduced. There is also an intention by the Minister to review certain aspects of the Retirement Villages Act and this review will also be opened to all stakeholders later this year. Stay tuned.

I want to tell you about two initiatives of your Committee that are now well underway. One is that we are now holding our Committee Meetings at individual Villages, rather than in the COTA office in the city. This way we can meet Members, other Residents and Managers. This brings us closer to our Members and (hopefully!) shows us as a pleasant, committed group who are wanting to work with all in the common good of all Residents.

The other initiative is the staging of Regional Forums, rather than having one annual central

Forum. We held the initial one at Cranbourne late last year and had one recently at Mornington. At each we had a good rollup of Residents from local Villages, many of whom might not have attended a CBD Forum. We had a range of speakers (Consumer Affairs, Legal, Finance etc.) and we reported on RRVV matters. Most importantly, we had a general discussion segment where all could raise questions, make comments on any matters of interest. We are currently reviewing the format and location of our next Forum and will let you know about it as soon as possible. *(Continued on Page 2)*

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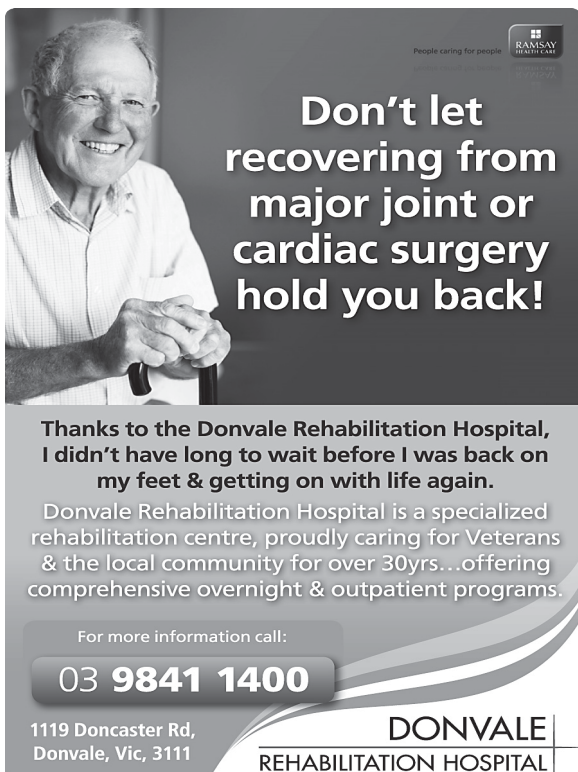
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As a finale to my report, I must with regret announce that I will not be nominating for any position on the Committee at the Annual General Meeting on 3rd October. This is not because I have stopped enjoying my role in any way, but because of my need for time for my wife, my family and for myself. This time has been in very short supply over the past years. I have mentioned often in this report the need for extra people resources for the Committee, with the usual response from Members being disappointing. The role of President is time-demanding and has left me with little flexibility in my personal life. I hope that the need for a Committee fully equipped with effective members is now noted by you all, because otherwise RRVV will fail to achieve the results so badly needed by many of you.

I thank my five colleagues currently on the Committee for their support for me and their efforts on YOUR behalf. Don't leave them too lonely – they deserve better from you, the Members of RRVV.

Best wishes to all,

Terry Macdonald
President



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STOP PRESS: It can be done!

Congratulations to a 'Lone Ranger' Geoff Walker, who took an issue for a retirement village in Cranbourne, right through to a VCAT Hearing at the Dandenong Court 15 June 2013, after a long period of fruitless discussion, internal dispute and CAV claim process. The issue involved a charge to the Service fees of an amount not authorised by the Loan/ Lease agreement entered into by the residents.

Geoff had no legal representation, as did the other party with a Barrister and Lawyer, but was supported by his wife Nalda, a fellow resident Leon Cordewener and RRVV Life Member Jim Burrowes.

As well as receiving reimbursement of the previous charge, a court order was also settled that no such charge would occur in the future.

So a precedent has been set for others, that

"Yes, it can be done !"

A SENIORS RIGHTS PUBLICATION

"Care for your Assets – Money, Ageing and Family"

Seniors Rights Victoria has recently published a free booklet to help older people plan and secure their future. You can see about it on the website www.seniorsrights.org.au/index or by calling 1300 368 821.

RRVV NEW WEBSITE BEING DEVELOPED

<http://residentsofretirementvillagesvic.org.au/>

We are proud to announce that we are developing a new website. During the development phase it will have the address shown above, but when we are ready we will close the existing website and transfer the address www.rrvv.org.au to the new site. If you wanted to try the interim address you will see it is a completely new look, design & feel. We hope that you will find it much easier to navigate and get the information that you want to know about RRVV and what we offer. We are proud to be a part of this community. Our goal is to bring content to you in a professional and efficient manner.

We have expanded the content to provide you with additional detailed information. One key feature is the ability to search our website. You will notice that there is a search box at the top right of the page, this feature will allow you to type a word or phrase into the box and when you press your enter/return key a list of results will be displayed for you. This should make finding pertinent information a quick and simple process for you. We engaged a very competent Consultant (Tina Stent of Web Intuition) to bring a modern website to you, our community. You will see various changes as we implement all the features that we have planned.

Additional new features that will be added are:

- A newsletter subscription - you can sign up for our newsletters and have them delivered to your email address. RRVV is conscious of its carbon foot print to sustain our environment hence we encourage all to receive the newsletter via email. Of course your privacy is assured and your email address will NEVER be sold or given to any other party.
- RRVV events (Forums & AGM etc.) will be listed as far in advance as possible to allow you time to fit them into your schedule.
- List of Services – Legal Services – We have a list of legal practitioners, some who offer the first 30 minutes of the first appointment FREE
- Links – To websites of interest (Council Of The Aging (COTA) and Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV)), the list of links will be expanded in the future.
- Our aim is to promote RRVV to increase membership and continue to ensure we provide a collective voice on issues, needs and problems regarding Retirement Village Residents.
- The opportunity to pay your membership easily via the internet via PayPal, the most secure form of online payment available nationally.
- Our RRVV Facebook page is due to be launched soon.

The committee would appreciate your feedback on the new website and ask you to share it with your relatives, friends and neighbours as they would all benefit from having this information tool easily accessible. Once we are sure that we have the new site ready for your use, we'll let you know.

NEOLOGISM

Once again, The Washington Post has published the winning submissions to its yearly neologism contest, in which readers are asked to supply alternate meanings for common words.

- Coffee (n.), the person upon whom one coughs.
- Flabbergasted (adj.), appalled over how much weight you have gained.
- Abdicate (v.), to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach.
- Esplanade (v.), to attempt an explanation while drunk.
- Willy-nilly (adj.), impotent.
- Lymph (v.), to walk with a lisp.
- Gargoyle (n.), olive-flavoured mouthwash.

The PROPERTY COUNCIL RETIREMENT FORUM 15th Aug 2013

I was invited to participate as a speaker in a session titled "Fostering Relationships" at the recent PCA gathering of Village Managers and others. I stressed that the meaning of Fostering took in a two-way responsibility, in our case the Manager AND the Residents. However, I thought that there were issues raised in other Sessions in which you'd be interested.

The National Director of Research for Colliers International spoke about the likelihood of there being 2.5M more over-65's in the next 20 years and that the Sector needed to have its act together to cope. She reported that the DMF approach to funding was seen as a problem by Developers, and had a low penetration rate in US and NZ developments. She said that alternatives will have to be considered over the coming decade. It was also mentioned that Strata Title developments are no longer being favoured by developers, because of cash flow issues. Comment in later sessions also was that flexibility of financial options for US Villages in the Coming In phase, the During Phase and the Leaving Phase were being evaluated.

A long term representative of Developers made a big point that the Sector had to do much better in "Marketing the Brand" i.e. that the benefits of Retirement Village Living needed to be better and more positively projected.

As the only representative of Residents present I was brought into many of the discussions and my words in my segment seemed to get agreement from the assembled throng – I just hope that they are actually put into the day-to-day management processes of their Villages. I did make the point that Residents see the Villages as being "THEIRS" because they pay all capital and operational costs, so Managements must take heed of this fact of life.

*Terry Macdonald
August 2013*

FOSTERING RELATIONSHIPS IN VILLAGES

This is the basis of my talk to Village Managers at the Property Council Forum on 15th August. I hope that this approach will become the norm at Villages in Victoria.

Fostering – The Dictionary/Thesaurus meanings of the word "Fostering" all point to a SHARED activity with a shared ongoing responsibility...

THE PLAYERS – Residents/Management

Residents

- They come to a Village to RETIRE in peace
- Many have low key life and need to adjust to Village life
- None want any problems and many cannot adequately even speak on their own behalf
- Some are the opposite and are very occupied with their own issues to the exclusion of common interests and rights.

It is therefore important that there is an effective and united Resident Voice in the Village and that this is through an elected Residents Committee.

Management

- Responsibility for cost-effective operation of the Village
- Responsibility for the human climate of the Village.
- Responsibilities to both Owners and Residents

It is therefore important that the Manager is equipped to balance these roles.

THE RELATIONSHIP

Openness and transparency – Aussies want the truth – then they'll understand when a difficult decision is needed.

Residents need to know about the Budget and be involvement in the development. The ownership status of the Village – rumours abound.

Village Operations – By Laws/Manuals/limitations should involve Residents. There should always be an "Open Door" to all Residents and Village Management should work as a "partner" with the Residents Committee.

BUT – This is where it gets to the TWO WAY Relationship being in place!!

BENEFITS

- Manager gets a unified opinion representing the majority of Res'.
- Residents know there are no secrets
- Residents become more relaxed and so less disputes.
- "It's Our Village" becomes a reality rather than a reason to fight.

HOW THE RETIREMENT VILLAGES ACT STATUTORY RULES CAN BE HELPFUL TO YOU!

By Terry Macdonald

I was recently asked by a Member about Residents rights when vacating Units and looking to the payment of Nursing Home Bonds and the general repayment of money by owners. On asking my Legal contact in CAV where could I find such guidance, he referred me to the Statutory Rules of the RV Act. Well, I admit that I'd forgotten that these exist so I looked up the Rules on the Victorian Parliament Website and there they were!

They cover:

- "Conditions for refund of in-going contribution to non-owner resident",
- "Payment of certain aged-care costs"
- "Calculation of amount of refundable in-going contribution ..."
- "Formula for calculation of adjusted maintenance charge".

So, to look these up in detail, go to www.legislation.vic.gov.au, then select "Victorian Law Today", then select "Statutory Rules" then hit "R" and select the Retirement Villages (Contractual Arrangements) Regs 2006 and read up on what you are entitled to.

For those without computers or access to one, I suggest that you should visit your local State Member of Parliament's office and ask for this information. Our MP's are elected by we, the voters, and we do not use them and the resources

at their offices as much as we can. My message to Residents is that we should all be ensuring that our MPs are fully aware of and situations in our Villages where unfair or unlawful attitudes by owners or managers are being experienced. RRVV will be taking the Rates Justice Campaign to MPs soon and asking them, on your behalf, to tell the Government of a serious problem that needs fixing. Other issues should also be taken to them as needed.

BE CAREFUL OF FINAL REPAIRS BILLS!

At the recommendation of the RRVV, executors of estates and persons leaving villages are requesting an itemised, costed listing of the repairs that the owners intend doing after vacation.

Several instances of charges that are not relevant have been received including - replacement of garage doors when there is no garage or carport - (and probably a capital item!), external painting when that is the responsibility of the owner or the Owners Corporation!

The RRVV can assist members when departing a village so let us know if you feel that some help is needed.

- Negligent (adj.), describes a condition in which you absentmindedly answer the door in your nightgown.
- Flatulence (n.) emergency vehicle that picks you up after you are run over by a steamroller.
- Balderdash (n.), a rapidly receding hairline.
- Testicle (n.), a humorous question on an exam.
- Rectitude (n.), the formal, dignified bearing adopted by proctologists.
- Pokemon (n.), a Rastafarian proctologist.
- Oyster (n.), a person who sprinkles his conversation with Yiddishisms.
- Frisbeetarianism (n.), (back by popular demand): The belief that when you die, your Soul flies up onto the roof and gets stuck there.

FLEXIBLE PRICING OF ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

The Switch On information campaign was launched by the Victorian Government recently to educate households about flexible pricing for electricity, which will come into effect from mid-September this year.

The campaign aims to educate consumers about flexible pricing and help them decide whether flexible pricing is right for their household. As a part of the campaign, new information has been published on the www.switchon.vic.gov.au website, including an online tool to help consumers understand how electricity is used by typical households over the day.

SMART METERS

Also available are webinar sessions for Residents about smart meters. There are various formats of the online presentation ranging from a short presentation on specific smart meters issues to a run through of all the issues. The online presentation also allows for a question and answer session.

Please contact Tricia on 0411 988 157 or triciat@socom.com.au should you have further queries.

RRVV AND VILLAGES NEED MORE RESIDENT LIAISON OFFICERS (RLOS)

An important part of the RRVV organization is that of the RLO at your villages. We currently have many Villages with RRVV Members where nobody is in the role. This makes communication with our individual Residents less easy.

We do not intend the role to be onerous, but need a person at a Village to be able to pass on to RRVV Members such things as Newsletters and general advice from RRVV on issues of interest or importance to individuals. There is no intention for the RLO to be more than the local contact between Resident Members and us at RRVV Headquarters. We are able to take the lead role for potential problems with management so long as we are alerted to a potential problem by the RLO. We are very aware that the RLO has to go on living in the Village, so we prefer to take on the carriage of discussions etc and reach a solution directly with your management.

So, please take a good look at your availability and your capabilities and give our Vice President (Trevor McPhee) a call on 9015 8402 and see if you can help us to help our Members at your Village.

The Washington Post's Style Invitational also asked readers to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting, or changing one letter, and supply a new definition. Here are this year's winners:

- Bozone (n.): The substance surrounding stupid people that stops bright ideas from penetrating. The bozone layer, unfortunately, shows little sign of breaking down in the near future.
- Foreploy (v): Any misrepresentation about yourself for the purpose of getting laid.
- Cashtration (n.): The act of buying a house, which renders the subject financially impotent for an indefinite period.
- Giraffiti (n): Vandalism spray-painted very, very high.

CHANGES TO OUR RRVV RULES

This year the Victorian Government has required Incorporated Associations (such as RRVV) to review their Rules (once used to be called the Constitution) to use a set of Model Rules which spell out a much more detailed set of principles and processes to be used for the guidance of organizations such as ours.

These new Rules must be submitted for approval by Department of Justice by November 2013, and must be agreed by the Members of an organization before being sent off for approval.

The proposed new rules are currently being considered by your Committee, so that a final proposed version can be presented at the Annual General Meeting on 3rd October and voted upon, with amendments decided upon at the Meeting.

There will be a document to be tabled at the AGM showing, alongside each other, the new and current versions so that easy comparisons may be made and decisions reached on the makeup of the final version.

It is proposed that the new Rules will contain all the essential clauses of the existing Rules, whilst accepting the newly required clauses.

- Sarchasm (n): The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.
- Inoculatte (v): To take coffee intravenously when you are running late.
- Hipatitis (n): Terminal coolness.
- Osteopornosis (n): A degenerate disease. (This one got extra credit.)
- Karmageddon (n): its like, when everybody is sending off all these really bad vibes, right? And then, like, the Earth explodes and it's like, a serious bummer.
- Decafalon (n.): The grueling event of getting through the day consuming only things that are good for you.
- Glibido (v): All talk and no action.
- Dopeler effect (n): The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.
- Arachnoleptic fit (n.): The frantic dance performed just after you've accidentally walked through a spider web.
- Beelzebug (n.): Satan in the form of a mosquito that gets into your bedroom at three in the morning and cannot be cast out.
- Caterpallor (n.): The color you turn after finding half a grub in the fruit you're eating.

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Residents of Retirement Villages Victoria Inc.

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Phone (03) 9015 8402 Email: rrvv.vic@gmail.com

GPO Box 215, Melbourne, Vic 3001

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

to be held on Thursday 3rd October at 10.00am

at St Michaels Church Hall,

cnr McIlwraith and McPherson Sts. Princes Hill (Melway 29J12)

Easy access from Trams up Lygon St (No's 1 or 8) to the northern end of the Melbourne Cemetery (Stop 117). Street parking available.

AGENDA

- 1. Open and Welcome**
- 2. Present and Apologies**
- 3. Minutes of Previous Annual General Meeting, held on 19th September 2012.**
- 4. Presentation of Annual Report by Terry Macdonald.**
- 5. Presentation of Treasurers Report by John Lumley.**
- 6. Election of Office Bearers (President, Vice Pres. & Secretary).**
- 7. Election of General Members of Committee.**
Note: There will be a total of seven vacancies available to be filled at this AGM – three positions of existing Members and four already vacant positions.
- 8. Position of Public Officer** (current Public Officer is John Lumley).
- 9. Change to the RRVV Rules – Notice of Motion.**
Changes to the Rules of Incorporated Associations have been outlined by the Victorian Government and must be registered with Department of Justice by November 2013. The proposed changes to the RRVV Rules will retain all important requirements whilst incorporating the new requirements of the Government. A paper detailing the comparisons will be available to aid discussion.
- 10. Close of Meeting.**
Because of the time probably needed to discuss the Motion of Changes to our Rules, it was decided not to have a Guest Speaker this year.

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available before and during the meeting.

IF YOU WISH TO ATTEND THE RRVV AGM PLEASE CONTACT US
ON Ph: 9015 8402 OR Email: rrvv.vic@gmail.com .