



THE VILLAGER

A Publication of the American Homesteading Foundation, Inc.



80th Annual Meeting & Dinner!

By Lorrie Muzzone

It's an exciting time for the AHF as we celebrate and officially kick off our **80th year!** We hope to have a record turnout of AHF members for our Annual Meeting as a quorum is required for voting. The meeting will be held at the AHF Hall on **Saturday, March 14th at 9 a.m.** with registration beginning at 8:30 a.m. The Annual Meeting agenda includes addressing any Resolutions, verifying and installing AHF Board of Trustees and committee members, and recruitment of additional members to fill any committee vacancies. It is also a time to highlight the previous year's AHF activities and review the AHF's financial position. A Zoom option will be available for those unable to attend, however please note that Zoom attendees do not count toward the required quorum. The AHF Office will send out the Zoom link in advance of the meeting, so if you aren't already receiving emails from the AHF, contact the office to add your name to the email list. Your presence and input are important to us all! Therefore, a **\$100 gift card** will be raffled off at the end of the meeting for those who are physically present for the duration of the meeting. Coffee and donuts will be available starting at 8:30 a.m.

The AHF is pleased to host a special **Indoor Picnic Dinner**, and we warmly invite you to join us for this memorable occasion. The dinner will be held on **Sunday, March 15th, at 6 p.m.** with doors opening at 5:30 p.m. We're bringing the charm of a classic picnic indoors with checkered tablecloths, treat-filled picnic baskets, and a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. The committee will be providing a picnic-style menu and as always guests are encouraged to bring a favorite side dish or dessert to share. Feel free to bring your own liquid refreshment of choice. Iced tea and lemonade will be provided.

Whether you've been part of our AHF community for years or are new to the group, this is the perfect opportunity to connect, reminisce, and celebrate our Founding Mothers' lasting legacy as we enjoy an evening of good food, warm memories, and wonderful company. AHF members are welcome to bring a plus-one as your guest. To ensure we order enough food, you and your guest **must be registered to attend no later than March 6th** by emailing office@ahfmv.com. Due to the limited seating, please be sure to register early. We look forward to celebrating with you!

80th Annual Meeting

Saturday, March 14th

Quorum Required

Registration at 8:30 a.m.

Call to Order at 9 a.m.

\$100 Gift Card Giveaway

Coffee & Donuts Provided



80th Annual Dinner~ It's a Picnic!

Sunday, March 15th at 6 p.m.

Doors open at 5:30 p.m.

RSVP no later than March 6th

BYOB and a dish or dessert to share!



AHF Board of Trustees '24-'25

President – Christine Kretz
 1st Vice President – Dwight Davies
 2nd Vice President – Carrie Cronkhite
 Treasurer – Brenda Mathews
 Secretary – Kevin Foster
 Assistant Secretary/Treasurer – Dennis Foster
 Paula Bailey, Gary Ingram, and Phil Hoffken

Board of Trustees Meetings

All meetings are held in the AHF Hall and via Zoom on the 2nd Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m. Zoom info is posted on the front door of both the AHF Hall and the AHF Office the Wednesday before the meeting. If you would like to receive the monthly meeting agenda by email and/or the Zoom link, please call or email the AHF Office. The BOT information packet will be available to view in the AHF Office the day of meeting from 9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. as well as at the meeting.

2026 Board of Trustees Update

We're pleased to share that **Dwight Davies** and **Dennis Foster** will continue serving on the AHF Board of Trustees for another three-year term. Because only two trustee positions were open, no election was required, and both will carry over into the new member year.

As approved by referendum at the 2025 Annual Meeting, the Board of Trustees will be reduced from nine to seven members over two election cycles. This year, the Board will decrease to **eight trustees and four officers**.

We also extend our sincere thanks to **Brenda Mathews** for her three years of service on the Board, including two years as Treasurer. During her tenure, she oversaw the transition of our investment funds to a new advisor and helped address audit findings through the Budget & Finance Committee. Brenda will continue contributing to the AHF by serving on the **Budget & Finance** and **Community Garden Committees**.

Regular Committee Meetings and Work Parties

- Budget & Finance– 4th Wed of the month, 7:15 p.m.
- Building & Grounds– meets as needed
- Community Garden– every Saturday at 8 a.m.
- Deerhead Hammock– 1st Saturday of the month, 8 a.m.
- Erna Nixon Hammock– 1st Saturday of the month, 8 a.m.
- Memory Garden– 2nd Tuesday of the month, 8:30 a.m.
- Nutting-Wood Green– 1st Thursday of the month, 5 p.m.
 & workday on last Monday of the month at 8:30 a.m.
- Parks & Paths– Fridays 8 a.m., see Dayton bulletin board
- Recreation Committee– meets as needed
- Swimming Pool– monthly assigned duties, meets as needed

AHF Calendar Spring 2026

Feb	9	Monthly Committee Reports due by 10 a.m.
	14	CardinalBucks After Dark 6-10 p.m.
	16	President's Day - AHF Office closed
	21	Adult Ed: Dr. Richard Crepeau 11 a.m.
	28	Recreation Committee event
Mar	2	Annual Committee Reports due by 10 a.m.
	9	Monthly Committee Reports due by 10 a.m.
	14	AHF ANNUAL MEETING 9 a.m.
	15	AHF Annual Dinner 6 p.m.
Apr	22	Nutting-Wood Green Educational event
	4	Easter Egg Hunt 9 a.m.
	5	Easter Service in Deerhead Hammock
	6	Monthly Committee Reports due by 10 a.m.
May	25	Adult Ed: AI & More w/ Paula Bailey 10 a.m.
	11	Monthly Committee Reports due by 10 a.m.
	16	Adult Ed: CPR Class 10 a.m.
	25	Memorial Day - AHF Office closed
	30	Recreation Committee event

Save The Date

May 9: Keep Melbourne Village Beautiful Community Service Day (tentative)

Reminders and Weekly Events

	Yoga - Wednesdays, 6 p.m.
	Art Club - Fridays, 9:30 a.m.
	Cardinalbucks - Every 4th Wed 8-10 a.m.

VISIT THE AHF WEBSITE TO READ THE VILLAGER NEWSLETTER AND SEE THE AHF CALENDAR OF EVENTS!

Scan this QR code with your smartphone!



AHF Office Contact Info

Phone: (321) 723-6042
Email: office@ahfmv.com
Website: ahfmv.com
Hours: Mon-Fri 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

New AHF Members

Jody DeRidder & Norm Miller

5730 Crane Rd.

AHF Member Passings

Richard Bryant who lived on Acacia Ave.

with his wife, Suzan Bryant

Eugenia "Genie" Johnson who had lived on Flamingo Rd. until moving back to Pennsylvania

Richard Jones who lived on Hammock Rd.

with his wife Sandi Jones

Changing of the Guard

We are sad to report that our Office Manager **Rebecca Carter** has resigned her position. Over the nearly three years she worked with us, she did an amazing job of running the office, helping us to improve processes, and supporting all of our members with warmth and attention. We've enjoyed having Rebecca with us, and will miss her. We wish her all the best in her next position.

We are pleased to announce that we have hired AHF member **Kelsey Shepard**, daughter of **Dwight and Lynn Davies**, who will be joining us as our new Office Manager in February. Please help us welcome her to her new position!

AHF Wish List

- ☼ 12" x 12" scrapbooking paper, any colors/designs
- ☼ 12" x 12" clear scrapbook page protectors
- ☼ Hanging file folder tabs with inserts
- ☼ 8 oz. (jelly flight) and 16 oz. (jelly jar) mason jars, rings, and/or unused lids
- ☼ A real estate brochure/sign (to borrow) like the one pictured at right. Will return at end of year



Christine Kretz
AHF President



Old Face Gets a New Body

By Dee Smith

Time and use have taken a toll on the AHF Hall's kitchen cabinets, yet their charm to them just can't be replaced. For years, there has been one area in dire need of replacement: the entire section under the windows. We limped it along, struggling with repairs that did not hold up, but eventually the entire cabinet was shot! A solution had to be found.

After much searching, we hired AHF member **Lenny Armstrong**, a carpenter by trade, to build us a new base, purchase a new top, and reuse the old face of the cabinet doors and existing drawers. Old face? Yes, and the finished result looks wonderful. Between the soft-close drawers, new drawers where there were none, and the refinishing, the cabinet looks very much like it did long ago. But now it has even more charm. Thank you, Lenny!

THE VILLAGER

is a quarterly newsletter published for members of the American Homesteading Foundation by the Information Committee. News items, stories, and comments may be addressed to the AHF office or bridget4975@yahoo.com.

Information Committee Members are:

Bridget Foster, Chairperson/Layout
Christine Kretz, Secretary/Contributor
Scott Perrine, Editor

Our 80th Year Kicks Off!

By Christine Kretz

This is such an exciting time to be a member of the American Homesteading Foundation, as we embark upon our 80th year! What an achievement from our beginnings in 1946 to today! We've maintained the many acres of parkland and green spaces for all Melbourne Village residents to share. It truly is remarkable that we have been able to retain our parklands and trails, as neighboring areas are losing theirs to development.

Through it all, we've built upon the foundation that those who came before us established; that of a "richer and more stable community^[1]," with a strong emphasis on sustainability and collaboration.

There are plans in place to help mark this milestone occasion and celebrate! Although the new member-year doesn't officially begin until the close of the annual meeting, we couldn't wait to start! The Nutting-Wood Green Committee gave us a great overview (literally) of how the green has changed over time and detailed the restoration currently in progress.

Other special events planned for the year include:

- ★ **Author Richard Crepeau:** ("Melbourne Village: the First Twenty-five Years.") will join us for a lecture this month. See the full article on this page for more information.
- ★ **Community Service Day:** Take the opportunity to help us Keep Melbourne Village Beautiful! Join us for a variety of projects (for all skill levels!) on May 9th (tentative). More details to follow.
- ★ **Scrapbook Exhibit:** The Information Committee has put together some "scrapbooks" of news clippings that you'll be able to preview at the Annual Meeting. We sure made the news back in the day(s)!
- ★ **Annual Dinner:** The Annual Meeting Committee is planning a dinner party that promises to outdo last year's impressive event. Don't miss it! Details on front cover.
- ★ **Time Capsule:** We'll be creating a time capsule on October 10 (save that date)! The Adult Education Committee is planning a workshop for members to suggest things to include and learn how to create their own time capsules.
- ★ **2026 Yearbook:** We'll also be creating a "yearbook" and look forward to submissions of photos from members throughout the year. Join in and help us mark this amazing milestone! Details this page.

[1] Professor Willis Nutting, Annual Meeting, July 28, 1947

Yearbook Committee

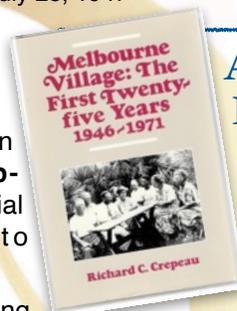
By Bridget Foster

The Information Committee is forming an unofficial "ad hoc" **Yearbook Sub-Committee** dedicated to creating a special **80th Anniversary Yearbook** to commemorate this milestone year.

This sub-committee will focus on capturing the moments that define our community today—taking photographs at events, gathering stories, and writing short articles that reflect the people, traditions, and activities that make AHF what it is. From big celebrations to everyday moments, the goal is to create a keepsake that tells the story of our 80th year in a way that feels personal, authentic, and lasting.

The yearbook will serve as both a celebration of the present and a historical record for future members, preserving memories that might otherwise fade with time. By documenting this anniversary year as it unfolds, the Yearbook Sub-Committee will help ensure that AHF's 80th year is remembered not just for what happened, but for how it felt to be part of it.

To join, email bridget4975@yahoo.com.



Adult Education Committee Presents: Dr. Richard Crepeau

By Ondine Constable

We are honored to have historian Richard Crepeau, PhD, author of "Melbourne Village: The First Twenty Five Years 1946-1971" speak on **Saturday, February 21 at 11 a.m.** in the AHF Hall.

After seeing a Public Television documentary that included a segment on Melbourne Village, Dr. Crepeau decided to explore the subject further. This led to a meeting with Virginia Wood and Elizabeth Nutting in 1975, where he discovered voluminous records of AHF meetings and gained access to Virginia Wood's personal papers.

While teaching at the University of Central Florida, Dr. Crepeau spent one day a week in the AHF offices and at Virginia Wood's home, driving from his home in Titusville to Melbourne Village most Thursdays. His research focused on how an idea and ideal evolved into a vibrant community shaped by diverse people amid the forces of change in post-World War II Florida.

His book was published in 1980. If anyone owns the book and would like to have it signed, Dr. Crepeau would be happy to do so.

Haven't got a copy of this book yet? Purchase a **raffle ticket** for \$2 and you may win a signed copy to be given away at the event! This is a fundraiser for the **Information Committee** and all proceeds will be used to offset the cost of bringing you The Villager every quarter. Contact **Bridget Foster** for your raffle ticket: (321) 960-9038. Tickets also available at the door (please bring exact change).

New Pool Policies – Please Read Carefully

To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone, an ad hoc committee was formed to review pool usage rules—specifically guest limits and large gatherings. Their recommendations were presented at the December Board of Trustees meeting, where the Board voted to approve the following changes:

- ▶ **Household Attendance Limit:** Each household may have a maximum of **ten (10) total people** at the pool at one time. *This includes children and guests.* A member **must** be present at all times.
- ▶ **No Pool Parties:** Pool parties are no longer permitted.

We sincerely thank the committee for their time and thoughtful work in reviewing these policies. These changes are intended to protect our shared space and ensure the pool remains enjoyable for all members. We appreciate your cooperation in following these updated guidelines.

Baby, It's Cold Outside: Winter in the Garden

By Brenda Mathews

Break out the freeze cloth, freezing temperatures are coming! While most of the vegetables we plant in the garden in the fall and winter are well suited for cool temperatures and even occasional frost, tomatoes are not among them. This season we have had several rounds of temperatures dropping below 40 degrees, triggering the alert: "Cold Weather Alert— Covering the Tomatoes!"



As I write this, the tomatoes are covered in white freeze cloth (their "wedding dresses," we call them), but with an impending warm up, they will need to be removed and stored for next time. "Next time" is in two more days, when Melbourne Village will receive its first hard freeze in 16 years, with temps in the 20s!

Tomatoes don't like temperatures below 40 degrees, and freezing temperatures can kill the plant and turn tomatoes on the vine to mush. So far this year, we have covered the tomato plants *five times* to try to save those beautiful fruits that everyone loves so much. Such is the life of the Florida farmer, and the challenge of backyard gardeners, who just want to get a big, red, juicy, homegrown tomato.

For more information on the AHF Community Garden, please email **Brenda Mathews**, Community Garden Chairperson, at prunella.stubbs@outlook.com. See you in the garden!



Key Exchange

It's time for the annual **AHF Pool Key Exchange!** As we prepare to re-open the pool for another fun-filled season, members are invited to stop by and exchange their current pool key for a new one. This yearly update helps keep the pool secure and ensures that everything is ready for a safe and enjoyable summer for everyone.

Not paid up on your dues? No problem. Just bring your payment with you and we'll take care of it on the spot. Not a member but interested in joining? This is a perfect time to come by, learn more about the AHF, and sign up. We love to welcome new faces to our pool community. Swing by, get your new key, and get ready to make a splash this swim season!

Let's Share the Load

By Celia Byrnes

Much work is done behind the scenes to keep our parklands and community running. While it's heartening to see the lists of so many committee members, many fine folks are working double-duty on two or more committees. Let's share the load by encouraging and inviting more involvement!

Currently, all parkland committees can use more hands: Deerhead Hammock, Memory Garden, Nutting-Wood Green, and Parks & Paths. The Membership Committee is reorganizing, so if you'd like to join them in welcoming new neighbors to the village and invite them to join the AHF, let me know. Finally, *all* committees can use "friends of," who are not obligated to attend meetings, but are available to help with events or as needed. Contact **Celia Byrnes**, Nominating Committee Chairperson, at (832) 466-5577.

I look forward to hearing which committee you'll support during the coming membership year!



Kids in the Garden

By Gwen

I had a great experience in the Community Garden! Miss Dani and Miss Brenda taught me about composting and soil. I planted red leaf lettuce, romaine lettuce, radishes, and carrots. The radishes were very fast-growing, fun to pick, and they were as red as an apple! I've picked a lot of lettuce for salads, too. My carrots should be ready soon and I can't wait because they're my favorite vegetable. There were harvest days each Saturday. The gardeners shared with me and I got to take home a lot of great stuff!



Recreation Committee

By Betty Jo Yorio

Whew, what a year it has been! Our small-but-mighty Recreation Committee hosted several events, then ended the year in casual style with our flannel shirts and a delicious holiday dinner all prepared by the committee for nearly 100 people!

Are you new to town? A great way to get to know the neighbors is by joining us for some evening fun! We started the new year with the return of "Game Night" and had eight teams in a fierce competition during "Music and the Movies" trivia. Our newly-appointed committee members, Mike & Marilyn, are professional chefs and really elevated the snacks with some scrumptious finger sandwiches!

Upcoming events this year will include the Easter Egg Hunt, more trivia competitions, another "Christmas in July," and Escape game, Fall Flea Market, Halloween Party, and of course the annual Holiday Dinner. We try to have something for everyone, but please feel free to give us any ideas or suggestions for an event you would like us to host!

At right: Betty Jo Yorio, Marilyn Johnson, Madeline Szabo, Mike Calenda, Lorrie Muzzone, Valerie Piszczek



Below: The AHF Hall was beautifully lit and decorated, complete with buffet line that included a carving station!



Those Holiday Greens Don't Hang Themselves!



A big, hearty thank you to Santa's helpers, **Mary Jane Moon** and **Sandi Dix**, pictured here gathering wreath and garland material. Mary Jane says, "You must be this old to be in the Hanging of the Greens group." Thanks, ladies!



Scott Perrine and Gigi Atwell



Bridget Foster, Lorrie Muzzone, and Bridget's sister Sheri (far left)



Paul Crumley and Dani Noell



Claire Pepper and Dee Smith



Celia Byrnes, Dwight Davies, and Paula Bailey

Mercantile a Success!

The festivities began with the smell of cinnamon and visions of twinkly lights to get us into the holiday spirit. The beautifully decorated fun-and-festive hall was packed with talented AHF members offering potholders, aprons, soaps, jewelry, and local honey. Such "shop-ortunities"! The bake sale and café with lunch items provided an opportunity to recharge, refuel, and visit friends. Did we mention the raffles? Plural?! **Don Willis** won the Villager coupon giveaway, and the big raffle basket went to **Lorrie Muzzone**! Congratulations to both!

A heartfelt thank-you to the many volunteers and helpers (pictured) who made the day run so smoothly—several of whom are pictured here. Our gratitude is endless.

Always a great social event, this holiday bazaar is also a fundraiser for the AHF, supporting projects and improvements throughout the year. If you missed it, make sure you mark your calendar for this year:

December 5, 2026!

Root of the Problem: When Plants Go Rogue

By Celia Byrnes



Sansevieria

Here in Melbourne Village, we love our woodlands. Part of their maintenance involves removing invasive species. These species crowd out beneficial native plants and do not support native insects or birds. Read on for a few examples of invasive plants and how they found their way into our parkland:



Bamboo

Sansevieria (Snake Plant, Mother-in-Law's Tongue)—Introduced to the village in an attempt to sell the fiber for paper and rope making (source: "Troubled Paradise" by Geirgiana Greene Kjerulff). This plant has extensive rhizomes that are nearly impossible to eradicate.

Bamboo—Planted in the hope of selling poles to Disney, (source: Parks & Paths gossip hub). The running types spread rapidly and are very difficult to remove.



Coral Ardesia

Ardesia crenata (Coral Ardesia) & **Ardesia elliptica** (Shoebuttan Ardesia)—Not deliberately introduced, but planted ornamentally and spread by birds (source: a little bird told me). Seeds prolifically.

Australian Pines—Clearly introduced by someone who did not do their homework (source: bold assumption). They create dense shade, allowing is very little growth beneath them.



Shoebuttan Ardesia

In contrast, to non-native or invasive plants, Live Oak trees in Florida support hundreds—and potentially thousands—of species of insects, which are in turn a vital food source for birds. Those insects are a vital food source for birds, especially during nesting season, when caterpillars and other soft-bodied insects are essential for raising young. A single mature Live Oak can function as an entire ecosystem, quietly sustaining wildlife year after year.



Australian Pine

Gumbo Limbo trees also play an important ecological role, offering food, shelter, and habitat for birds (cardinals, woodpeckers, flycatchers, warblers), pollinators (bees, butterflies, moths, spiders), and mammals. Their fruit, bark, and branching structure provide resources across multiple seasons.

Please research prior to introducing plants and trees to your yard. They can easily "escape" into surrounding areas, where they compete with native trees and vegetation for precious space, sunlight, and nutrients. Remember: today's landscaping choice can become tomorrow's park problem.

Parks & Paths

By Leslie Fay



Before Christmas, we spent several weeks in **Griffith Park** clearing the invasive ardesias and red passionflower vines that have continued to take over the area we have dubbed "Passion Meadow." Our plan is to keep the area mowed short in an attempt to eradicate these incredibly invasive vines. We've planted several trees here and have a magnolia that will grace the area soon.

WARNING

Avoid the area around the north side of the **Tippie Lake** trail if it is still roped off. We agitated a nest of ground wasps and have been treating the area. These wasps can chase, sting multiple times, and may trigger allergic reactions, making them a safety concern.

We are back at work after the holiday break and will continue every Friday morning until mid June. With so many acres of parkland to maintain, help is always welcome. Please consider joining us, whether occasionally or regularly. Just bring a bottle of water and a pair of gloves. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Parks & Paths Committee, please contact **Leslie Fay** at (321) 626-7619.

Nutting-Wood Green: Then and Now

By Kathryn Merry

On Sunday, January 18, AHF members were treated to a unique, entertaining, and educational afternoon followed by a chili dinner on a chilly evening.

Kim Zarillo, NWG Committee member, presented an aerial view of changes in the Nutting-Wood Green from 1943 to 2024 as it has transitioned from a pine flat woods, complex with embedded grasslands, to a smaller disturbed grassland surrounded by an urban community. She explored the impacts of this transition and the efforts the committee is taking to improve the ecological function that supports the biodiversity of Nutting-Wood Green. The program continued with a tour of the meadow, then we warmed ourselves up enjoying some hot chili while watching a film presentation about the endangered Florida Panther.

The Nutting-Wood Green Committee is meeting weekly for spring maintenance of the meadow.



Nutting-Wood Green in 1943 and in 2015.

Erna Nixon Hammock

by Sandi Dix

We are moving along with our QR codes to identify the plants and information about the hammock and we hope to have the first posts with codes sometime in the spring. The codes will link you back to the AHF website, which will have a page for Erna Nixon Hammock with our plant list.

We continue to remove invasive plants from the hammock. One of the worst areas that is overgrown with the Arrowhead vines and Pothos is the S. Wildwood path area. They had taken over trees and covered the ground. This area was too much for this committee to tackle by ourselves, so we contracted with A Change of Greenery native nursery/landscaping company to come in with a machine that scooped up the vines and put them in a dumpster. They were here for 4 days in December with our committee working alongside them. Our plan is to continue removing the vines and then keep the area mowed so that they can't regrow. Eventually, we will reintroduce native plants to this area. We did reroute some of the path and it has been roped off with yellow tape to help you stay on it.

There are some new biological beetles that attack and eat the bulbils of the Air Potato vines! Hooray! Not only are there beetles that feed on the leaves, but now beetles that actually eat the bulbs. I have applied for them for Erna Nixon Hammock, but if we are approved we won't receive them until the spring. The adjacent article discusses these beetles in more detail.

We need more committee members! If you are willing to put in a couple of hours a month, please contact **Sandi Dix** at (321) 272-8975 or mntlcrpl@yahoo.com.

New Air Potato Beetle!

By Sandi Dix

There's a new beetle on the scene called the *Lilioceris egena* which eats the bulbils (potato looking thing) on the Air Potato vine. This is actually groundbreaking news! So, not only is there a beetle, *Lilioceris cheni*, that eats the leaves which cuts down on the growth of the vine, but now there's a biological bulbil-feeding beetle.

A little bit about the dreaded Air Potato vines: the vines sprout in late spring/early summer from underground tubers and bulbils that have dropped in the fall/winter. The vines climb along the ground and up trees/shrubs to reach sunlight. They are very fast growers, so if unmanaged, they can cover vegetation very quickly. In the fall, the vines will produce bulbils and start to die back. These bulbils will drop to the ground, where they will sprout in the spring alongside the underground tubers, and the cycle starts all over again. But if we can stop this vine from growing and making the potatoes, we might be able to keep it under control with the beetles and manual removal.

To request the new beetles for release on your property, search Google for "request air potato beetle Florida." The Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (FDACS) website will pop up with a link to their Air Potato Report form, which is the request form.

To learn more about the beetles, search Google for "*Liloceris egena*" and follow the FDACS link that appears in your search results.

IN ALL PARKLAND



Invasive Arrowhead vine covers the ground in Erna Nixon Hammock. Pothos climbs the trees in the background.



The ground has been cleared, giving native plants a chance to return to the area. Pothos has been removed from the trees and will be hauled away.



Above: Air Potato vine with bulbil. Below: The new Air Potato Bulbil Beetle looks nearly identical to the familiar Air Potato Leaf Beetle.

This is a Paid Memorial

Our Promise to Richard



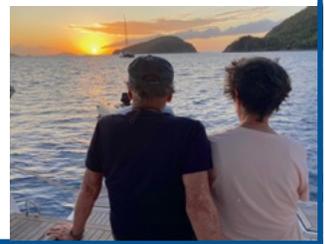
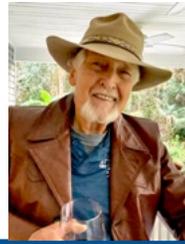
There are some loves so complete that they quietly become the center of a life. Suzan and Richard enjoyed such a love—steadfast, devoted, and profound. Their love shaped their days, weaving the years together and creating their own world. Few people are ever so fully seen and cherished as they were to each other, their bond so certain, so gently enduring... leaving an imprint that will never fade. In his final moments, Richard expressed that love simply and fully, saying to Suzan, "I love being alive. I love you."

Richard had a rare gift for making people feel lighter just by being near him. His humor was effortless, his charm unmistakable, and his laughter generous and contagious. People were drawn to his warmth, his wit, and the easy way he made space for everyone. Conversations with him lingered, stories grew better in the telling, and time always seemed to pass too quickly in his company. The many friendships he leaves behind are a testament to the generous and joyous circle of affection he created in all of our lives.

Richard is missed more than words can say. We all feel his absence and the weight of this great loss, and so some of us have come together to honor not only his life, but the friendships and connections that bind us together. He lives on in our memories, our gratitude for the time we had him in our lives, and in the love that for many years wrapped Suzan in such steady, certain arms that it shaped the life she lived and the person she became.

She carries an immeasurable sadness now, but also a great strength— something Richard always treasured in her. We, his friends, promise we will do our best to help Suzan remember the woman she is, and the unique version of herself that only he could bring out—the joy & laughter, the confidence & courage, and the light that glows from within.

And so as we hold Richard close, in our hearts, in our memories, and in the love he gave so freely— we are grateful for a life that was deeply lived and beautifully shared.



Happy Croton!

By Don Willis

Here is a bit of trivia:

When I bought my house on West Pine in the early '60s, this Croton was left behind by the previous owner. It lived in successively larger containers until '97. It seems to like being here, it's over 12 feet tall!



Don's Croton in 1967. (Image enhanced)



Don's Croton today. Happy, indeed!



Hammock Weddings

By Ginny Allen

My aunt and uncle, my parents, and now my husband and I have all been married in Deerhead Hammock. My grandparents (Melvin and Carolyn Brown) have lived in Melbourne Village since 1963, and now my parents live on Flamingo Road in my mother's childhood home. We have cherished the Deerhead Hammock throughout our lives.



Memory Garden Through the Years

By Mary Murphy

In 1966, a village family donated a plant to honor their late friend, **Kate Fick**. The AHF granted the Building & Grounds Committee permission to find suitable locations near the AHF Hall for memorial plantings. Plant donations continued but garden maintenance was sporadic.

In 1974, Villagers planning a memorial service for **Gertrude Martin** were saddened by the lack of care for the existing memorial plantings. The result was the formation of a Memory Garden Committee: donations covered garden expenses, all plantings were noted in a Memorial Garden Book, and the garden location set between the parking lot and Nutting-Wood Green.

In 1982, the committee encouraged the use of native plants since they require less maintenance once established. In 1983, Memory Garden became a funded committee of the AHF. With no space for new plant donations, the committee added an annex – the “Azalea Garden Under the Oaks.” They planted thirty-one azaleas “in an artistic pattern” along the east and south side of the AHF Hall. For a brief period, the Memory Garden Committee maintained the original Memory Garden and the Azalea Garden. Eventually, **Mel Manthey** took over care of the azaleas, now the responsibility of the B&G Committee.

In 1995, **Bill and Shirley Hills** helped with the installation of a sprinkler system in the Memory Garden. A huge help for watering!

Today, the Memory Garden Committee is an active committee that meets once a month, except for July and August. New plantings are native to simplify maintenance. We welcome new members or anyone interested in exploring the garden with us. Contact the AHF Office to join.

Also, be sure to come see our most recent addition: a new bench and plaque in memory of **Richard Bryant**, donated by his friends.

Our Values in Practice

One of the things that makes the American Homesteading Foundation special is the sense of community our members bring to every meeting, event, and gathering. Whether we are working side by side, sharing ideas, or welcoming newcomers, each of us helps shape how the AHF is experienced by others. With that, this is a gentle reminder of the shared standard of behavior expected of all members whenever we come together—formally or informally—under the AHF name.

When representing the AHF to fellow members or to the broader community, we ask everyone to lead with politeness, good manners, and self-control. This includes using respectful language, listening with an open mind, and addressing disagreements calmly and constructively. Differences of opinion are natural and even healthy, but how we express them is what truly matters. Courtesy and kindness should guide our words, both in person and online, including on social media whenever AHF and Town events or activities are involved.

Each member is an ambassador of our values. Treating one another and our guests with respect and care strengthens our community so the AHF remains a place where people feel safe, supported, and proud to belong.

Got an idea for an article you'd like to see in *The Villager*? Email the Information Committee at bridget4975@yahoo.com to let us know what you'd like to read or write about.



Dollars to CardinalBucks

Did you know that a tall, medium-roast black Starbucks coffee costs \$3.80 in the chain's native state of Washington? In Hawaii, it's \$3.30, and “only” \$2.92 in Mississippi. That same cup of joe is just \$1.96 in Brazil, but it'll set you back \$5.36 in France, \$6.55 in Denmark, and a whopping \$7.17 in Switzerland.

A tall, medium-roast black coffee at CardinalBucks:
Free.

Staying connected with your friends, meeting some new neighbors, and enjoying the delicious pot-luck breakfast:
Priceless.

COFFEE★SOCIAL



4th Wednesday of Every Month
From 8-10 AM at the AHF Hall

2026 AHF Budget Approved

The final 2026 budget was approved by the Board of Trustees at the December meeting. The total budget for this year is \$218,423.

An increase in the annual dues to \$200 was also approved and will appear on your July invoices. Questions? Please join us at the Annual Meeting.

Daylight Saving Time Starts

Sunday, March 8
at 2 a.m.

set your clocks forward an hour

Adventure Awaits at the AHF Children's Summer Camp!

by EmilyAnne Thomason

Save the dates for an unforgettable week June 15 -19 as we dive headfirst into our most inspiring theme yet: **Intentionally Purposeful.**

This isn't just camp—it's a celebration of every child's uniqueness through a whimsical blend of grit and imagination. We are building more than just memories; we are building resilience, growth, and collaboration! It's going to be a week of messy hands and big breakthroughs.

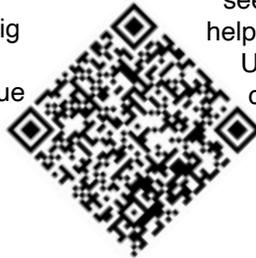
What's in store?

Our days will be packed with high-energy creativity and hands-on fun, including:

- Fort Building: Engineering epic hideouts with friends.
- Masterpiece Painting: Expressing our wildest ideas through color.
- Collaborative Creating: Working together to bring big dreams to life.
- Meaningful Contribution: Discovering how our unique talents help the whole group.

Questions?

For more info, please reach out to **EmilyAnne Thomason** at (321) 831-8148.



Hey, parents and grandparents! A camp this magical runs on the heart of our community, so we are seeking enthusiastic volunteers to join the fun and help guide our campers through this incredible week. Use your smart phone's camera to scan the QR code at left to register your child or grandchild to attend, or to sign up as a volunteer:

Let's make this summer one for the history books!

SOLD IN MELBOURNE VILLAGE IN 2025

Courtesy of Debbie Seiler REALTOR®, celebrating 11 years as an area expert with 89 properties sold in Melbourne Village since 2014.

FOR SALE

6831 Norman Dr built 1948
2202 sf 4/2 garage on .58
asking \$529,000 or \$240/sf.
(Realty World Curri Properties)

6910 Sheridan Rd built 1952
1532 sf 3/2 garage on 1
acre asking \$549,900 or
\$359/sf. (Progressive Real
Estate Inc)

544 S Wildwood Ln built
1958 2303 sf 4/3 on .37
asking \$436,000 or \$189/sf.
(Turkey Oak Realty LLC)

FOR RENT

193,197,199 Dayton Blvd
built 2025 3/2.5 garage
unfurnished \$2800/mo.
(RE/MAX Aerospace)

6587 Towhee Dr built 1964
2/1 carport unfurnished
\$1950/mo.
(Vincent Keenan REALTORS)

	Address	Sold Date	DOM	Orig Price	Sold	%	\$/SF	Built	SF	Acre	Bed	Bath	Gar	Pool
1	6229 Savannah Dr	01/31/2025	61	\$369,000	\$320,000	87%	\$236	1953	1,356	0.50	3	2.0	1	No
2	571 Platt Cir ★	03/12/2025	3	\$375,000	\$355,000	95%	\$216	1952	1,642	0.43	3	2.0	1	No
3	6507 Norman Dr ★	03/13/2025	11	\$450,000	\$437,000	97%	\$191	1983	2,285	0.58	3	2.0	2	No
4	XXXX Flamingo Rd ★	05/12/2025	1	\$525,000	\$522,000	99%	\$263	1974	1,983	0.91	3	2.5	2	No
5	536 Platt Cir	05/13/2025	7	\$247,000	\$246,500	99%	\$139	1965	1,777	0.63	4	3.0	2	No
6	570 Acacia Ave ★	05/28/2025	49	\$439,900	\$420,000	96%	\$267	1953	1,576	0.34	3	1.5	2	No
7	439 Blue Heron Rd ★	07/31/2025	4	\$405,000	\$405,000	100%	\$251	1958	1,612	0.41	3	2.0	1	No
8	6516 Flamingo Rd ★	08/22/2025	177	\$535,000	\$445,000	83%	\$234	1988	1,901	0.79	3	2.0	2	No
9	6257 Savannah Dr ★	10/30/2025	6	\$349,900	\$340,000	97%	\$243	1952	1,400	0.50	3	1.0	1	No
10	5730 Crane Rd ★	11/25/2025	1	\$410,000	\$410,000	100%	\$262	1957	1,565	0.55	3	3.0	0	No
11	5755 Crane Rd ★	12/17/2025	0	Off Market	\$370,000		\$164	1964	2,260	0.72	3	3.0	2	No
	Median		6	\$407,500	\$405,000	97%	\$236	1958	1,777	0.55	3	2.0	2	

© Copyright 2026 by Deborah B Seiler, REALTOR® Star ★ indicates property listed and/or sold by Deborah B Seiler. DOM is number of days on the market before contract. % column shows what percentage of the original price was received. Based on information from Brevard County Public Records and Space Coast MLS for the period of Jan 1, 2025 through Dec 31, 2025.



The Melbourne Village Real Estate Team

Debbie Seiler, Laura Burns, Rusty & Kelly Melle
Call/Text (321) 412-4784 LiveInMelbourneVillage.com
ITG Realty LLC - 1455 S Wickham Rd. West Melbourne FL 32904



This is a Paid Advertisement



**AMERICAN HOMESTEADING
FOUNDATION INC. (AHF)**
535 HAMMOCK RD
MELBOURNE VILLAGE, FL 32904

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MELBOURNE, FL
PERMIT NO 641



CBAD hosts Will & Stephan warmly invite you to attend a Valentine-themed Cardinal Bucks After Dark!

This event is a potluck, BYOB, no RSVP, all-residents-welcome, come as you are, stay through dessert, no date no problem...

Valen-Town's Party!
February 14th at 6 p.m.

Coupled, Companionless, or Complicated, come celebrate with us!