

AMERICA'S HEALTHIEST HOMETOWN

A weekly report on The Villages' efforts to become "America's Healthiest Hometown" compiled by Daily Sun Ombudsman **Larry D. Croom**. Email larry.croom@thevillagesmedia.com. Or call him at 753-1119, ext. 9366.

Contact The Villages Health at 352-674-1700 or visit the website at thevillageshealth.com.

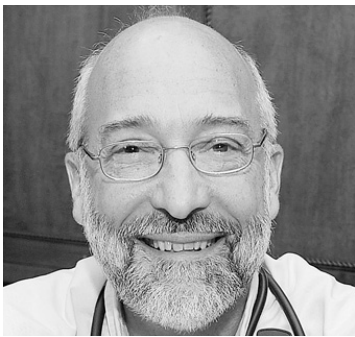
Did you know?

Dr. Catherine Horner, a primary care physician at the Pinellas Care Center, enjoys reading, cross stitching and crocheting in her spare time.

Villages Health Q&A

Lifestyle Is a Key Ingredient to Health

The 2012 USF Health survey of more than 33,000 Villagers showed that 85.9 percent of those surveyed believe they have a better quality of life than seniors living outside The Villages. As a primary care doctor, are you seeing evidence of that and do you think the lifestyle in Florida's Friendliest Hometown contributes to that finding?



Absolutely. The disease burden in The Villages may not be substantially different from communities elsewhere. But the degree to which those diseases hold a resident back is much lower. For example, a patient with advanced emphysema living elsewhere may be homebound until a caregiving family member arrives once per week to take the patient to pharmacy, grocery, etc. Whereas in The Villages, with such easy golf-cart access and helpful, caring neighbors, that same patient might have a much higher level of functioning and quality of life.

Dr. Joe Hildner,
director of medical affairs



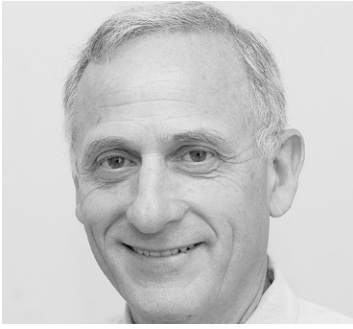
Having been in practice here for about a year and a half, I have no doubt whatsoever that The Villages lifestyle plays a major role in the quality of life and the health outcomes of my patients. The opportunities afforded to Villagers by virtue of them living here enables them to be active year-round. Not only are they able to engage in physical activity, but they are also given the opportunity to fortify their mental and spiritual well-being through the various social activities and clubs that make up part of the wonderful Villages lifestyle.

Dr. Robert Reilly,
medical director, Creekside,
Mulberry Grove care centers



In the two years that I have been a family physician in The Villages, I have continued to be impressed with the high quality of life the majority of residents enjoy. The lifestyle in The Villages, supported by a variety of ways to remain active and to interact with peers, contributes to that high quality of life.

Dr. Dave Jordahl,
medical director,
Colony Care Center



The Villages offers people the opportunity to remain as active as they wish to be, and that is one of the key ingredients in a high quality of life. Studies have been done around the world in "Blue Zones" where people have unusually long lives. The shared and common attributes appear to be genetics, activity even as simple as walking daily, moderation of calorie intake and purpose to your life.

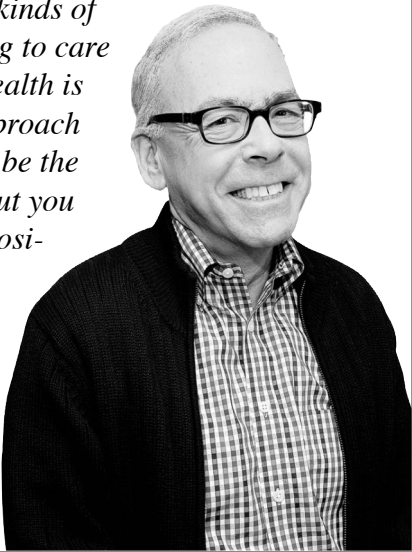
Dr. Saul Rosenblum,
medical director,
Santa Barbara Care Center

Creating America's Healthiest Hometown

What are some things that excite you about this coming year?

"I think we'll see further progress along the journey to become America's Healthiest Hometown. That'll be seen by the community in terms of even more robust care centers and more educational initiatives that will result in Villagers being happier and healthier. It'll be the addition of significant numbers of new physicians, both primary care physicians and specialty physicians. And it will be the ongoing growth in terms of the kinds of people that we're attracting to care for those patients. Good health is all about a team-based approach to care. Somebody's got to be the quarterback of the team, but you need to have really good position players to make that dream of great health care for people who move to The Villages a reality."

Dr. Elliot Sussman,
chair, The Villages Health



George Horsford / Daily Sun

USF Health's Dr. Derrick Robertson, a neurologist who subspecializes in multiple sclerosis, completed his residency at the University of South Florida. He says that MS affects many different systems and his team's goal is to provide patients in The Villages with comprehensive care. Robertson's work in The Villages falls under the partnership between The Villages Health and USF Health.

A new level of care

Partnership with USF continues to pay off with advanced MS treatment

By **EDDY DURYEA** / DAILY SUN SENIOR WRITER

THE VILLAGES

Health care in The Villages is getting better and better every day. And Joe and Elaine Renshaw, of the Village Santo Domingo, had a small hand in its improvement.

That's because Joe encouraged Elaine's neurologist to begin seeing patients in The Villages one day a month. And the arrival of Dr. Derrick Robertson, a prestigious neurologist and director of the multiple sclerosis center at the University of South Florida, means an extra level of care for those with MS.

"We needed someone like him," Joe said. "This began back in 2005, when we quickly realized although we have plenty of neurologists, we don't specifically have a multiple sclerosis specialist."

There is a marked difference between a neurologist and one who specializes in MS, he added.

"A neurologist knows a little bit about everything, but because he's treating so many things, he can't know everything about a specific disease," Joe explained. "That is why we pushed so hard to get (Robertson) over here."

Joe said he admired the way Robertson treated Elaine.

"He's very emphatic," Joe said. "He will listen to everything you have to say and develop a plan of action. We are so fortunate that he's my wife's doctor. And now he will be here."

Dr. Elliot Sussman, chair of The Villages Health, said Robertson's work in The Villages also came about largely because of the partnership between his organization and USF Health. He added that he is quite excited about the possibilities that lie ahead for those battling MS in Florida's Friendliest Hometown.

"Villagers will have access to trials, new medications and cutting-edge research and won't have to go to Tampa for that," Sussman said. "They can have their care monitored primarily from here."

Sussman said the biggest advantage for MS patients is the opportunity to receive a much higher level of care.

"They're going to have access to people who are asking and answering those cutting-edge questions about what's next," he said. "The care for patients with multiple sclerosis has advanced dramatically over the last decade. I think that is going to continue and we want to make sure that Villagers have access to that."

Robertson agreed.

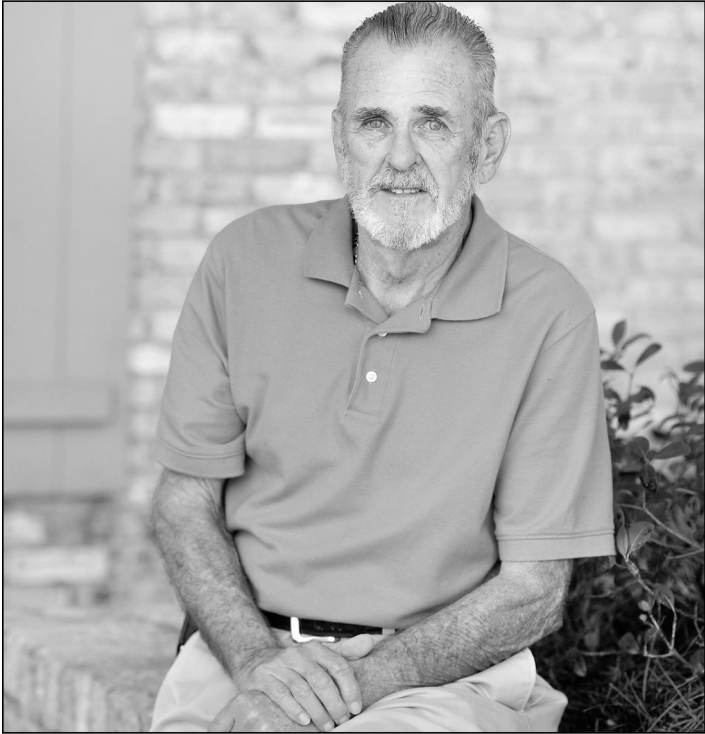
"Our goal is to provide comprehensive care," he said. "What's been shown consistently is that MS affects many different systems."

Robertson studied neurology and did his residency at USF, and became acquainted with the former director of the multiple sclerosis center.

"My career slanted toward MS," he said. "There really is just so much to learn."

Robertson, who is heavily involved in research at USF, and members of his team will be seeing patients at The Villages Health Specialty Care Center the third Thursday of each month.

"At this point, we envision being here only one day



Amy J. Correnti / Daily Sun

Joe Renshaw, of the Village Santo Domingo, was part of the effort to bring USF Health's Dr. Derrick Robertson and his team to The Villages. Renshaw's wife, Elaine, was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1988 and is one of Robertson's patients.

Making appointments

Patients with multiple sclerosis who wish to see Dr. Derrick Robertson can make appointments by calling 813-396-9478 or 888-USF-DOCS. Robertson and his team will see patients at The Villages Health Specialty Care Center on the third Thursday of each month. Appointments will be scheduled, starting at 1 p.m. The specialty care center is at 1400 U.S. Highway 27/441 in the old wellness center building near The Villages Regional Hospital. Appointments cannot be booked through the specialty care center or The Villages Health USF Health Community Center.

a month," he said. "But we're continuing to foster the relationship between The Villages and USF, and I'm happy that I can be here."

Sussman said he believes this kind of specialty care is just one of the many possibilities for the future.

"This is good for Villagers and it's a good thing for the university to be out and about in the community, kind of rubbing elbows with us ordinary

folks and learning from the world's most active and largest over-55 community," he said. "I think it's just wonderful for all concerned."

Eddy Duryea is a senior writer with The Villages Daily Sun. He can be reached at 753-1119, ext. 9062, or eddy.duryea@thevillagesmedia.com.

Daily Sun Ombudsman Larry D. Croom contributed to this report.