

# 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](mailto: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](http://thevillageshealth.com).

**Did you know?**

Dr. Laura Pratesi, an audiologist with The Villages Health, is a big fan of the 1942 classic drama “Casablanca,” starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman.

**Villages Health Q&A**

## Discovering the Secrets To a Long, Healthy Lifestyle

You are obviously an advocate for routine and consistent medical care focused around primary care medicine for your patients. What else are you big proponents of encouraging your patients to engage in so they may pursue a healthy lifestyle in hopes of enhancing their longevity?



“I believe it is very important for my patients to maintain a well-balanced and well-rounded lifestyle that pays attention to both physical and mental well-being. Consistent and regular physical activity is very important, as is maintaining strong interpersonal relationships and social connectivity. Studies have proven that longevity is connected to maintaining a balanced diet, regular physical activity and close personal relationships, which promote spiritual growth and stability.”

**Dr. Robert Reilly,**  
medical director,  
Creekside Care Center



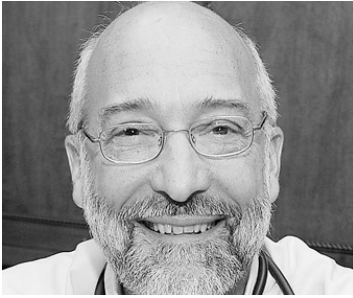
“Our greatest gift as primary care medicine advocates is to promote the active lifestyle with both physical and mental exercising. And what seems to bring so many people to The Villages is to enjoy a purpose later in life. People who are engaged, be it as a volunteer, a second career, pursuing a life-long dream or just socializing, not only enjoy life but appear to increase their chances of living longer.”

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



“Routine exercise – a minimum of 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week. 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



“Remain physically active – cardiovascular fitness is essential. It seems to have more impact than dietary habits. Remain interested and engaged in ongoing learning, teaching and interacting with others. Serve the world around you in ways that are enjoyable and take advantage of your natural gifts, talents and abilities.”

**Dr. Joe Hildner,**  
director of medical affairs

### Primary Care Centers in The Villages

- The Villages Health Colony Care Center**  
280 Farner Place, 352-674-1710
- The Villages Health Santa Barbara Care Center**  
1575 Santa Barbara Blvd., 352-674-1740
- The Villages Health Pinellas Care Center**  
2485 Pinellas Place, 352-674-1720
- The Villages Health Mulberry Grove Care Center**  
8877 S.E. 165th Mulberry Lane, 352-674-1750
- The Villages Health Lake Sumter Creekside Care Center**  
1050 Old Camp Road, Building 100, 352-674-1760

### Creating America’s Healthiest Hometown

#### What is your philosophy on health care?

*“It should be directed by your primary care physician, surrounded by specialists that are responsive, professional and caring. If your doctor is more like your coach and there to support you and educate you, I don’t see how we can fail. And if I wouldn’t do it with my mom or my dad, I don’t do it for a patient. That’s kept me straight and it’s helped me build very successful practices over the years by putting my patients first and treating them like mom and dad.”*

**Dr. Al Turri,**  
director of audiology,  
The Villages Health



# A coordinated effort

## Specialty care thriving as part of Villages Health initiative



Photos by Bill Mitchell / Daily Sun

Dr. Kathleen Steepy, right, an OB-GYN at The Villages Health Specialty Care Center, talks with Jane Chamberlaine, a certified medical assistant, at The Villages Health Specialty Care Center recently. Steepy says she is very excited to be a part of The Villages Health and enjoys working closely with the organization’s other specialists and primary care doctors – all in the name of better patient care.

By **LARRY D. CROOM** / DAILY SUN OMBUDSMAN

### THE VILLAGES

It has been seven months since the Specialty Care Center moved under The Villages Health umbrella, and the medical providers there say they are thrilled to be a key component in the primary-care-driven initiative here in Florida’s Friendliest Hometown.

“There have been huge changes in the way that we bring patients in and the care that we render, and bringing patients back,” said Linda Arredondo, manager of the Specialty Care Center. “I think it’s just the whole picture of The Villages Health and how we remain patient-centered.”

Last July, the facility, which is located in the old wellness center building near The Villages Regional Hospital, moved from USF Health into The Villages Health as part of the ongoing effort to improve health care here. The move allowed USF Health to concentrate more on its role as an academic, research and educational partner, with The Villages Health assuming the role of day-to-day operations of the Specialty Care Center alongside its six primary care facilities.

Arredondo, who moved to the care center after serving in the same role at the Santa Barbara primary care facility, said she has heard positive feedback from Villages Health patients who appreciate the ease of going between primary and specialty care.

“I hear, ‘This is how it’s supposed to be. This is how it should’ve worked. For years and years I’ve gone here and there,’” she said. “They’re in awe of the system. I think most of The Villages Health

primary care patients that come here see it as a seamless process and that’s what makes it so attractive.”

Dr. Kathleen Steepy, an OB-GYN at the Specialty Care Center, said there are many advantages to being with The Villages Health.

“Now, I’m part of a bigger community effort – a bigger part of the medical community in The Villages,” she said. “I can now interact directly with the family doctors. We can do it by computer, we can text and email. We can communicate through patient charts or we can do the old-fashioned telephone calls. But it’s much more access and better integration of patient data, which I think leads ultimately to better patient care.”

Jennifer Jordahl, an advanced registered nurse practitioner who works alongside Steepy, said the seamless care between primary and specialty care can make a huge difference for patients.

“When a patient comes through and I see that it’s one



Dr. David B. Ethier, an orthopedic surgeon at The Villages Health Specialty Care Center, says he appreciates the electronic medical record that ties all the information together about Villages Health patients and their medical histories.

of our physicians from The Villages Health, I know the chart is ready to go and the history’s in there,” she said. “I get a really good picture about that patient before they even come in the door, because I can look at their medical records. And then it’s a nice correspondence because we can send messages back and forth. They know that their patient was seen and they can call us with any questions.”

Caroline Mathis, an advanced registered nurse practitioner who also works alongside Steepy, said patients are thrilled with the integration of their care.

“They don’t have to worry about anything,” she said. “And when they get a summary of their day at the end of the visit, their primary care doctor appointments are on there. So it’s still reminding them about their other appointments.”

Along those same lines, Dr. David Ethier, an orthopedic surgeon, said he has found that Villages Health patients truly appreciate the fact that

all their initial patient intake forms are electronically available at the Specialty Care Center before their visit.

“A lot of those are necessary government forms that require authorizations for things, but a lot of it is trying to establish the past medical history and the baseline history,” he said. “The fact that that’s already been entered into the system by the primary doctor saves a tremendous amount of time on the specialist side.”

Arredondo agreed, adding that the picture can be much different when physicians treating the same patient aren’t in the same practice or on the same electronic medical record.

“Often times, when family practitioners will send patients out to a specialist, they have to wait for weeks and weeks to get that consult back,” she said. “Here, it’s a seamless transition and there is none of the back-and-forth paperwork. Because we’re all on one medical record, we don’t have to wait.”

**Coming Feb. 1:** New medical providers thrilled to join Villages Health Specialty Care Center.

**Coming Feb. 8:** Medical providers tout benefits of electronic medical record.