

HOMETOWN CIVITAN CLUB MEETING MINUTES

January 6, 2026 10:45 a.m. Evans Prairie CC Restaurant
www.HometownCivitanClub.org www.HometownCharities.org

President Deb McCoy opened the meeting by welcoming everyone then leading us in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and Civitan Creed.

PROGRAM: 'My Special Place' is a new organization whose mission is to create safe, high-quality residential options for adults with IDD that align with a quality lifestyle. Because of a lack of housing options in The Villages, many elderly parents are still caring for their special needs adult children. My Special Place (MSP) President Kristy Sullivan described to us a new residence facility, located in Spanish Springs across from The Villages Hospital and next to Freedom Point, that will be available for the adult IDD people living with their parents or caregivers in The Villages. It will house 44 – 31 in the two-story building and 13 in the smaller ground-level building for those needing closer supervision. The MSP Board members, twelve family caregivers and professionals, are doing a major fundraising as they need \$3 million for the closing on the purchase in the middle of February. Donations accepted at <https://myspecialplacethevillages.com>

Sunrise Group/Community is one of the largest, private 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations in the country dedicated to serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They will supply the support personnel and administer the operation of My Special Place.

The Agency for People with Disabilities (APD) offers a wide range of social, medical, residential, and behavioral services. In order to be eligible for services from the APD, an individual must have a developmental disability (as defined in section 393.063(12), Florida Statutes), including traumatic brain injury which occurs prior to age 18 and constitutes a substantial handicap that can reasonably be expected to continue indefinitely. Those registered with APD are then eligible to apply for residence in My Special Place.

Kristy answered many questions, provided everyone with a brochure and a flyer about their Open House, hosted by their realtor, on Saturday, January 10, 2026 from 2-5 at 1475 El Camino Real.

"Ensuring they're cared for – today, tomorrow, and always."

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Festival of Trees report: A total of \$15,610 was raised (\$12,735 from trees, \$2,875 from small items). Of the gift baskets donated, the 'Warm & Cozy' one Deb and Lana provided brought the highest price of \$100. Nice job!
2. Adopt-A-Precinct 12/9/25 – Volunteers Jeanne Lyle, John Higbee, Judi Higbee and Deb McCoy earned \$840 for Hometown Charities. Judi presented the Sumter County Elections check to Treasurer Ilene Hyams.

SECRETARY'S REPORT ON MEMBERSHIP: 2026 Rosters and Birthday Calendars were provided to the eleven attendees and will be available at future meetings. Current membership is 23 (didn't renew: Maureen Anderson, Marilyn Ettman, Sharlene Floam, Chickie Holtzman, Pat Rusk)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

1. The winter Giving Clubs Showcase is scheduled for Saturday, February 7, 2026, from 10-2 at the Lake Miona Recreation Center. Telling lots of people who we are and what we do! Contact President Deb McCoy to participate.
2. 2026 Adopt-A-Precinct fundraiser: Eight volunteers are needed to staff the Phone Bank for the Mid-Term Election Days of August 18 and November 3. It is a great way to show your civic pride by working in the national elections process at the local level, supporting the staff in the Sumter County Elections office, and earning money for Hometown Charities. Contact Team Leader Judi Higbee to apply.

SOCIAL:

1. Plans are for a Galentines Celebration in February. Details to come. Lana also suggested a trip down to the Alpaca Farm again, and a tour of Howie In The Hills.
2. Happy Birthday to Margie Brower on January 21st.
3. Mary Anderson gave us an update on Penny Badolato who is now at Cornerstone Hospice. Please text Penny if you would like to go visit her.
4. Ilene won the Door Prize drawing.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: January 21, café at 9am, 9:30 meeting at Fruitland Park Library. Recruitment will be a main agenda item.

NEXT CLUB MEETING: February 3, 2026

Program: Celebrate Differences is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities. We offer a range of programs, including ***Moms Helping Moms, Dads Helping Dads, and M.O.R.E.***—a life skills program designed to foster independence and confidence. Our year-round events provide opportunities for fun, connection, and support. We also partner with other organizations to expand our reach and further support the disability community. Visit our [website](#) to explore our programs.

Judi Higbee, Secretary

Submitted 1/9/26