

WESTWAYS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION, INC.

Emailed to 5,109 Rotonda Residents

MAY 2024



E-NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH ASSISTS LOST 13 YEAR OLD GIRL

By: David Perry



WOW!!! Talk about being the “EYES and Ears” of CCSO (Charlotte County Sheriff’s Office). On Thursday April 5th, at 9:30pm when Gail and Lloyd Henderson (Car #510) were on patrol on West Pine Valley Lane they noticed a shadow on the side of the road (if you know the location it is very dark with little to no streetlights) so they turned around and ended up stopping. The dark shadow was a lost 13 year old girl from up-state New York. She couldn’t remember where she was staying, didn’t have a cell phone, and was afraid to knock on homeowner’s doors for help.

She was so scared, if not for the comforting compassion and determination to get her back safely to her family from Gail and Lloyd, this could have ended badly. The Sheriff’s department intervened along with the on-site help from myself and Greg Banks and we were able to reverse phone number search and look at Google maps to determine where she was staying (Medalist Road). In the end she was reunited with her family, and all ended well.

It just goes to show you how vital Neighborhood Watch is to the community. Not only do we look for suspicious activity at your homes, but we know enough to stop and assist when required. Congratulations to Gail and Lloyd for saving the night.

VOLUME 28 ISSUE 5

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

Neighborhood Watch

Community Outreach Committee

Spotlight on: Debi Schroeder

Music in the Park

Rotonda Nature Events

Florida LakeWatch

Upcoming Events

Contact West Ways at:
westways@rotondawest.org

Rotonda West Administrative
Office-Community Center
Broadmoor Park
646 Rotonda Circle
Rotonda West, FL 33947
Office Hours: 8 am-4pm M-F

Tel: (941) 697-6788



Please welcome our newest members:

John Splawski (Car#302)

Lastly, Happy Mother's Day to all the great Moms out there.

Interested in joining our organization, please contact David Perry at 941-828-1584, scan QR code below OR go to our Facebook page @ Rotonda West Neighborhood Watch



Scan Here For More Information

Protecting Rotonda West since 1981



TABLE OF CONTENTS

01 Neighborhood Watch

**04 Committees at Work-
Community Outreach**

05 Did You Know?

06 Spotlight on Debi Schroeder

07 Dance Party Fun!

08 Speakeasy Alley

09 Bird Watching Walk

10 Lemon Creek Presentation

**11 Rotonda Celebrates
Earth Day**

13 Florida LakeWatch

14 Aquatics Member's Articles

18 Upcoming Events

19 Memorial Day Honors

20 Trivia Night

21 Fitness Classes

24 Charlotte County News

RWA COMMITTEES AT WORK

THE COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Article by: Nadine Clough



The next committee that will be focused on in the Committees at Work series is the very busy Community Outreach Committee.

This committee is involved in the social life of the Rotonda West Association and is an important link to the community. Members of this committee initiate, research, plan, organize, and run over 50 events a year.

A main goals of this committee are to improve communications between RWA and its members, and to create a positive, active community life for our residents.

Chairperson, Deb Orchard has led this committee into many new areas such as the Health & Wellness initiative, Music in the Park events, Rotonda Nature Flora & Fauna interactive events, and various Emergency Preparedness presentations.

These programs are in addition to the many other hats that this committee wears. Things such as: overseeing the publication of the West Ways newsletter; the Meet & Greet Potluck dinners each month; running the Sunday Bingo games; holding the Volunteer Appreciation Banquet; organizing the Share It & Shred It Day and other food drives; the popular Rotonda Has Talent Show; the fall and spring Rotonda Garage Sale; monthly Trivia contests; the Christmas Parade; Holiday Stroll and Holiday decorating; the Gazebo Lighting; "Ask The Pharmacist" series; "Frank Levin Lecture" series; and helping with Constant Contact and the website.

Currently, as part of the Health & Wellness initiative, the committee is working to get fitness classes up and running. These classes will include Pilates and Posture (Monday, May 6th at 9 a.m.), and Tai Chi (Friday, May 17th at 9 a.m.). Both programs will be held in the Community Center. The committee is hoping that these are well-received by the residents and that they will be able to be continued.

As with the other seven standing committees of the RWA, these committee members are made up of volunteers appointed by the board. If you are interesting in serving on this committee email your information to: communityoutreach@rotondawest.org

MEETING TIMES: 1st Wednesday of every month at 9:30 a.m. in the Community Center
Or join the meeting through zoom.



Left to Right: West Ways Editor Nadine Clough, Committee Secretary Annmarie D'Abrosco, Committee Chairperson Deb Orchard, Vice-Chair Gwen Grace, Rita Lopienski, Merrill Horswill; and Donna Stogsdill

Not pictured: Andy VanScyoc, Denise Slovinski, Board Liaison Karen Harvey, and photographer David Pulaski

Photo by: Joe Harris

DID YOU KNOW ?

By: Deb Orchard

Community Outreach Committee

You have multiple ways to find out what's happening in our Rotonda West community. Here's what you have available, including our new Facebook page:

Constant Contact – Sign up at rotondawest.org by completing the pop-up screen. E-mails will automatically be sent to you of upcoming board and committee meetings, other important announcements, the Manager's weekly report (always a local favorite), West Ways newsletter and the Community Outreach flyers. When you sign up, you may choose which notices you wish to receive.

RWA Calendar - From the Rotonda West website (rotondawest.org) you may search the monthly calendars to see what is happening. The calendar lists all bookings in the Community Center and beyond. This includes things such as club meetings, committee meetings, board meetings and when the building is closed for private events. All are booked through the RWA office by completing an application and receiving the RWA approval of your application.

West Ways – the RWA newsletter not only includes great articles, but also a section of upcoming events, as well as, many flyers for a better description of those events. Sign up at rotondawest.org to have it automatically emailed to you the first of each month.

Broadmoor Park entrance – the portable sign is updated weekly, usually on Sunday. It gives you the upcoming events of that week. Sometimes, there are so many events the sign is updated mid-week. As you drive by, check it out. Note: The Building and Grounds Committee is working towards getting a permanent sign...stay tuned.

Facebook – NEW: [Rotonda West Official Events Page](#) Join the page, where you will find information about events and activities happening in Rotonda West. The Community Outreach Committee is using this platform to post our flyers, along with notices of other events and activities happening in our community. It gives you the opportunity to look back at previously posted flyers and notices. We are starting with four basic rules: 1 - Commenting has been turned off, as this site is a bulletin board not for social media conversations. 2 - Activity must be happening within Rotonda West. 3 - We will not post regularly scheduled club meetings; however, will help advertise their special event, such seeking new members, or a special presentation. 4 – No soliciting/fundraising, unless it is an event sponsored, in part, by the Community Outreach Committee. While these parameters may change in the future, this is our starting point.

Please check out any and all of these sites to learn about what's happening in our community. More importantly, come join the fun in Rotonda West.

SPOTLIGHT ON DEBI SCHROEDER

By: Pattie Mihalik



Debi Schroeder

Photo By: Pattie Mihalik

Seven years ago when Debi Schroeder tried kayaking for the first time she fell in love.

“Kayaking gave me an incredible feeling of freedom and joy,” she said. “It’s the kind of feeling that reaches into my soul.”

For Valentine’s day the husband she lovingly calls Hunk bought her everything she needed for her new passion—a kayak, paddle, life vest and all accessories.

Call it a loving gift that keeps on giving to Debi and to many more women that she has introduced to the joys of kayaking.

A true organizer and people person, Debi wanted to share her newfound passion for kayaking with other women. When she realized there was no organized local group of women that kayaked, she decided to start one.

“I planned a local trip then put an announcement on Facebook inviting interested women to join me,” she said.

There were about a dozen women that came and encouraged the Rotonda West woman to continue the kayak trips.

Debi made good use of social media by creating Kayaking Gals, Relaxed Adventures in Englewood, FL.

So far through the years 523 women from Charlotte and Sarasota County have joined. There are no dues and the only requirement is that women are able to handle their kayak.

Debi has helped dozens of women get involved in the sport. Local trips are small with anywhere from eight to 30 women.

“It’s the perfect way to get to know other women and to build a network of friends,” Debi says.

She also facilitates friendships through luncheons, occasional special weekend trips and an annual day of education and fun at her house.

Those who know her understand the physical challenges Debi has to overcome in order to kayak.

In 2020 she came down with auto immune disease followed by devastating Lupus.

“Lupus kills us inside with inflammation that makes life difficult, she says.

A less determined woman would have given up. While she had to make serious lifestyle changes and her kayaking is limited from what it once was, she says is grateful for any day she can spend on the water.

From the time Debi was a young girl she had to deal with major physical challenges including a birth deformity and serious burns that covered much of her body.

She regards each day as a precious gift that she doesn’t take for granted.

She can be reached through her Kayaking Gals Facebook site.

DANCE PARTY



**ERIC STEFANIK (PICTURED ABOVE)
THE SEASONS OF SOUND
A HIT FOR ALL AGES**

Photos and Write-up by: Nadine Clough

On April 8th a dance party was enjoyed by over 80 Rotonda residents as Eric Stefanik played and sang along to popular hits from across the decades. As the sun went down, people rose from their chairs to dance and the fun really began. Hits from Elvis, Buddy Holly, The Everly Brothers, Rolling Stones, Queen, and many others filled the perfect evening air. Eric played crowd pleasers like *Play That Funky Music*, *YMCA*, *Lady Marmalade*, *Pretty Woman*, that made it impossible not to dance and have a great time.

Watch for future Music in the Park events coming this summer. Check West Ways and the Constant Contact messages. Flyers are also posted outside the RWA office.



**A MUSIC IN THE PARK EVENT
BROUGHT TO YOU BY
THE COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE**

Music in the Park

SPEAKEASY ALLEY

By: Deb Orchard, Community Outreach Committee

Our first Happy Hour Music in the Park saw over 100 of us in attendance. We had a great time. The weather on the patio was sunny and warm; but, with a great breeze to help cool us off a little. Rather than putting their chairs on the patio, many attendees opted to find shade under the few trees we have left following hurricane Ian. While the crowd was scattered around the patio area, it certainly didn't dampen their enthusiasm.

Speakeasy Alley treated us to their take on music we know, such as: Bruce Springsteen, Santana, U2, Fleetwood Mac, Tom Petty, and the Eagles. It was so special to have two of our own Rotonda residents, Karin Martin and Ralph Franco, perform for us along with their friend and left-handed guitar player, Roger Sigman. Karin is not only their lead singer, but plays the bongos and tambourine. Check local eateries to find them performing elsewhere in the area.

No Music in the Park has been scheduled for May. Over the summer we plan to move indoors for our musical treats. We're working on performances such as, Cary Price from Fletcher Music playing a concert on his electric organ. If you have attended one of his performances in the past, you know he is a high energy entertainer. We're also working on an evening of Name That Tune or Music Bingo. And, perhaps the return of our own Rotonda Singers. A full schedule of music will return in the fall, once the weather breaks and we can once again enjoy being outside for a few months.





Rotonda Nature: Bird Watching Walk

By: Merrill Horswill

On Saturday, March 30, thirty-five participants went on a Bird Watching Walk in Broadmoor Park led by Calvin Bernard, Charlotte County Natural Resources.

The enthusiastic group was excited to be able to identify 23 species of birds, and even saw three alligators in the ponds.

The bird checklist included: Anhinga, Great Egret, Little Blue Heron, Tri-colored Heron (Species of Special Concern), White Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill (Species of Special Concern), Wood Stork (Endangered), Mottled Duck, Black Vulture, Osprey, American Kestrel (Threatened), Red-Shouldered Hawk, Common Tern, Mourning Dove, Loggerhead Shrike, Blue Jay, Fish Crow, Northern Mockingbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Blackbird, and Boat-tailed Grackle. A great day to be outside in nature!

Did you know it's illegal to feed imperiled birds?

See: <https://birdgap.com/legal-feed-backyard-birds-florida/>

Community Outreach Committee, Rotonda Nature, plans to resume the Broadmoor Walks in the fall.



Left to Right: Loggerhead Shrike, Tri-Colored Heron, Birdwatchers
Bird Photos by Ann Weaver

ROTONDA NATURE

LEMON CREEK WILDFLOWER PRESERVE: CONVERTING A GOLF COURSE TO A NATURE PRESERVE

BY: MERRILL HORSWILL



**SPEAKER
EVA FURNER**

Lemon Creek Wildflower Preserve is an 80-acre property on Gasparilla Pines Boulevard, just south of Rotonda Boulevard West, our closest natural area. From the early 70's until 2006 the property operated as an 18-hole executive golf course. Lemon Bay Conservancy (LBC) purchased the site in 2010 after a major community fundraising effort and has converted the old golf course into a new nature wonderland creating a wildlife corridor with adjacent Charlotte County Amberjack Park.

Eva Furner, LBC board member and preserve committee co-chair, informed an audience of 30, about the history, fundraising, design elements and goals for the restoration project, the implementation process and showed some of the thousands of native wetland and upland plants added to the site to create a natural environment.

Lemon Creek Wildflower Preserve is an outstanding community resource and water filtration system for Lemon Bay. LBC volunteers have developed a trail network, a butterfly habitat, a bird watching blind, purple martin houses, a meditational labyrinth, outdoor classroom areas, the juvenile tarpon research in Lemon Creek and a variety of other features for daily LBC member use.

The public is invited to visit for free nature walks and educational events on a regular basis. For more information see: <https://lemonbayconservancy.org/wildflower-preserve/>



ROTONDA

CELEBRATES EARTH DAY MONDAY, APRIL 22nd



**BIKE RIDE,
TRASH PICK-UP, AND
BUTTERFLY GARDEN TOUR
HELP MAKE THE
EARTH HAPPY!**



RWA BIKE RIDE AND LITTER CLEAN-UP

Rita Lopienski, a member of the Community Outreach Committee, and Carl Williams, of White Marsh Ln, spear-headed the 4/22 meetup at the Community Park. Rita focused on Boulevard North & West, collecting 97 items (majority were recyclable beer cans & plastic bottles), and Carl covered the east neighborhoods, gathering 5 bags full of many kinds of items!



We hope everyone is respectful of our community, and takes time to pickup and help keep our neighborhoods clean!

The next organized bike ride is Monday, June 3rd, **WORLD BICYCLE DAY**, at 9 a.m. at the Community Park.

Thank you to the many individuals in Rotonda West that went out on their own to celebrate Earth Day by picking up trash.

Only one picture was sent in to West Ways from the other appreciated volunteers.



ROTONDA

CELEBRATES EARTH DAY

BUTTERFLY GARDEN TOUR WITH ANN WEAVER



Above: Host
Ann Weaver,
Master Gardener

The Broadmoor Park Butterfly Garden was a perfect way to spend the morning of Earth Day. Master Gardener and guide, Ann Weaver, gave an informative tour to a group of twenty people explaining all about the plants in the garden, their job as butterfly hosts, and how to have your own butterfly garden. She shared a handout on “Creating A Butterfly Garden”, and a list of the plants and trees in the garden. Handouts are shown below.



Butterfly Garden Plant List

Natives

Bahama cassia
Senna mexicana chapmanii
Firebush
Hamelia patens
Yaupon holly
Ilex vomitoria
Simpson's Stopper
Myrcianthes fragrans
Beautyberry
Callicarpa americana
Porterweed
Stachytarpheta jamaicensis
Frogfruit
Phyla nodiflora
Sunshine mimosa
Mimosa strigulosa
Stoke's aster
Stokasia laevis
Coral Honeysuckle
Lonicera semperv
Maypop
Passiflora incarnata
Corkcystern passionflower
Passiflora suberosa
Horsemint
Monarda punctata
Scorpiontail
Heliotropium angiospermum
Pickersweed
Portulaca cordata
Aquatic milkweed
Asclepias perennis
Jamaican Caper
Quadralla jamaicensis
Blackeyed Susan
Rudbeckia hirta
Elliot's love grass
Eragrostis eliotii
Snow squarestem
Melanthera nivea
Tampa verbena
Glandularia tampensis
Pencil Flower
Stylosanthes biflora

Exotics/Florida friendly

Jatropha
Panama rose
Porterweed
Phillipine violet
Goldenrod
Tropical milkweed
Giant milkweed
Firespike
Dune sunflower - native
Helianthus debilis

TREES

Fiddlewood - *Citharexylum spinosum*
Magnolia - *magnolia grandiflora*
Live Oak - *Quercus virginiana*
Guager Tree - *Cordia sebestena*

CREATING A BUTTERFLY GARDEN



Monarch Butterfly & Caterpillar on Milkweed

A SUCCESSFUL BUTTERFLY GARDEN NEEDS:

1. Adult Nectar Plants - attract and nourish butterflies. Plant native!
2. Larval Host Plants - unlike butterflies, larvae (caterpillars) have discriminating tastes, only utilizing certain plants for food.
3. Shelter - vegetation provides protection from temperature extremes, storms/rain, predators and locations for roosting/sleeping.
4. Water Source - provide easy and consistent access for drinking and thermoregulation.
5. **NO PESTICIDES!**

Online Resources for downloading:
<http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/SE-Monarch-butterfly-host-plant-brochure-final-2012.pdf>

http://www.florh1.ufl.edu/wildflower/brochure_side2_wildflowers.pdf



Weed Killer

1 quart white vinegar
1/4 cup salt
1/4 teaspoon Dawn
Blend thoroughly

1 gallon white vinegar
1 cup salt
1 T. Dawn
Blend !

Common Butterflies and Host Plants

Butterfly

Rhodes
Buckeyes
Hairbreak
Longwings
Monarch and Queen
Red Admiral
Skippers
Sulphur
Swallowtail, Giant
Swallowtail, Black
Viceroy

Larval Host

Partridge pea, Milk pea, Leadwort
Vervain, Mangroves
Wax Myrtle, Oaks, Coontie
Corkcystern Passionvine
Milkweed
Pellitory, Nettle
Mangrove, Saw Palmetto, Coconut Palm
Bidens, Cassia, Partridge Pea
Citrus cultivated and Wild Lime
Carrot family herbs, Mock Bishops Weed
Willows

Nectar Plants

Aster
Biden
Buddleia
Blackeyed Susan
Coral Honeysuckle
Coreopsis
Firebush
Firecracker
Flamevine
Gaillardia
Golden Dewdrop
Goldenrod
Native Lantana
Necklace Pod
Penta
Porterweed
Salvia
Tropical Sage
Verbena



Florida LAKEWATCH



**ROTONDA WEST AQUATICS SUB-COMMITTEE
HOLDS ANNUAL LAKEWATCH PRESENTATION
WEDNESDAY, MAY 22ND, FROM 4-8 P.M.
AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER**

What is Florida LakeWatch?

Florida LAKEWATCH is a citizen volunteer lake monitoring program that facilitates "hands-on" citizen participation in the management of Florida lakes, estuaries, rivers and springs through monthly monitoring activities.

Coordinated through the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences/FFGS Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences, the program has been in existence since 1986. In 1991, the Florida Legislature recognized the importance of the program and established Florida LAKEWATCH in the state statutes (Florida Statute 1004.49.). LAKEWATCH is now one of the largest lake monitoring programs in the nation with over 1800 trained citizens currently monitoring 525 lakes, 175 estuary stations, 125 river stations, 20 coastal dune lakes, and 10 spring runs in 57 counties.



LONG-TIME AQUATICS MEMBERS SHARE TWO INTERESTING ARTICLES

With the Annual LakeWatch meeting coming up on May 22, 2024 starting at 5 p.m., this is a perfect time to share with West Ways readers two articles written by long-time Aquatics group members, John House and Bob Winter. Rotonda West is fortunate to have these knowledgeable people, along with many of the other members of the Aquatics Group to help residents keep an eye on the quality of our waterways.

As residents of Rotonda West, we all enjoy the beauty of our waterways and the beauty of surrounding flora and fauna that healthy water provides. These articles contain important information on how we all can contribute to the well-being of canals and lakes.

IMPORTANT CANAL SYSTEM INFORMATION FOR RESIDENTS

Article By: John House, Aquatics Group Member

Question: How many miles of canals are there in Rotonda, what is their function and where did they come from? Approximate 28 miles of canals are an artificial system that was dug by the original developer with the goal of providing drainage and access to the Gulf. For various reasons, mostly environmental, that didn't happen and we are better off that it didn't. Direct Gulf access would have presented many problems from possible salt water intrusion (can't water you lawns with salt water) to a changed environmental system with salt and fresh water species competing for their environmental niches.

The canals are a drainage system for flood control which evolved into a significant ecosystem with freshwater aquatic plants, fish, turtles, birds and the ever present alligators. In order to help stabilize water level over time, weirs were installed at each end of the Rotonda River. During the winter dry season, water levels are considerably lower than during the summer rainy season but the weirs moderate this effect. Each end of the outer canal (Rotonda River) empties into Coral Creek which connects to the Gulf. When there is significant rainfall, water flows over the weirs, into Coral Creek and makes its way to the gulf thus providing flood control. This was evident during hurricane IAN which brought a deluge to the area but there was no significant flooding in Rotonda.

What happens to an artificial water body with no maintenance? It becomes overgrown with aquatic weeds such as cattails and eventually fills in with silt and disappears or becomes a swamp. Water can become stagnant (low oxygen levels) from decaying vegetation and can produce fish kills. Certain bacteria, (anaerobes which can live without oxygen), can generate hydrogen sulfide (odor). You sometimes smell it on parade circle from the waste water plant just off Cape Haze drive.

While the growth of aquatic plants must be controlled, there needs to be a balance because these plants remove excessive nutrients and provide a habitat for aquatic species which maintains the food chain necessary for a healthy ecological system to flourish. Excessive nutrients such as nitrogen (ammonium and nitrate compounds), and phosphates causes an overgrowth of aquatic plants and algae blooms. Fertilizer runoff, containing nitrogen compounds, is a major problem and phosphates are naturally present in soils in Florida. Increased construction will eventually result in more runoff and increased levels of nutrients in the canal system which will increase aquatic weeds and may produce algae blooms.

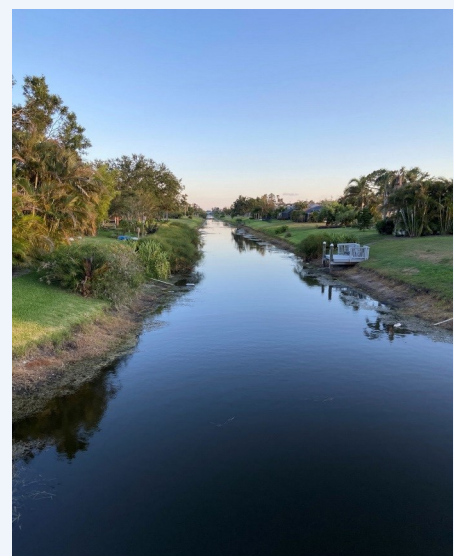
For residents that use canal water to irrigate their lawns, the water contains nutrients such that additional fertilizer application should be minimized. Once new sod has taken root, very little additional fertilizer should be necessary. In addition, we recommend that residents not fertilize or mow to the water's edge. This helps prevent erosion of the canal banks and keeps grass clippings and fertilizer out of the canals.

In a future article we will discuss our water sampling program conducted with the University of Florida and our own in-house sampling program. For more information on our water quality and sampling programs, or to assist in our water sampling program, please contact John House at (941) 697-8030 or Hank Killion at (941) 697-3453.



Lake at Broadmoor Park

Photo by: N. Clough



Canal in Pinehurst

Photo by: N. Clough

THE QUALITY OF OUR WATERWAYS IMPACTS THE QUALITY OF LIFE

Article and Photos by: Bob Winter, Aquatics Group Member

Why do people move to our little corner of paradise here on the Cape Haze Peninsula? Some come for the opportunity to fish in the pristine waters of Charlotte Harbor and Gulf of Mexico. Others come to be able to play Golf when their courses up north are blanketed with snow. Yet all new comers enjoy the sub tropic flora and fauna at the beach or along our local waterways. There is a common denominator for all these activities: it is abundant good quality water.

The 3 government agencies involved with the water in our canals are:

1-South West Water Management District (aka) swiftmud SWFWMD: Their Responsibility is insuring good water quality.

2-Fish and Game: Good water quality is required to provide habitat for a healthy fishery and the birds and other animals that rely on water for their livelihood.

3-Charlotte Country: maintains the infrastructure of our canals.

When RWA was visited by these 3 agencies last year we were given these recommendations for residents with the canal in their backyard:

- Do not mow or trim to water's edge. A small strip of uncut vegetation has many benefits for our canals.**
 - A. It is a buffer to keep lawn fertilizer out of the water.**
 - B. It allows space for native plants such as Duck Potatoes to grow.**
 - C. It provides habitat for wading birds like Egrets and Herons.**
- Do not apply Fertilizer near water's edge and obey Charlotte Country's fertilizer ordinance. Fertilizer that finds its way to the water will put excess nitrogen into the canal which will result in harmful and smelly algae blooms.**



Shoreline With Duck Potatoes and White Water Lilies



Duck Potato— Seeds are favorite food for ducks. Grows in and out of water at shoreline.



White Water Lily— Grows from shoreline to 3ft water depth. Roots keep water clean by absorbing excess nutrients. Pads release oxygen into the water through their leaves.

If these beneficial plants are allowed to grow they will provide cleaner water and beautiful views along our canal banks. The practice of environmental stewardship by canal property owners and RWA waterways contractor can be a big help in making our canals good habitat for wildlife.



ENJOY THE WILDLIFE OF OUR CANALS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY

- Meet & Greet Happy Hour,
Wednesday, May 1st @ 5 pm
Rotonda Community Park at Parade
Circle. Bring your own drink &
snack
- Trivia With Tim, Wednesday May 1st
@ 6:30 pm (Doors open at 6)
- Health & Wellness
Lecture and Participation -
"Posture & Pilates"
Monday, May 6th @ 9am—12:30 pm
Community Center
- Hurricane Preparedness
Tuesday, May 7th 5:30 pm-7pm
Community Center
- Rotonda West & The Vanderbilts
Tuesday, May 14th @ 2 p.m.
- Health & Wellness
"Benefits of Tai Chi"
Friday, May 17th @ 9-10 a.m.
Community Center
- BINGO! Sunday, May 19th @ 1 p.m.
- Rotonda & the Super Stars TV Show
Tuesday, May 21st @ 2-3 p.m.
Community Center
- Aquatics with Florida LakeWatch
Wednesday, May 22nd @ 5-8 p.m.
- Meet & Greet Tuesday, May 28th
@ 5 p.m. Potluck Dinner

JUNE

- Trivia with Tim
Wednesday, June 5th @ 6:30-8:30
pm (doors open at 6)
- Music in the Park Event
Thursday, June 20th @ 6:30-8:30 pm
(pending)
- Meet & Greet Potluck Dinner
Tuesday, June 25th @ 6-7 pm
- Ask a Master Gardener
Wednesday, June 26th @ 1-3 pm



Thank you to
Linda Kelly and Deb Orchard for
organizing holiday decorations.
Also, much appreciation to John Harvey
and Karen Harvey for all their help.

Looks great!

MEMORIAL DAY 5/27/2024



LET US REMEMBER AND HONOR THE BRAVE



**SOUTHWEST FLORIDA
HONOR FLIGHT- APRIL 2024**

**Veterans from southwest Florida visit Washington D.C.
to see the memorials that commemorate their service.**

**M
A
Y
1ST**

Trivia Night

LITERATURE &
SCIENCE

TOYS & GAMES

HISTORY & ANIMALS

MUSIC
TV & MOVIES

SPORTS AND MORE!

FREE!

Presented by Tim's Trivia
Tim's Trivia@yahoo.com
Timothy Dowd, originally
from Michigan, I have been
a college professor for
almost 30 years with
degrees in English,
philosophy, sociology,
psychology, history and
humanities. I have been
doing TRIVIA for almost 20
years; also music bingo,
scavenger hunts, hosting
various events as well as
DJ-ing dances of all kinds.
Recently have been named
the number one TRIVIA in
Southwest Florida!

What: Trivia - by team or individual.

When: 1st Wednesday of the month April 3rd, May 1st & June 5th.

Where: RWA Community Center, 646 Rotonda Circle

Doors open at 6:00 pm with play beginning at 6:30 pm.

Bring your own drinks and snacks and be prepared to have fun and be challenged!

Open to RWA property owners, residents, renters, and their guests.

Questions? communityoutreach@rotondawest.org Please do not contact the RWA Admin Office.

Hosted by the  Community Outreach Committee

TRIVIA NIGHT KEEPS EVERYONE GUESSING!

By: Deb Orchard

Trivia 4/3/24

It was a night of the unexpected. First, a storm was threatening to bring heavy rains and high winds, just as we should be gathering for the evening. Then, Tim Dowd didn't show. He didn't answer text or phone (very unusual). Finally, after reaching out to a family member, I learned he was at the hospital in the emergency department. (Fortunately, he was released the following morning and was feeling better). When I made the announcement just after 6:30 that we couldn't reach Tim, sadly, a

The blessing of the evening was Vanessa Preston. She, her husband Kyler and daughter Charlotte were vacationing with family, Vivian & Tom Power. Vanessa stepped forward, volunteered her services, stating she found 100 trivia questions on a website and she was willing to be our trivia host. To say she did a wonderful job is an understatement. In fact, several teams asked whether we could talk her into moving to Florida and being a permanent trivia person. Our heartfelt thank you goes out to Vanessa and her family. And, the Mighty Mouse award "Here I Come to Save the Day" goes to Vanessa.

Everyone seemed to have a great time. And, are looking forward to "the next time". Speaking of which, Tim felt so bad that he was in the hospital and didn't think to reach out to us, and with good reason, that he has offered to do a free session sometime in the future.

**TRIVIA
NIGHT**



COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE
ROTONDA HEALTH & FITNESS
PRESENT CLASSES
WITH DR. FRANCINE FINUCO OF ROTONDA

By: Rita Lopienski

Dr Francine Finuco, of Rotonda West, will present both programs at the Community Center.

Dr. Francine, a retired chiropractor, became interested in Pilates as a way to help her patients strengthen their backs. She quickly saw the benefits for the entire body and became passionate about the Pilates method. Her professional degree is from Cleveland Chiropractic College, in Kansas City, MO. She has advanced training in Applied Kinesiology, Acupuncture and Nutritional analysis. Dr. Francine is certified through Power Pilates, Peak Pilates, on all Pilates equipment, as well as Mat certification. She has been teaching for 16 years.



PILATES & POSTURE

Monday, May 6th, 9:00 a.m.

While Pilates is a full-body workout, there are targeted exercises for improving balance and posture.

Pilates helps with posture as it helps to engage the deep core muscles in what was originally known as 'the powerhouse' – the abdominals, back and pelvic floor – which enables you to relax your shoulders and neck and alleviate pressure on your hips, legs and feet, in turn, improving your posture. Learn simple exercises you can do at home to improve posture.

Please bring a mat for those joining in the experiential section.

TAI CHI

Friday, May 17th, 9:00 a.m.

Tai chi is an internal Chinese martial art practiced for self-defense and health. Known for its slow, intentional movements, tai chi has practitioners worldwide and is particularly popular as a form of gentle exercise and moving meditation, with benefits to mental and physical health.

Tai Chi is done all standing, but may also be practiced in a sturdy chair.

Some of the many benefits of practicing Tai Chi: preventing falls in older adults in the community, osteoarthritis, Parkinson disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and cognitive functioning. This gentle form of exercise can help maintain strength, flexibility, and balance, and could be the perfect activity for the rest of your life.

Weather permitting, the experiential section will be outside on the new patio.

3rd Sunday of each month!



1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Doors open at 12:15 pm

ONLY 1 DATE LEFT! 5/19

Invited to join in on the fun are property owners, residents, renters, and their guests.

Questions? communityoutreach@rotondawest.org
Please do not contact the RWA Admin Office.

646
Rotonda Circle
RWA
Community Center

Must be
18
to play.

Play
begins
promptly
at
1:00 pm

Snacks & water
available, or
bring your own.
Covered
beverage
container please.



Community Outreach Committee

MEET & GREET



Tuesday, May 28 from 5-7pm

RWA Community Center - 646 Rotonda Circle

Open to all RWA members and their guests

Bring a dish to share, and your drink of choice and cup. We will provide the rest of the tableware.

To try and even out the dishes, we are suggesting the following (we will rotate this every month):

If your last name begins with:

A-H - Salad or Side

I-P - Main Dish

(ie: casseroles, baked pasta dish, etc.)

Q-Z- Dessert

This is a great way to meet
your neighbors and make
new friends!



Follow
-US- 
for Community Outreach Events.
Please Follow us on Facebook at

Rotonda West
Official Events Page



Rotonda West
Association

Presented by the
Community Outreach
Committee

There will be
a 50/50 pot

MEET & GREET

Happy Hour

Wednesday, May 1st,
at 5pm

FOR ALL ROTONDA RESIDENTS
(THAT INCLUDES SANDS, LAKES,
HEIGHTS, ETC) AND GUESTS.
ROTONDA COMMUNITY PARK
ON PARADE CIRCLE. BYOB,
BRING A SNACK IF YOU WOULD
LIKE!

COME MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS AND
MAKE SOME NEW FRIENDS AND
HAVE SOME FUN!!!!





GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club, Inc.

Gwen Grace, President

MAY 2024



The year is 1974 and the cost of gas was \$.53 per gallon, a dozen eggs was \$.78, and a loaf of bread was \$.35. There were 600 homes in Rotonda West and a group of 43 women became GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club. One of the first major projects was to have a flagpole erected at the Cape Haze Drive traffic circle as a Community Bicentennial project which won a Nation Award.



Now on May 1st we celebrate 50 years of community service. We are proud of our accomplishments, the friendships we have made, of the women who went before us, and the difference we have made both locally and around the world.

Save the Date for October 10th when we are having our Fall Fashion Show Fundraiser. Tickets and sponsorships are available. We are raising funds for Greater Englewood Kids Nees and for Lemon Bay High School Scholarships.

If you are interested in joining GFWC RWWC you are very welcome to attend. Our next General Meeting is Thursday, May 16th at the RWA Community Center. We take a break over the summer so the next General Meeting will be September 19, 2024. The social hour begins at 9 a.m. and the business meeting starts promptly at 10 a.m. This month we will induc new members and our speaker will be from Honor Flights. We will also have a pizza lunch after the meeting. The cost is \$10.



Above: At our April meeting, or Civic engagement Community Service Program chair presented a check for \$775 to the Charlotte County Police K-9 Unit for a K-9 protective vest. Sgt. Musgrove attended the meeting to accept the check.



Above: Our Environmental Community Service Program members participated in the Stump Pass Beach Clean-up. The club also donated to *Keep Charlotte Beautiful*.



Above: Members of the Englewood Chamber of Commerce made a visit to the RWA Community Center to learn more about the Rotonda West Woman's Club and about the Rotonda West community

RWA WEST WAYS
CHARLOTTE COUNTY NEWS ITEMS

By Sam Besase

The first 3 bridges (of 17) here in Rotonda West needing repairs and maintenance and being brought up to date on current US Department of Transportation bridge standards have been completed on time and are now open.

- Rotonda Circle bridge between Mark Twain Lane and Bunker Road
- Rotonda Circle bridge between Annapolis and Caddy (high street numbers), near Rotonda Blvd. West.
- 3 completed – 14 more to be completed.

Lane closures are occurring at the following BRIDGE location in Rotonda West until approximately May 6, 2024:

- Cape Haze Drive BRIDGE over Rotonda River until approximately May 6, 2024, this work appears to be on schedule.
- Rebel Court BRIDGE is now OPEN over Rotonda River.

The new news on the Hurricane Ian damaged ROTONDA BLVD SOUTH BRIDGE is that the Charlotte County Commissioners wrote a letter to the US FEMA Director in Washington DC, asking for her review and expedited resolution for this bridge. Also, Congressman Greg Steube is engaged in resolving this issue with FEMA.

The issue is money: \$312K – FEMA vs \$1.2M Charlotte County.

Charlotte County Public Works has also advised that there are intermittent lane closures on PLACIDA because of new paving for another few weeks. Expect delays!

The intersection of Gasparilla and Rotonda Blvd. East is slated for a traffic light, however, there are supply chain issues with the computer chips that operate the signals, therefore, the traffic light (being paid for by the new high-end RV park), is about 15 or more months from installation (~July 2025). Charlotte County has issued a purchase request to interested bidders.

The next quarterly Rotonda West Streets & Drainage meeting is at 9:30am Thursday June 20, 2024, at the Charlotte County annex building on San Casa. Please consider attending regarding these key MSBU non-ad valorem tax issues:

- **Rotonda Boulevard South Bridge closed for up to 36 months (FEMA).**
- **Rotonda Bridges Repair Cycles. Perhaps 2 to 4 more bridges (of 18) might start in 2024.**
- **Rotonda Blvd North & East & West Bridges – repair cycles**
- **Charlotte County – Multiple Swale Drainage Issues throughout Rotonda West.**
- **Road Paving Schedule pushed back to perhaps late 2025.**
- **All Rotonda Bridges are rated at 80,000 lbs. GVW.**
- **Residents or their contractors are MOWING all the way down to the Ponds, this is not recommended by FWC or SWFTMUD or Charlotte County.**
- **Also, Residents or their contractors are FERTILIZING all the way down to the Ponds, this is not recommended by FWC or SWFTMUD or Charlotte County.**
- **Charlotte County Commissioners alerted residents that there is TOO MUCH NITROGEN in local waterways.**
- **When to Call Charlotte County Public Works (941-575-3600) if:**
- **Water is threatening to enter your house or garage.**
- **Deep Water (6 inches or more) is on the roads.**
- **Water remains in the swale for LONGER than 72 hours after the last rain event.**

ATTENTION RESIDENTS

The RWA Buildings & Grounds Committee shall be hosting the:

- **University of Florida – LAKEWATCH presentation on Wednesday May 22nd from 5pm to 8pm in the RWA Community Center.**
- **The topic is the condition of our canals and waterways. Mark your calendars, this is always a well-attended event. Snacks and refreshments are provided!**

OFFICE STAFF

Derrick Hedges
Manager

Tammy Birdsong
Administrator

**Nancy Schwechel and
Pablo Guardiola**
Administrator and
Deed Restrictions

Jenny Bulle
Bookkeeper

Annette Casteel
Administrator and
Minutes Clerk

Sheryl Ann Nowicki
Administrator

Joe Harris
Communications Specialist

Jack Lanar
Compliance Officer

MAINTENANCE STAFF

Wayne Taylor

Dale Anderson

Bill Simmons

Craig Brown

Doug Smith

**THANK YOU TO OUR
WONDERFUL STAFF**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024

Andy VanScyoc, President

David Kelly, 1st Vice President

Sam Besase, Treasurer

Karen Harvey, Secretary

Les Goodman, Director

Jack Metz, Director

Peter Traverso, Director



WEST WAYS STAFF

Nadine Clough, Editor
westways@rotondawest.org

Connie Smith, Writer

Pattie Mihalik, Writer

Deb Orchard, Writer

Rita Lopienski, Writer

Merrill Horswill, Writer

Sam Besase, Contributor

Gwen Grace, GFWC Woman's Club

David Perry, Neighborhood Watch

Sarah Swiatek, Guest Writer

David Pulaski, Photographer

Wayne Mengel, Photographer

Nadine Clough, Layout & Design