

WESTWAYS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION, INC.

Emailed to 5,995 Rotonda Residents

JANUARY 2025



E-NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION



ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING ADDITION PASSES

By: Nadine Clough



History was made at the RWA Annual Meeting on December 5th, 2024. As noted by Board President Andy VanScyoc and by accountant Geoff Lorah, it was the first time that an expenditure listed on the ballot and voted on by Rotonda residents was passed.

The building addition to the Administrative Office issue was put to a vote and handily passed by a vote of 1326-309 in favor of the addition. The Board of Directors had made the effort through a Town Hall meeting, and other informational articles, to inform voters of the facts of the building proposal. The united message from the board was to vote for the addition, and it was made clear that there was a real need for the addition and that there would not be any increase in HOA fees because of it.

The second issue appearing on the ballot was in regard to the Rollover of Excess Membership Income over Membership Expenses as provided by IRS Ruling 70-604. This item passed 1549-49, resulting in the rollover of funds.



Accountant Geoff Lorah
announces results of vote.

VOLUME 29 ISSUE 1

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

RWA Annual Meeting & Voting

RWA Committee Meeting Times

Christmas Parade Wrap-up

A Very Broadway Christmas

Sea Turtle Hatchlings

Charlotte County News Items

Upcoming Events

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

Website address:
www.rotondawest.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01 Building Addition Passes

03 Committee Meeting Times

04 Parade Wrap-Up

05 A Very Broadway Christmas

07 Turtle Hatchlings

09 Music in the Park

10 Volunteer Job Log

14 MSBU News

17 Calendar of Events

18 Nature Presentations

23 Pilates

24 Stroke Awareness

25 Shredding Hunger

27 Neighborhood Watch

28 Woman's Club

29 Coast Guard Auxilliary

30 Staff



RWA COMMITTEES AT WORK- MEETING SCHEDULE



ALL MEETINGS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE ON ZOOM

<u>COMMITTEE</u>	<u>DAY</u>	<u>TIME</u>
BOARD OF DIRECTORS	2ND THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH	2 P.M.
ADMINISTRATIVE/PERSONNEL COMMITTEE	“AS NEEDED” BASIS	TBA (not on zoom)
BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE	2ND MONDAY OF EACH MONTH	9:30 A.M.
BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE	2ND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH	10:30 A.M.
COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE	1ST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH	9:30 A.M.
COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE	DATES VARY (CHECK CALENDAR)	2 P.M.
DEED RESTRICTION COMMITTEE	4TH WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH	9 A.M.
ELECTION COMMITTEE	SPECIFIC TO ELECTION SCHEDULE	CHECK CALENDAR
RESIDENTIAL MODIFICATION COMMITTEE	2ND & 4TH TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH	9 A.M.

2024 Rotonda West Association Christmas Parade

Judges:

Meghan Hedges
Kathy Powell
Erin Halstead

Trophy Sponsor & Judge Chauffeur

The Island Team / Paradise Exclusive
Parsley Baldwin Realty & Vacation Rentals
Michelle Finley & Kendal Canonico



WENG RADIO Broadcast Hosts

Kerri Black
Ken "KB" Birdsong
Stacy

Parade Coordinators:

Pam Pierce & Janet Mamon

Judge Wrangler:

Tammy Birdsong

PHOTOGRAPHERS:

David Pulaski
Wayne Mengel

PARADE WINNER CATEGORIES

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS:

ROTONDA UKULELE BAND

BEST COMMERCIAL:

ELITE INSPECTIONS

BEST ORGANIZATION:

ROYAL ORDER OF PONCE DE LEON

CONQUISTADORS

BEST USE OF THEME:

TERRA VERDE LAWN CARE

BEST PARADE PERFORMANCE:

LEMON BAY HIGH SCHOOL BAND



A VERY BROADWAY CHRISTMAS



45 Rotonda Residents Enjoy Mesmerizing Show!

By: Nadine Clough

Debi Schroeder organizing a very successful bus trip to Tampa for Rotonda residents. Broadway talent did not disappoint providing a magical Christmas treat to the audience. Along the way, the luxury coach bus stopped at “Der Dutchman” restaurant which offered an Amish style “made from scratch” buffet, huge salad bar and homemade pies that were reportedly melted in your mouth. Guests also enjoyed the two story gift shop (with many homemade gifts) experience as well.



Debi Schroeder, trip organizer



Luxury bus with a great driver!



Friday, December 20th was a great day for a Christmas Show!



PICTURES FROM *A VERY BROADWAY CHRISTMAS*



It's Not Easy When You're a Sea Turtle Hatchling

By: Connie Smith



Of the five species of sea turtles in Florida waters, four species may be found off the coast of Charlotte County. Some 35 Rotonda West residents heard Charlotte County Parks and National Resources' Suzanne Derheimer discuss these fascinating creatures, their local nesting habits and what can be done to enhance their reproductive success.

The four sea turtles that inhabit the Gulf of Mexico along Charlotte County are:

- Loggerhead
- Green
- Kemps ridley
- Leatherback

The hawksbill sea turtle is only found on Florida's east coast.

The loggerhead succeeds the most at laying and hatching turtle nestlings here with some 80-90%. Green sea turtles are next with nearly 10-20%. In 2023 of the 2,278 turtle nests in Charlotte County, 1,992 were Loggerhead and 285 were green sea turtles, Derheimer said. One was a kemps ridley.

"When we have a kemps ridley nest, everyone comes running," she said. "It's rare." In the last five years, there have been four kemps ridley nests and three nests have successfully produced hatchlings in the past three years.

But the most stunning sea turtle nesting achievement was this year when a first-ever leatherback nest was documented on Manasota Key beach. Volunteers noted the nest produced 12 healthy hatchlings, 67 unhatched eggs and 26 eggs with hatchlings that were unsuccessful at emerging. The leatherback sea turtle is unique due to its large size – up to six feet in length and weighing up to 1,500 pounds.

But it's a wonder there are any sea turtles at all, with the uphill challenges a typical hatchling must overcome to survive. Sea turtles are one of the world's most endangered species.

A female sea turtle will come ashore from three to five times a nesting season (May 1-October 31). Except for the ridley kemp, which will nest during the day, all other sea turtles predominantly nest at night. Like salmon that only reproduce where they were spawned, sea turtles only nest upon their natal beaches. Just one of a thousand hatchlings will survive to return.

A female sea turtle may not nest every time she comes to shore. Called a "false crawl", the female will turn around some 50% of the time and return to the sea. When she does lay eggs in the nest she has created, people, birds, coyotes, armadillos, crabs and raccoons are just some of the predators that can interfere with the eggs reaching maturity.

Continued...

Right: Suzanne Derheimer makes a point about sea turtle survival during a recent presentation to Rotonda West residents.

Derheimer is an employee with Charlotte County Parks and Natural Resources.

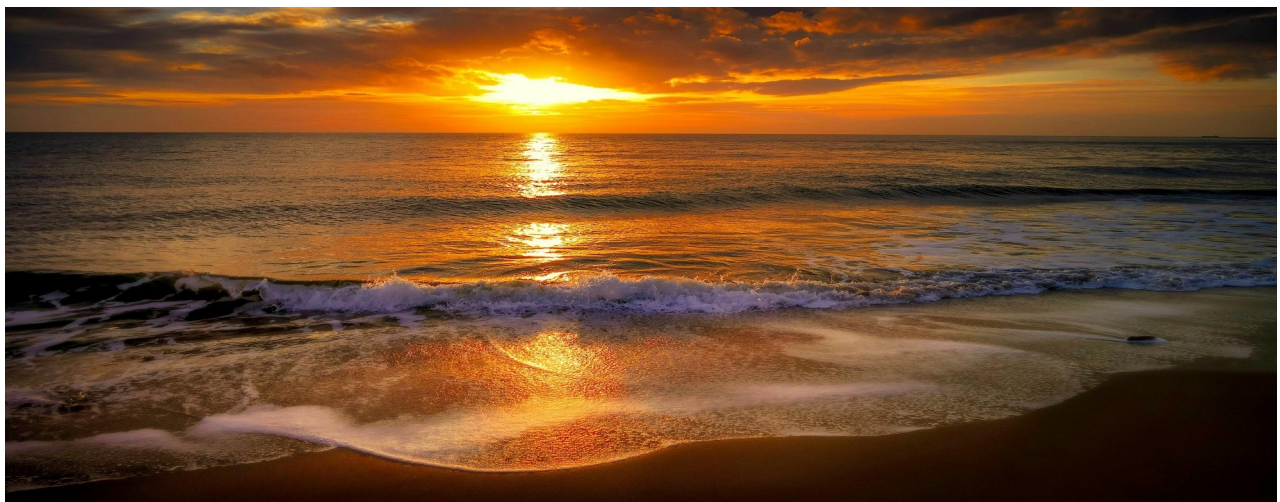


Once the hatchlings emerge, they instinctively make a bee-line for the brightest horizon (ideally the moon on the water) but other bright lights from beach homes, flashlights from beach walkers, a sandcastle or holes left by digging beach-goers, or possibly predators, can keep them from reaching their goal. A delay in reaching the water can use up much-needed energy by the hatchlings. When a hatchling reaches the surf, it dives into a wave and rides the undertow out to sea. A “swim frenzy” continues from 24 to 48 hours until the young one reaches deep water where it is less vulnerable to underwater predators.

It is the temperature of the sand that determines whether a hatchling will be male or female. With the usual southwest Florida temperatures, Charlotte County hatchlings are female, although as Derheimer said, “scientists say you can never say never, but also, you can never say always.”

Sea turtles grow very slowly and can take up to 50 years to reach the age where they can reproduce.

Three hurricanes affecting Charlotte County beaches during nesting season (Debby, Helene and Milton), did lessen the number of hatchlings, but a dedicated number of volunteers, with county and state oversight, are doing a better job of discovering, protecting and monitoring nesting sites on nearby beaches, hopefully leading to a strong future population of sea turtles in the Gulf of Mexico.

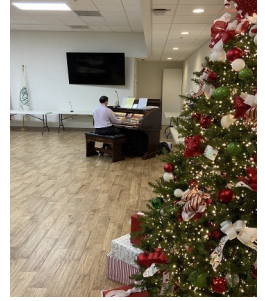




Jonny Puma

MUSIC IN THE PARK

By: Deb Orchard
Community Outreach Committee



Cary Price

We had two Music in the Park performances in December. Both were Christmas music themed.

For our first one, we enjoyed the music of Jonny Puma on Wednesday, December the 4th. Unfortunately, the weather didn't cooperate for us to be on the patio, as planned. The day turned out to be windy and in the low 60's, moving us indoors. While we had a smaller group, the crowd was enthusiastic and all seemed to enjoy the 90 minutes of all holiday music. Jon played more than 20 classic songs we grew up hearing; including, Blue Christmas, We Three Kings and Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree and The Grinch, complete with a guitar solo. He began his show with "It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas" and his last themed song was "Have Yourself of Merry Little Christmas" before singing his signature finale "Hallelujah".

For our second one, Cary Price from Fletcher Music brought his Lowrey organ to our Community Center for a 2-hour concert of all seasonal music. He is such a talent. We heard sounds of a pipe organ, bell choir and more traditional organ music. We also enjoyed ice cream sundaes and trivia during intermission. He never disappoints and we look forward to having him come perform for us.

Thank you to all who came out to join us for these seasonal performances. Watch the calendar for performances in 2025. Weather permitting, we will be outside the end of March for another live performance. Happy New Year everyone.



**THANK YOU TO GRACE CHETCUTI AND HER HELPERS FOR
THE BEAUTIFUL HOLIDAY DECORATIONS!**



ATTENTION 2024 VOLUNTEERS

You are responsible for filling out your own JOB LOG

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER GUIDELINES

Dear Members,

In an effort to reach a compromise on the often controversial topic of who is invited to the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner held each spring, and the confusion on whose dinner will be paid for, the BOD approved new guidelines at their May 2024 meeting.

These guidelines will begin this year, 2024, and will be implemented at the March 2025 Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. It is important that you read and understand these guidelines so that you can keep track of your volunteering for 2024. The Guidelines and the Job Log are on the following pages.

The Rotonda West Association values its volunteers and wants to properly and fairly acknowledge them all.

Thank you.



RWA VOLUNTEER JOB LOG (Jan.-Dec. 2024)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

<u>RWA EVENT/JOB</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMMITTEE NAME</u>
----------------------	-------------	-----------------------

1. _____		
----------	--	--

TIME TO FILL OUT AND TURN IN YOUR VOLUNTEER JOB LOG

TIME EXTENDED TO JANUARY 15TH, make sure
to send in this form to:

Nadine Clough Volunteer Dinner Event Coordinator

Use one of the following options:

1. Text photo of form to: Nadine at 518-598-6565
2. Email photo of form to: NFC1138@yahoo.com
3. Snail mail completed form to: Nadine Clough, 265 Mariner Lane, Rotonda West, Florida, 33947

*This form must be submitted in order to receive your invitation to the
RWA Volunteer Dinner/Dance event to be held on March 16th, 2025 at The Hills

*RWA BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS DO NOT NEED TO SUBMIT FORM

Questions??? Text or email Nadine. See above.

THANK YOU!

IT IS THE VOLUNTEER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO
FILL OUT THIS FORM!

Coordinator will check box



RWA VOLUNTEER JOB LOG (Jan.-Dec. 2024)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

RWA EVENT/JOB	DATE	COMMITTEE NAME
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____
7. _____	_____	_____
8. _____	_____	_____

At the end of the calendar year, hand in this sheet
in to the Community Outreach Committee, or to
the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner Coordinator.

THANK YOU!

**IT IS THE VOLUNTEER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO
FILL OUT THIS FORM!**

RED GROUP

BLUE GROUP

☐
☐

Coordinator will check box

RWA VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER



WHO IS INVITED? ALL RWA MEMBERS WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED FOR RWA EVENTS IN 2024 (JAN.-DEC)

WHOSE DINNER IS PAID FOR? DEPENDENT ON NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS (see below)

WHAT TYPE OF EVENT WILL IT BE? SIT-DOWN DINNER

WHERE WILL IT BE HELD? THE HILLS, ROTONDA WEST

WHEN WILL IT BE HELD? MARCH 16, 2025; Time: 5 pm Social Hour, 6 pm Dinner

There will be two categories that RWA volunteers would fall into:

RED GROUP

- Any Rotonda resident who volunteered in the year 2024 for an official RWA event will be invited to the RWA Volunteer Appreciation Event.
- Any Rotonda resident who volunteered for 1-4 RWA events will have their dinner paid for, BUT will be required to pay for their spouses/guests dinner.
- All RWA volunteers will be required to track their own volunteer jobs on a provided VOLUNTEER JOB LOG form.
- All RWA volunteers must turn in VOLUNTEER JOB LOG to the Community Outreach Committee or the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner event coordinator at the end of the calendar year.

BLUE GROUP

- Any Rotonda resident who volunteered in the year 2024 for an official RWA event will be invited to the RWA Volunteer Appreciation Event.
- Any Rotonda resident who volunteered for 5 or more RWA events will have their dinner AND their spouse/guest dinner paid for.
- All RWA volunteers will be required to track their volunteer jobs on a provided VOLUNTEER JOB LOG form.
- All RWA volunteers must turn in VOLUNTEER JOB LOG to the Community Outreach Committee or the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner event coordinator at the end of the calendar year.
- Any person serving on the one of the RWA standing committees will not be required to fill out the VOLUNTEER JOB LOG form.

Possible RWA volunteer opportunities: Committees, Christmas parade, holiday decorating, Aquatic sub-committee water sampling, butterfly garden weeding, event welcome tables, volunteer appreciation event, photography at RWA events, event write-ups for WEST WAYS, Shred Day assistance, Celebrate the Circle, RWA Open House, serving ice cream at special events, Meet & Greet help, BINGO help, and many more.

- Proposal accepted by BOD at May 9, 2024 meeting
- Proposal accepted by Community Outreach Committee at May 2024 meeting

CHARLOTTE COUNTY NEWS ITEMS

By Sam Besase

The Rotonda West Streets & Drainage Municipal Services Benefit Unit (MSBU) finally met on Thursday December 19, 2024. The September meeting was cancelled due to hurricanes DEBBIE-HELENE-MILTON.

- Paving of the GAS TAX ROADS/BRIDGES is anticipated to start on January 6, 2025.
- ROTONDA BLVD NORTH–ROTONDA BLVD EAST–ROTONDA BLVD WEST–PARADE CIRCLE
- The Paving Schedule for the other 60 plus miles of roads here in the Rotonda West MSBU shall probably begin in the 2nd half of 2025. GREAT NEWS!
- Standard crosswalks will be installed at the 6 crosswalks on Parade Circle.
- Election of MSBU Officers has been deferred until the March, 2025 meeting.

As you can imagine, Rotonda BRIDGE work has been delayed several months due to the recent series of Hurricanes.

The next 6 bridges work should now start in March of 2025 and be completed by the end of the 2nd quarter of 2025. Thus, at that time there should be 10 of the 18 bridges completed. It takes approximately 8 weeks to complete repairs and maintenance per bridge. Traffic shall be maintained. Please observe posted construction/detour signs.

1. [Rotonda Bridge #014100:](#)

NEAR 407 ROTONDA CIRCLE–Between Fairway Road & Mariner Lane

2. [Rotonda Bridge #014101:](#)

NEAR 517 ROTONDA CIRCLE–Between Fairway Road & Mariner Lane

3. [Rotonda Bridge #014104:](#)

NEAR 563 ROTONDA CIRCLE–Between Broadmoor Lane & Sportsman Road

4. [Rotonda Bridge #014107:](#)

NEAR 727 ROTONDA CIRCLE–Between Long Meadow Lane & Marker Road

5. [Rotonda Bridge #014060:](#)

NEAR 45 ROTONDA CIRCLE–Between Caddy Rod & Annapolis Lane

6. [Rotonda Bridge #014063:](#)

NEAR 211 ROTONDA CIRCLE–Between Bunker Road & Mark Twain Lane

- 4 completed – 14* more MSBU bridges to be completed.

Meanwhile, the construction work schedule for the bridges over the Rotonda River at ROTONDA BLVD NORTH and ROTONDA BLVD EAST and ROTONDA BLVD WEST shall be provided by Charlotte County at the next MSBU meeting.

These 3 bridges are paid for by the Charlotte County GAS TAX fund, NOT paid for by this MSBU.

*The latest news on the Hurricane Ian damaged ROTONDA BLVD SOUTH BRIDGE is that in April of 2024, 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 between FEMA and Charlotte County. NO NEW NEWS FROM FEMA!!! Charlotte County is moving forward with plans for this bridge, should hear something at the next MSBU meeting.

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

I am in continuous follow up in person and by phone and email on this topic with the Charlotte County Commissioners. There is no additional news yet.

Later in the 2nd-3rd quarter of 2025, 5 more Rotonda bridges shall begin the bidding process and work on these 5 bridges shall be later in 2nd half of 2025.

- **Bridge Rehabilitation #6 – Bridges 014105 and 014106 – Weiler Engineering Corp. will soon present 100% design plans.**
- **Bridge Rehabilitation #7 – Bridges 014100, 014112 and 014123 – Request for design bids in progress.**

TRAFFIC LIGHT: The intersection of Gasparilla & Rotonda Blvd East is slated for a traffic light. There are supply chain issues, therefore, the traffic light (being paid for by the new high-end RV park), is about 6 to 9 months from installation (~spring 2025). Charlotte County has issued a purchase request to interested bidders.

The 14 streetlight poles on the 4 bridges over the Rotonda River have been repaired/replaced. RBN & RBE & RBW & REBEL COURT

There is going to be a SPECIAL MSBU meeting in January, 2025 related to BUDGET. The next regular quarterly Rotonda West Streets & Drainage meeting shall be held on Thursday March 27, 2024 at the San Casa Charlotte County facility. The last MSBU meeting was cancelled due to Hurricane Milton.

- **All Rotonda Bridges are currently structurally sound**
- **Rotonda West bridges (all are over 40 years old), they are rated at 80,000 lbs. GVW.**
- **Residents or their contractors are MOWING all the way down to the Ponds, this practice 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 practice is not recommended by FWC or SWFTMUD or Charlotte County.**
- **Also, residents are leaving their GRASS CLIPPINGS in the roadway, this practice is not recommended by FWC or SWFTMUD or Charlotte County**
- **Charlotte County Commissioners alerted residents that there is TOO MUCH NITROGEN in local waterways.**
- **The RWA canals are in good shape per water test samples taken monthly by the RWA Aquatics group.**

The Charlotte County Commissioners met recently regarding Proposed MSBU Rates for 2025. There are 2 MSBU's (Municipal Services Benefits Unit) that apply to RWA residents:

1. **ROTONDA WEST STREETS & DRAINAGE MSBU:**
2. **WEST CHARLOTTE COUNTY STORMWATER MSBU:**

The MSBU rates for both of the above MSBU's here in the Rotonda area shall remain the same
– **NO INCREASE IN MSBU RATES FOR 2025.**

Swale Drainage Issues:

We had a wet summer! From June – August, [43 inches](#) fell. Then Tropical Storm Debby and Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton!

Charlotte County advised that the plan is to put a segment of **Greenbelt** out for bid for swale ditch maintenance. From there, the County can estimate what the entire sections would cost to remediate and then create a multi-year budget to do so. That would mean an increase in MSBU rates probably in 2026.

Drainage Pipes to be lined in advance of paving:

Rotonda Blvd E @ Crevalle Road near Fiddlers Green, line from catch basin to canal – done

- Rotonda Blvd E @ Cape Haze trail head – line road crossing pipe – done
- Sunnybrook Blvd @ Greenway Ave – line double barrel pipe – in progress.

There are **DOZENS** of open drainage work orders in Rotonda West. Public Works will get to all of them. These are a few that I have asked about lately.

- 72 to 86 **White Marsh Lane**
- 248-250-252-254-256 & 252-253 **Rotonda Blvd North**
- 57 & 61 **Pine Valley Lane 2 & 4 Oakland Hills Ct**
- **33 Clubhouse**
- **243 White Marsh.**
- **59 Pine Valley Lane**

I hope that answers many of your questions between now and the next meeting on December 19, 2024, where you'll see the annual presentation on the Rotonda West work program.

Respectfully, Sam Besase – Advisory Board Member–Rotonda West Streets & drainage MSBU.

(questions, please call 281-923-4041, I'll try to get you an answer)

The other MSBU members are: Carol Delucca–Laura Ingrassia–Nicholas Kotzalas–Leo VanOrden

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

J
A
N
U
A
R
Y

2
0
2
5

- 1/1 Wednesday, All Day: RWA OFFICE & COMMUNITY CENTER CLOSED
- 1/6, 1/20, 1/27 Monday, 10-11 am: Tai Chi
- 1/7 Wednesday, 5:30-7 pm: Charlotte County Presentation on Scrub Jays
- 1/8 Thursday, 2-4 pm: Charlotte County Presentation on Wild Hogs
- 1/10, 1/17, 1/24, 1/31 Friday, 9-10 am: Pilates Mat Fitness
- 1/15 Wednesday, 2-4 pm: Butterfly Garden 101
- 1/15 Wednesday, 6:30-8:30 pm (doors open at 6 pm) Trivia Night With Tim
- 1/19 Sunday, 1-4 pm: BINGO!
- 1/21 Tuesday, 9 am– 3 pm: GFWC RWWC One Blood Drive, RWA Marina Parking Lot
- 1/22 Wednesday, 3-4 pm: “Stroke Prevention-Signs & Treatment”
- 1/23 Thursday, 5:30-7:30 pm: Presentation on Pythons, Tegu & Iguanas
- 1/25 Saturday, 9 am-Noon: “Shredding Hunger” (Community Center Parking Lot)
- 1/28 Tuesday, 5-8 pm: Mix & Mingle Pot Luck Dinner

F
E
B
R
U
A
R
Y

2
0
2
5

-
- 2/3, 2/17, 2/24 Monday, 10-11 am: Tai Chi
- 2/4 Tuesday, 2-4 pm: Gopher Tortoise Presentation
- 2/7, 2/14, 2/21, 2/28 Friday, 9-10 am: Pilates Mat Fitness
- 2/12 Wednesday, 2-4 pm: Tale of the Atala Butterfly & Coontie (Rotonda Nature)
- 2/14 Friday, 11 am-2 pm: Rotonda West Talent Show Auditions
- 2/15 Saturday, 11 am-2 pm: Rotonda West Talent Show Auditions
- 2/16 Sunday, 1-4 pm: BINGO!
- 2/18 Tuesday, 5:30-7:30 pm: Amphibians & Frogs Presentation
- 2/19 Wednesday, 6:30-8:30 pm (doors open at 6 pm) Trivia Night With Tim
- 2/20 Thursday, 3-4:30 pm: RWA Treasurer Quarterly Town Hall Meeting
- 2/25 Tuesday, 5-8 pm: Mix & Mingle Potluck Dinner
- 2/26 Wednesday, 2-3:30 pm: Why Plant Native? Presentation



Rotonda West Association

Community Outreach Committee
Nature Presents:

Meet the Wildlife: Native and Non

Rotonda West Community Center 646 Rotonda Circle
Charlotte County Environmental Lands Specialists

Scrub Jays: January 7 5:30 pm

The Florida Scrub-Jay is a Federally Threatened species, the only bird that is endemic to Florida. The Florida scrub-jay is a blue and gray bird about the size of a blue jay without black markings or a crest.



Wild Hogs: January 8 2:00 pm

Wild hogs eat a variety of plants and animals and feed by rooting with their broad snouts. They may disturb the soil and ground cover vegetation and leave the area looking like it has been plowed.



Invasive Reptiles: Pythons, Tegu and Iguanas January 23 5:30 pm

Invasive reptiles are a threat to native wildlife, consuming eggs of American alligator, ground-nesting native wildlife such as the gopher tortoise, American crocodile, sea turtles and ground-nesting birds.



Learn about Florida's threatened and invasive wildlife from the experts!

Don't forget another great Nature program:
Butterfly Gardening 101, January 15, 2:00pm (see separate flyer)

Welcome are Rotonda West residents, renters and their guests. Please do not contact the RWA Admin Office. Questions? Contact Community Outreach Committee:
communityoutreach@rotondawest.org



Florida Scrub Jay

by Merrill Horswill

Community Outreach Committee Nature Presents
Charlotte County Environmental Lands Specialist January 7, 2025 5:30pm
Rotonda West Community Center 646 Rotonda Circle

The Florida Scrub-Jay is a Federally Threatened species, the only bird that is endemic to Florida. The Florida scrub-jay is a blue and gray bird about the size of a blue jay without black markings or a crest. Florida scrub-jays live in family groups that consist of a breeding pair and young helpers.. Scrub-jays inhabit sand pine and oak scrub, and scrubby flatwoods, which occur in some of the highest and driest areas of Florida. The primary threats to the Florida scrub-jay are habitat destruction, fragmentation and degradation from development and agriculture. The scrub-jay population has declined 90% in the past century (Florida Natural Areas Inventory 2001).

Three-quarters of remaining scrubby habitats are protected through land under public or private ownership that is dedicated for conservation and requires the efforts of multiple local, State, and Federal agencies and non-governmental organizations and private landowners.

Two of the best places to see Florida Scrub Jays in Charlotte County are Tippecanoe Environmental Park and Prairie Creek Preserve. In 2014 Charlotte County developed a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) to help insure long term survival of the species. Learn about this beautiful bird and what is being done to protect it.

Welcome are Rotonda West residents, renters and their guests. Please do not contact the RWA Admin Office. Questions? Contact Community Outreach Committee: communityoutreach@rotondawest.org



Wild Hogs

by Merrill Horswill

Charlotte County Environmental Lands Specialist January 8, 2025 2pm
Rotonda West Community Center 646 Rotonda Circle

The wild hog (*Sus scrofa*) is also called feral hog, feral swine, feral pig, wild boar, wild pig or piney woods rooter. This species is not native to Florida. However, resident populations have existed here for hundreds of years – they may have been introduced by Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto as early as 1539.

Wild hogs can reach weights of more than 150 pounds and measure 5 to 6 feet long. Wild hogs occur in all 67 counties of Florida. They are found in a wide variety of habitats but prefer oak-cabbage palm hammocks, freshwater marshes and sloughs, pine flatwoods, and more open agricultural areas.

They usually travel in small family groups or alone. Wild hogs eat a variety of plants and animals and feed by rooting with their broad snouts. They may disturb the soil and ground cover vegetation and leave the area looking like it has been plowed.

Welcome are Rotonda West residents, renters and their guests. Please do not contact the RWA Admin Office. Questions? Contact Community Outreach Committee:
communityoutreach@rotondawest.org

Community Outreach Committee Nature Presents

Invasive Reptiles: Pythons, Tegu and Iguanas

by Merrill Horswill

Charlotte County Environmental Lands Specialist January 23, 2025 5:30pm
Rotonda West Community Center 646 Rotonda Circle



Argentine black and white tegus are large lizards that can reach nearly five feet in length. They have a mottled black and white coloration that often is arranged into a banding pattern across the back and tail. Hatchlings display similar markings, but typically have bright green heads.

a large nonvenomous constrictor that is found primarily in and around the Everglades ecosystem in south Florida where the snake represents a threat to native wildlife.

The
Burmese
python is



Green iguanas are large, typically green or brown lizards. Hatchling and young green iguanas usually have bright green coloration.

Nonnative reptile species are not protected in Florida except by anti-cruelty law and can be [humanely killed](#) on private property with landowner permission. This species can be captured and [humanely killed](#) year-round and without a permit.

These invasive reptiles are a threat to native wildlife and have been documented consuming eggs of American alligator, ground-nesting native wildlife such as the gopher tortoise, American crocodile, sea turtles and ground-nesting birds.

Welcome are Rotonda West residents, renters and their guests. Please do not contact the RWA Admin Office. Questions? Contact Community Outreach Committee:
communityoutreach@rotondawest.org

Rotonda West Community Outreach Committee Nature Presents:

Butterfly Gardening 101

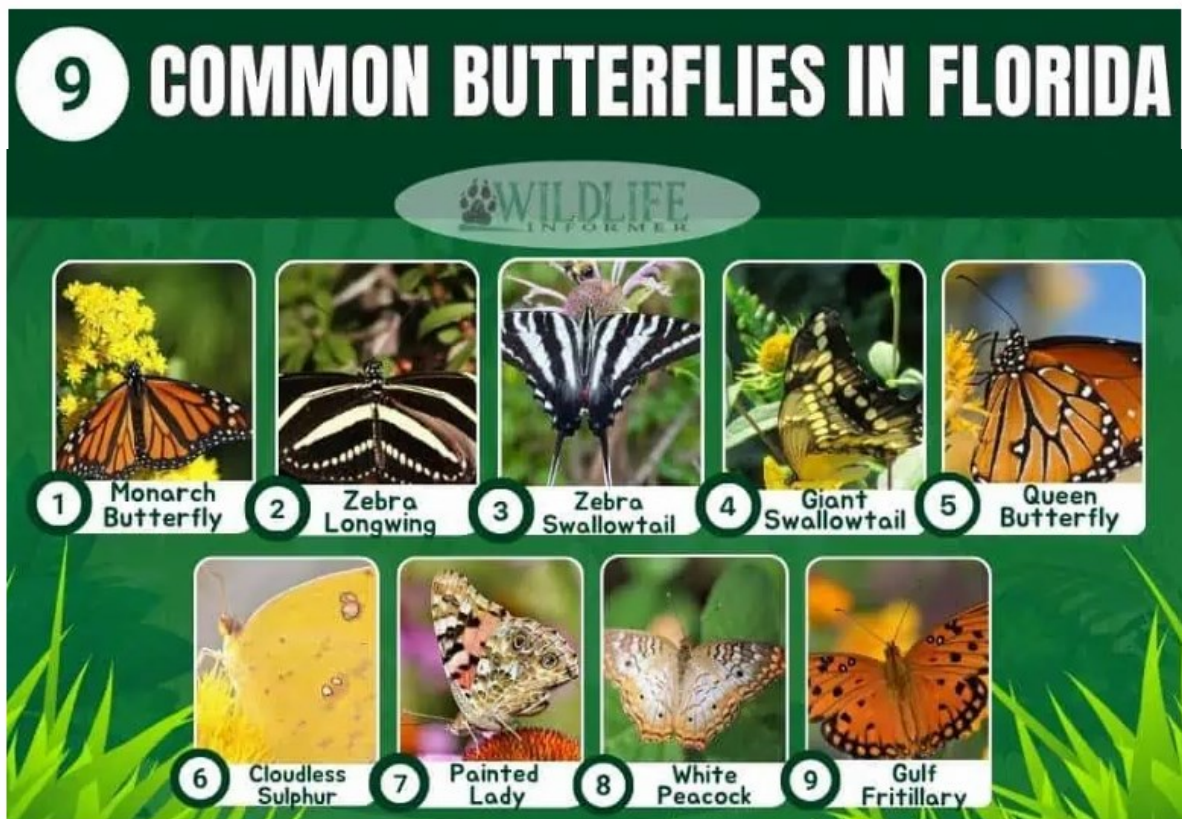
by Merrill Horswill

Sara Weber, Florida Friendly Landscaping Specialist, Charlotte County Extension

Wednesday January 15, 2025 2pm

Rotonda West Community Center 646 Rotonda Circle

Florida is home to nearly 200 species of butterflies. Attract butterflies to your garden by planting a variety of larval host plants for caterpillars and nectar plants for adult butterflies. Butterflies are entertaining to watch and help pollinate our flowers and fruits. Learn to attract these beautiful, beneficial insects into your space whether it's large or small. This class will teach you the basics of butterfly gardening in Southwest Florida including: plant selection, local species ID, benefits, and how to have a Florida-Friendly yard that is both low maintenance and environmentally friendly.



Welcome are Rotonda West residents, renters and their guests. Please do not contact the RWA Admin Office. Questions: communityoutreach@rotondawest.org



Dr. Francine Finuco

**RWA Community Outreach Committee
Health & Wellness Initiative 2025 Kickoff For January**

STARTING ON JANUARY 10TH @ 9-10 AM

**Shape Up US Month with a New Weekly
Pilates Mat Class**

SUBMITTED BY: RITA LOPIENSKI

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.

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.

- Please bring a Pilates mat.
- This class is for RWA members, owners & renters.
- A one-time Fitness Waiver needs to be signed.



RWA Community Outreach

Health & Wellness Initiative Presents:

STROKE AWARENESS- EVERY SECOND COUNTS

**WEDNESDAY,
JANUARY 22, @ 3 PM**



**Speaker Jill Worley, RN,
Clinical Coordinator for Stroke and Sepsis
HCA FL Englewood Hospital**

Stroke is a medical emergency. The longer blood flow is cut off to the brain, the greater the damage. Getting to a hospital quickly saves lives and increases the chances for successful recovery.

Join HCA Florida Englewood Hospital Stroke Coordinator, Jill Worley, who will share live-saving information with you about signs and symptoms of stroke.

Julie Beatty, Director of Communications and Community Engagement will also give a hospital update. There will be time for Q & A at the end of the presentation.

This presentation is open to RWA residents, owners, renters and their guests.

DO YOU KNOW?

- . WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS OF A STROKE?**
- . WHAT DOES THE ACRONYM “FAST” MEAN?**
- . WHAT DO YOU DO IF SOMEONE IS
HAVING A STROKE?**



SHREDDING HUNGER

Free Shredding Event & Food Drive

Saturday, Jan. 25

9 am - noon

Rotonda West Community Center

Parking lot

646 Rotonda Circle



**Non-perishable items
for local Food Pantries**



**Limit is 3 boxes or bags per car.
Paper will be shredded on-site.
Please no plastic, cardboard or metal
(other than staples and paper clips)**

**Welcome RWA property owners & Residents
Questions? communtoutreach@rotondawest.org.
Please do not contact RWA Admin Office.**

TAI CHI

NEW TIME IN 2025

**1st, 3rd, 4th & 5th Monday
of Each Month**

10:00 AM

**RWA
Community Center
646 Rotonda Circle**



For Beginners and the Experienced
Instruction by Dr. Francine Finucan

- Tai Chi is an internal Chinese martial art practiced for self-defense and health known for its slow, intentional movements.
- Tai Chi is particularly popular as a form of gentle exercise and moving meditation, with benefits to mental and physical health.
- Tai Chi is all standing, but may also be practiced in a sturdy chair.
- Benefits of practicing Tai Chi: preventing falls in older adults, 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.

- Wear comfortable clothes and shoes, bring water in a covered container.
- At this time, the Tai Chi fitness class will be for RWA members & renters only.
- An RWA Fitness Liability Waiver must be filled out (only once).
- Questions: communityoutreach@rotondawest.org
- Please do not contact the RWA Admin Office, you will be referred to the above email.
- No pets.



Rotonda West
Association

Community Outreach
Nature Committee
Presents

**Wednesday January 15, 2025 2pm
646 Rotonda Circle**

Sara Weber, Florida Friendly Landscaping Specialist,
Charlotte County Extension

Learn to attract these beautiful, beneficial insects into your space whether it's large or small. This class will teach you the basics of butterfly gardening in Southwest Florida including: plant selection, local species ID, benefits, and how to have a Florida-Friendly yard that is both low maintenance and environmentally friendly.



Welcome are Rotonda West residents, renters and their guests. Please do not contact the RWA Admin Office. Questions? Contact Community Outreach Committee: communityoutreach@rotondawest.org



Community Outreach Committee Presents



**3rd Sunday of
Each Month**

**RWA Community Center
646 Rotonda Circle**

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

Welcome property owners, residents, renters, and their guests.
Please invite your vacationing neighbors.

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

Questions?
communityoutreach@rotondawest.org
Please do not contact the
RWA Admin Office.
You will be referred to the above e-mail
No pets.

Play begins
promptly
at 1:00 pm

Must be 18 to
play.



**ROTONDA'S
GOT TALENT
AUDITIONS &
SHOW**

**WE WILL AGAIN SHOWCASE RWA'S FINEST TALENT!
ALL KINDS OF TALENT OF ALL AGES IS DESIRED FOR A
DIVERSE VARIETY TALENT SHOW:**



**AUDITIONS: FRIDAY & SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH & 15TH,
FROM 11 AM-1 PM**

TALENT SHOW: SATURDAY, MARCH 1ST, 1 PM
**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO JOIN THE PLANNING TEAM AND
ASSIST WITH THE EVENT.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
communityoutreach@rotondawest.org



Submitted by David Perry
JANUARY 2025

Neighbors helping neighbors. It's a simple adage and one that holds immeasurable power when it comes to keeping communities safe. Residents should always keep an eye out for strangers in their neighborhood. If anyone is seen running through the neighborhood, carrying suspicious packages, entering an unoccupied house, loitering around, peering into cars, waiting around schools or parks, or even appearing at people's doors as a delivery person with the wrong address, call the Sheriff's Non-Emergency number 941-639-2101.

Welcome our newest Base Station members, Joyce Burris, Tom Farrell, and Gwen Grace

Congratulations to Terri Lawson and Tom Bailey who were unanimously voted in for another term as our Secretary (Terri) and Vice President (Tom).

Why do we patrol?

Basic Crime Prevention~ Work for a better and safer neighborhood through protecting and honoring the rights of others. Build a Stronger Community~ Get to know your neighbors. In our fast-paced world, we don't spend enough time learning about our neighbors. Watch groups give community members a reason to get together and talk about making their community a better place

Benefits of Neighborhood Watch

There are obvious benefits Neighborhood Watch volunteers and their communities have experienced throughout the years such as: • a reduction in crime • a better quality of life • a greater sense of security, responsibility, and personal control • building community pride and unity • preparing for helping others and ourselves in our community • becoming the extra "eyes and ears" of law enforcement personnel and therefore reduce law enforcement's burden.

You Can Do It.

Feel like you don't have the time? It only takes a moment to notice something suspicious and report what you saw. Volunteers assist just two hours a month. Every effort helps.

Feel like you're still a newcomer to the neighborhood? Neighborhood Watch is a wonderful way to get to know your neighbors and find people who share your interests. Knowing your neighbors also makes it easier to recognize strangers who may not have legitimate business on your street.

You're Part of the Answer. People like you are what makes a Neighborhood Watch program successful. Your neighbors need your help and you need your neighbor's help. The small steps you take now will pay big dividends down the road. Building a spirit of community helps keep all of you safer and more secure. That's what Neighborhood Watch is all about!

If you are looking to volunteer as a Patrol or be a Base Station, it just takes two hours a month; a small commitment to protecting our neighborhoods. Interested in joining our organization, please contact David Perry at 941-828-1584, go to our Facebook page @ Rotonda West Neighborhood Watch, or scan the QR code below.

**Our next meeting is February on 18th
at 10am at the RWA Community Center.**

Protecting Rotonda West since 1981



GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club, Inc.

GWEN GRACE, PAST PRESIDENT



**HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM GFWC ROTONDA WEST WOMAN'S CLUB!
WISHING EVERYONE A HAPPY AND HEALTHY 2025**



Splash the otter

Our December meeting's guest of honor was the otter Splash from Peace River Search & Rescue. He was a big hit with the members and guests. President Mike Hadsell explained how otters are the only animal able to smell underwater which makes them perfect for human remains detection.



Check presentation to Mike Hadsell of Peace River Search & Rescue by Gwen Grace and Rachele Adler.

Our new President, Gloria Rogoski and her Board of Directors were installed for the 2025 – 2026 term. And we ended the meeting with a performance by the GFWC RWWC Tonettes which was followed by a Holiday luncheon.



Left: New officers pictured left to right: Past President Gwen Grace; Treasurer Elaine McNeill; President Gloria Rogoski; 1st VP Linda Hall; 2nd VP Fran Hamilton; Corresponding Secretary Jean Howard; Asst. Treasurer ed Meyer; Past President Kathryn Gallagher.

Missing from photo: Recording Secretary Barbara Frey

Our next General Meeting is Thursday, January 16th at the RWA community center. This meeting will include the Annual Art Competition with entries from our members. Winners of this competition will go to the District Competition and District winners proceed to the Florida State competition. The social time begins at 9:30 am and the business meeting starts promptly at 10:15 am. Please go to our website at www.gfwcrotondawest.org for information about upcoming events and who we are and what we do. You can also find us on Facebook at GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Group. All are invited to our general meeting.



News Release

This next 3 Public Education classes are:

February 8th 2025, Paddler's Safety Guide! In person four (4) hour training with SUP Englewood Outfitters, CGAUX Flotillas 99 and 86 at **Don Pedro State Park 8450 Placida Road Cape Haze FL 33946** Cost is \$25 per person, \$10 for students. This course should precede or supplement on-water training. Students are made aware of basic safety issues and needs for paddling safety.

February 15th: Suddenly in Command! The 4-hour class will be held at Ingman Marine Showroom 15001 Gasparilla Rd, Placida, FL 33946 starting at 8:30 am and finishing at approximately 12:30 pm. The in-person class is limited in size. The course is taught by members who patrol and are very familiar with south Charlotte Harbor, Gasparilla Sound, Pine Island Sound, South Gulf Cove and Boca Grande areas. The course is designed for those not generally at the helm. It will help participants to be prepared with the basics of boating and boating safety in case of an emergency or a situation that places you in command of your boat. Regular Captain encouraged to attend so they can learn what the "Admiral" needs to learn and practice! Participants learn about: Boating vocabulary and operating principles; starting and stopping an engine; basic boat handling and how to get help; familiarization with your on-board equipment; descriptions of what causes boating mishaps and how to minimize them.

Cost for the class is:

\$45 per person

\$60 per couple sharing workbook

\$15 per middle or high school student

March 8, 2025: Boat America! In person eight (8) hour training at the HOA building here in South Gulf Cove. Starts at 8:00 am. Cost is \$60 per couple, \$45 per person, \$25 for students. Participants learn about the basics of Boating Safety. You also earn, upon successful completion of course and test, your State of Florida **Boating Safety Card**. This is *required for all those born on or after 1 January 1988*. Preregistration is required for all classes.

Call Anne Brengle, Flotilla Staff Officer Public Education, at 508-717-2613 to learn more, or email to abrengle@aol.com

The Coast Guard Auxiliary is the uniformed civilian component of the U.S. Coast Guard and supports the Coast Guard in nearly all mission areas. The Auxiliary was created by Congress in 1939. For more information, please visit www.cgaux.org

###

OFFICE STAFF

Derrick Hedges
Manager

Tammy Birdsong
Administrator

Nancy Schwechel
Administrator and
Deed Restrictions

Jenny Bulle
Bookkeeper

Annette Casteel
Administrator and
Minutes Clerk

Sheryl Ann Nowicki
Administrator

Kelsey Stewart
Administrator

Denise Huffman
Minutes Clerk

Joe Harris
Communications Specialist

Jack Lanar
Compliance Officer

Travis Green
Aquatics

MAINTENANCE STAFF

Wayne Taylor

Dale Anderson

Craig Brown

Doug Smith

**THANK YOU TO OUR
WONDERFUL STAFF**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2025

Andy VanScyoc, President

David Kelly, 1st Vice President

Sam Besase, Treasurer

Karen Harvey, Secretary

Peter Traverso, Director

Deb Orchard, Director

Jerry Eldred, Director



WEST WAYS STAFF

Nadine Clough, Editor
westways@rotondawest.org

Connie Smith, Writer

Pattie Mihalik, Writer

Gwen Grace, GFWC Woman's Club

David Perry, Neighborhood Watch

Rita Lopienski, Contributor

Merrill Horswill, Contributor

Sam Besase, Contributor

Deb Orchard, Contributor

Maureen Laderer, Contributor

David Pulaski, Photographer

Nadine Clough, Layout & Design

Grace Chetcuti, Flyer Contributor