

WEST WAYS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION, INC

MAY 2021



PUBLISHED BY THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION FOR ROTONDA WEST PROPERTY OWNERS.
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2021 Board of Directors

Patricia Aho, President
Patti Cowin , 1st Vice President
Sam Besase, Treasurer
Jerry Eldred, Secretary
Stephen Froggatt, Director
Bernie Schmelz, Director
Diane Shaw, Director

West Ways Staff

Nadine Clough, Editor / Layout
Karen Harvey, Writer
Barry Kean, Writer
Connie Smith, Writer
Diane Shaw, Writer
David Pulaski, Wayne Mengel, Photographers



MANAGER'S MESSAGE



Happy May to all Rotonda West Members,

As the warmer weather approaches, many of our seasonal residents will be heading to their cooler residences. It has been wonderful seeing many of our seasonal residents visit our association office to say "Hello" while here. I hope those traveling arrive safely at their destinations.

Many seasonal and full-time residents have been attending the various nature walks, nature presentations, committee meetings, and have been utilizing Rotonda's Broadmoor Park along with the Memorial Parks, and are continuing to enjoy our Florida sunshine.

Recently, I was honored to attend the Rotonda West Association Volunteer Appreciation Picnic. It was a privilege to share my appreciation for our many wonderful volunteers. I truly cannot thank all of the volunteers in our community for all of their hard work. From the decorations for the winter holiday season to serving on committees, to volunteering time to assist with various tasks, the list goes on and on. The Rotonda West Association volunteers help to make our community a great place. Their timeless and selfless giving is appreciated by all members of the community.

Sincerely,
Derrick Hedges

Photo by: Dave Pulaski



ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PICNIC



Office Staff

Derrick Hedges,
Manager

Tammy Birdsong,
Administrator

Holly Carr,
Administrator
Deed Restrictions

Kim Gehr
Administrator

Penny Hansen,
Asst. Bookkeeper

Annette Casteel
Minutes Clerk

Joe Harris,
Communications
Specialist

Mike Heincelman,
Compliance Officer

Maintenance Staff

Matt Rooney
Wayne Taylor
John Daveluy

COMMITTEE MEETINGS MAY 2021

Date	Time	Committee
5th	9:00 a.m.	Activities Committee Mtg.
	10:30 a.m.	Communication Committee Mtg.
	12:00 p.m.	Wildlife Committee Mtg.
7th	9:45 a.m.	Election Committee Mtg.
11th	9:00 a.m.	Residential Modification Mtg.
12th	10:00 a.m.	RW Neighborhood Watch (ZOOM ONLY)
13th	2:00 p.m.	Board of Directors Mtg.
17th	9:30 a.m.	Budget & Finance Committee Mtg.
18th	1:00 p.m.	Building & Grounds Committee Mtg.
19th	10:00 a.m.	Aquatics & Canal Committee Mtg.
24th	9:00 a.m.	Fishing Club Board Meeting
25th	9:00 a.m.	Residential Modification Com. Mtg.
26th	1:00 p.m.	Deed Restrictions Committee Mtg.
27th	2:00 p.m.	Board of Directors Mtg.
28th	11:30 a.m.	Rotonda Garden Club Mtg.
31st	MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY RWA OFFICES CLOSED 	

CLUBS & ACTIVITIES

Monday:	9:30 a.m.	Mahjong
	1:00 p.m.	Mahjong
	2:00 p.m.	Ukulele
Tuesday:	9:00 a.m.	GFWC RWWC Sew N Sews/Knit & Chat
Thursday:	9:00 a.m.	Sew Much Fun
	6:30 p.m.	Englewood Fishing Club (May 13th only)
	2:00 p.m.	RWWC Book Club #6 (May 20th Only)
Friday:	8:30 a.m.	Sweatin' to the Oldies (canceled 5/7)
	9:00 a.m.	RWWC Creative Crafters
	1:00 p.m.	GFWC RWWC Board Meeting (5/7 only)
Saturday:	8:30 a.m.	Nature Walk (May 15th Only)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS HIGHLIGHTS



By: Barry Kean

The Rotonda West Association Board of Directors met on April 22, 2021. Highlights of that meeting were:

The draft 2020 audit of RWA finances was presented by Geoff Lorah, CPA, of Webb, Lorah and McMillan, CPA. Mr. Lorah stated that RWA remained in a “strong financial position” at the end of 2020. The Board approved the draft audit by a unanimous vote.

The Budget and Finance Committee reported on properties in Rotonda West on which the RWA holds liens because of unpaid assessments, fines, etc. The Committee identified eleven properties that are seriously delinquent, owing a total of \$58,000 among them, and recommended that these properties be referred to the Association’s attorney for initiation of foreclosure proceedings. Foreclosure would not be immediate; the process begins with a warning letter and can take a year and a half before a property is actually foreclosed, and that’s assuming any existing moratorium on evictions has been lifted. After extended discussion, the Board adopted this recommendation on a 5 to 1 vote. The Board also agreed to meet with the committee in a workshop to discuss the 5-year plan.

The Board approved about 20 more Broadmoor Park mowing agreements and referred a few others to Manager Derrick Hedges for clarification. These are agreements between RWA and property owners who abut Broadmoor Park, who wish to mow the small sections of parkland adjoining their property; this has been a common practice since before RWA acquired the Broadmoor Park tract from the Golf Partners in 2013. The written agreement formalizes the practice and places conditions on it. To date more than 70 of these agreements have been approved and more are pending.

Among many suggested changes to the by-laws was a proposal for term limits for Board members, which has been percolating for some time now, finally came to a vote in the Board but failed approval on a 3 to 3 tie vote. This proposal would have required Board members to go off the Board after serving two 3-year terms, and remain off for at least a year. This Board action means that term limits will not be in effect for this year’s election, though the Board may revisit the issue in the future.

Finally, the Board continued consideration of changes in the Association’s Committee structure. Any such changes would take effect as of the newly elected Board’s organizing meeting in December.

The RWA Board of Directors meets on the second and fourth Thursday of each month, at 2 PM at the Community Center in Broadmoor Park. All RWA members are welcome to attend Board meetings, either in person or via ZOOM.

MAGNIFICENT RAPTORS EDUCATIONAL AMBASSADORS FOR PEACE RIVER WILDLIFE CENTER

Story and Photos by: Connie Smith



Nature may not be “all warm and fuzzy,” but it is magnificent, as evidenced by a March 31 program about raptors at the Rotonda West Community Center.



Left: Wildlife rehabilitator and Peach River Wildlife Center Volunteer Diane Hime holds Alastair the red-tailed hawk. Perched above her is Annie the Great Horned Owl.

Sponsored by the Rotonda West Wildlife Committee, representatives of the Peace River Wildlife Center brought to the presentation, Annie, the great horned owl; Maggie, the barred owl; and Alastair, a red-tailed hawk.

The raptors are in the care of Diane and John Hime, rehabilitators and volunteers at the Peace River Wildlife Center and come from the New England area. While spending time in Florida, Annie, Maggie and Alastair serve as ambassadors for the PRWC and sometimes may be seen at Fisherman’s Village in Punta Gorda or on display outside the PRWC, along Charlotte Harbor in Ponce de Leon Park in Punta Gorda Isles.

All three types of raptors may be found in south Florida and Annie was particularly vocal during the Rotonda West presentation, often “Hoo-Hoo-Hooing”, even when it was the barred owl or red-tailed hawk’s turn in the spotlight.

The great horned owl is considered an apex predator, animals at the top of nature’s “food chain,” along with grizzly bears, killer whales, Komodo dragons, wolves and eagles. In fact, great horned owls and eagles are natural enemies, perhaps because this type of owl never builds its own nest, instead stealing the nests of eagles or falcons. Great horned owls are the largest owl in nature and ambush their prey by flying with complete silence, made possible by their serrated feathers. The Himes said in their enclosure, Annie will often surprise them by flying unexpectedly and without warning, into their field of vision.



Rotonda West Wildlife Committee Chairperson Cari Hale exchanges a greeting with Maggie the barred owl during the March 31st Raptors Presentation at the Rotonda West Community Center

Annie became an educational ambassador because she is blind in one eye, preventing her from hunting and surviving successfully in the wild. In captivity, her lifespan may exceed 30 years.

Maggie, the barred owl, became a wildlife ambassador after being hit by a car and breaking a wing. But in addition to her service as an educator, she last year served as a surrogate mother to four screech owlets. Barred owls are medium sized raptors and named due to the ribbons of white and brown feathers across their bodies.

Alastair, the red-tailed hawk, also became a wildlife ambassador due to a wing injury, but while veterinarians originally thought the bird had been hit by a car, surgery revealed an embedded pellet. A good portion of a wing was amputated as a result. The term, “watching like a hawk” is evident in Alastair, say his caretakers. “He is high intensity...He doesn’t miss a thing.”

David Hayes, also representing the Peace River Wildlife Center, said that while many of the wildlife ambassadors that represent the facility are birds, approximately 50 percent of the residents are mammals. The center’s final goal for its wildlife inhabitants is release and the facility has its best success rehabbing and releasing the mammals that come into its care. The 501c3 not-for-profit depends upon donations to feed and care for its many species of inhabitants. Hayes said the center feeds almost 120 permanent residents, in addition to more than 2,500 annual patient admissions, the cost totals \$90,000. Ways to provide financial support to the PRWC web site may be accessed at prwildlife.org.



ROTONDA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB, THE LINKS

By: Nadine Clough



Cape Haze Links
Photo by Dave Pulaski

Early Rotonda West residents had been promised seven golf courses by 1980 by the Cavanagh Communities Corporation, the original developer. The plan started out nicely with the opening of The Hills (Sunday course) in 1971. But as people went about their lives and enjoyed the Florida sunshine, many years passed without another course opening.

According to Jack Alexander's book, Rotonda The Vision and The Reality, The Links Golf Course (the so-called "Monday Course"), opened in 1989 after upgrading from a 9-hole course to an 18-hole course. People in Windward were happy that the course survived because in Cavanagh's original plan, it was to be phased out.

The Links, although an important part of Rotonda West family of golf courses, remains the only golf course located in Cape Haze. It is a 18-Hole Executive length golf course beautifully weaving its way through the Cape Haze community.

Architect: John LaFoy

Officially Opened: 1990

Located: 4055 Cape Haze Dr., Rotonda Fl. 33947

For Tee Times Call: 941-697-8877



CANDIDATES NEEDED FOR NEXT ELECTION CYCLE

Submitted by: Karen Harvey

The time is now for you to step up and become a candidate for the Rotonda West Board of Directors. This year, 2 seats, Stephen Froggatt and Sam Besase, will be up for election. The election term is for December 2021 through November 2024.

THERE ARE SEVERAL ACTION DATES THAT YOU NEED TO BE AWARE OF:

- **Friday, June 4 at 9:45 a.m.** The first of two Candidate Workshops.
- **Thursday, July 15 at 6:30 p.m.** The second Candidate Workshop will be held in the evening. These workshops are intended to familiarize candidates with all the information needed to file their notice of intent to become a candidate.
- **Friday, August 13, 2021** All candidate's documents must be filed by **12:01 p.m.**

Get all the facts and information from a committee member or if you have any questions, please consider sending the election committee members an email at: electioncommittee@rotondawest.org.

Stay tuned! More information will be coming your way through West Ways and Constant Contact over the next several months.

We are Searching
for Volunteers



ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS



L to R Sitting: Sam Besase (Treasurer), Patricia Aho (President),
Patti Cowin (1st Vice President), Jerry Eldred (Secretary),
Standing: Bernie Schmelz (Director), Diane Shaw (Director),
(Stephen Froggatt not in picture)

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

The RWA Board of Directors is generally responsible for maintaining and improving the community in the best interests of its members. The Board interprets, applies, administers and enforces the governing documents affecting the community. The Board may be assisted in these efforts by the establishment of standing/statutory and advisory committees. The RWA collects appropriate assessments, charges in the form of fines, deposits and fees for services rendered. These moneys are used to finance the activities of the association. (Policies and Procedures)

Board of Directors meetings are held at 2:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Thursday of each month at the Rotonda West Community Center and are open to the public.



Rotonda West Celebrates the Gopher Tortoise...

By Connie Smith



File Photo

April 9th was Gopher Tortoise Day in Florida and Rotonda West celebrated with an educational program featuring Legolas the gopher tortoise.

David Smith, Charlotte County's environmental land management specialist, said tortoises differ from turtles because tortoises are not aquatic. Instead, tortoises choose dry upland areas to burrow a habitat that may extend 15 feet in length and 10 feet in depth, containing multiple chambers and possibly hosting up to 360 other species, including rattlesnakes, spiders, mice, frogs, ticks, dung beetles or other gopher tortoises.

Gopher tortoises are considered a threatened species, so moving tortoises or bulldozing their burrows may result in a fine.

Other species burrow so it's important to discern what animal has made a home in your flower bed. The opening to a gopher tortoise burrow will have a half moon shape at the top and a flat bottom. An active burrow will have a clean "apron" and possibly tracks leading to it. And while an inactive burrow may be surrounded by leaf litter, there is still a strong likelihood that multiple other species are inside. And while trying to figure out the status of a gopher tortoise burrow, make sure you don't step on the burrow opening – that's where tortoises lay their eggs.

File Photos



Gopher Tortoise Burrow



Gopher Tortoise emerging from shell

How to tell whether that tortoise you've encountered is male or female? Males have longer tails and the lower part of their shell extends under their chin. A gopher tortoise's lifespan may extend from 40 to 60 years and they may live to be 100 in captivity. Like all reptiles, it takes a long time for gopher tortoises to reach sexual maturity. For females, it may take 9 to 21 years and a little sooner for males. When they lay eggs, the tortoise provides absolutely no parental care – the hatchlings are on their own and may face a 90% predation rate.

If you come across a gopher tortoise burrow, especially if it's on your property, contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) and stay 25 feet away from the burrow at all times. As Legolas' handler, Linda Platt of the Peace River Wildlife Center, said, "If you build over a burrow, there is a zero percent chance for the tortoise's survival. The tortoise's best chance is to relocate it. But," she added, "the best thing we can do for a gopher tortoise is to leave it alone. Let it go its own way."

At the conclusion of the program, Legolas was allowed to explore the Community Center's main room. The participants were also invited to walk to a nearby gopher tortoise burrow within Broadmoor Park while David Smith extended a fiber optic camera inside. For those wishing more information about gopher tortoises, Wildlife Committee Chairman Cari Hale said informational packets would be located at the RWA office.



Legolas the gopher tortoise visiting the RWA Community Center
(Zoom shot by Connie Smith from presentation)

ROTONDA WEST **VOLUNTEER** **APPRECIATION** **PICNIC** **SATURDAY,** **APRIL 24TH**

Photos by: Dave Pulaski



A wonderful time was had by all who attended the Rotonda West Association Volunteer Appreciation Picnic! It gave us a chance to thank all the hard-working volunteers and recognize them for their contributions. It was also great to get-together!

PRESENTORS:

Barb
Peszko



Emcee: Sam Besase



Stan
Plizga



Derrick Hedges



Pattie
Aho



Cari
Hale



Donna Stogsdill



Karen
Harvey



Good food, good friends.



Sitting: Gwen Grace, Donna Stogsdill
Standing: Nick Gizzi, Deb Orchard



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Posthumously awarded to Dick Duggan for his many years of service to our Rotonda West community. Plaque was presented to his family.



L to R: Sam Besase, BOD Treasurer; Mark Duggan, Dick's son; Joan Duggan, Dick's wife; Debra Duggan, Dick's daughter in-law; and Patricia Aho, BOD President

**A BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED TO MAKE
THIS VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PICNIC A SUCCESS !**

**CONDÉ NAST TRAVEL MAGAZINE
NAMES ROTONDA WEST
RESIDENT
BOB SHAFFER TO TOP TRAVEL
ADVISOR LIST**

By: Diane Shaw



Condé Nast Traveler, America's leading travel publication, has released its annual list of top travel specialists for 2021, including a Rotonda West travel advisor.

Bob Shaffer, owner and luxury travel advisor of Vacations by Cruise & Travel Experts, was selected for this year's list for his expertise in custom vacations and more. Editors of Condé Nast magazine evaluated thousands of qualified travel professionals and selected those advisors who are the leaders in their field.

LET'S PLAY ROTONDA TRIVIA!

Do you think you know a lot about where you live? See if you can get the correct answers to the following 3 questions. (They are found somewhere in this issue)

1. What was the original name of the Hills golf course?
2. What is the name of the famous child TV and film star who hails from Rotonda West?
3. Who was "Don Pedro" after whom the Island is named?

(submitted by Diane Shaw)



GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club, Inc. Projects and Upcoming Events

Donna Krabbe, Past-President



April Showers, May Flowers and Fun!

Member Farewell

On April 8th, we bid farewell to member Vera Sharko, who is relocating to Massachusetts with her family. We hope that Vera will visit us when she returns to Florida for some warmer weather next winter!



Norma Wood Kathryn Gallagher Vera Sharko

Successful OneBlood Drive!!



Jennifer Cope, donor, and
RWWC Member

We held our April 12th OneBlood Drive and exceeded our January drive donations by 10 pints! That makes a total of **52** pints of blood and as many as **156** lives saved by our dedicated donors **just in 2021**. Thank you for making a huge difference in our community!

Watch for the Big Red Bus to come back in July!

Twelve Local Charities Receive Donations

After a very restricted year, financially, our generous members have made it possible for us to donate to 12 local charitable outreach organizations.

Three representatives of their organizations were at our April Meeting to be presented with our donations.



Beth Harrison from
Englewood Community Clinic



Becca de Rosa from
Kid's Needs



Callie Stahl from
Peace River Wildlife Center



Happy 47th Anniversary Celebration! GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club May 13, 2021 General Meeting

The May General Meeting and Anniversary Celebration will take place at the Rotonda American Legion Post 113 on Thursday, May 13th. It will be the final meeting of the 2020-2021 Club Year.

Monthly General Meetings will resume on September 9th. At that time, we hope to return to 10:00 am meetings at the Rotonda Community Center, with a social hour from 9:00 am to 10:00 am prior to the General Meeting.

In the meantime, we invite you to join us as a guest at our 47th Anniversary Celebration on May 13th at the American Legion Post 113. Registration at 10:30am, meeting at 11:00am, lunch served at 12:30pm.

Call Jane at 941 214 5981 to reserve a lunch selection for \$12 per person.

For further information and to join, please visit <http://www.gfwcrotondawest.org> or send an email to rwwcmembership@hotmail.com



Some of our members proudly wearing their Love, Respect and Kindness Shirts.

ANSWERS TO ROTONDA WEST TRIVIA QUESTIONS

1. The original name of The Hills Golf Course was the "Sunday Course". Built in 1971, it was so named because it was to be the first of seven courses named after the days of the week.
2. Remember the TV show Flipper? It starred 15 year old Luke Halpin. He and his wife live in Rotonda West.
3. In the mid-1500's, there was a Calusa king who was nicknamed "Carlos" by the invading Spanish. After resisting Spanish attempts to take their land and convert them to Christianity, Carlos was executed by the Spaniards who then proclaimed Carlos' son chief, giving him the name Don Pedro.



**WEST WAYS
NEWSLETTER
IS LOOKING
FOR
WRITERS!**

**HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE YOUR WRITING PUBLISHED AND READ BY
RESIDENTS OF ROTONDA WEST?**

**WEST WAYS NEWSLETTER WOULD LIKE TO OFFER AN OPPORTUNITY TO
ROTONDA WEST RESIDENTS TO SHARE THEIR WRITING SKILLS!**

JUST EMAIL WESTWAYS@ROTONDAWEST.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION.



**Monday,
May 31st
2021**



VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR UPCOMING ISSUES!

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