

WEST WAYS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION, INC

August 2021



PUBLISHED BY THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION FOR ROTONDA WEST PROPERTY OWNERS.
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IMPORTANT ROTONDA WEST WEBSITE NEWS!

SEE PAGE 11 FOR DETAILS!



President's Message

By: Patricia Aho



Greetings Rotonda West!

This spring we paused for a few moments to thank the hundreds of volunteers who selflessly give of themselves each year to make our community beautiful. We honored the legacy of one of our community leaders, Dick Duggan, who served for over 14 years on the Compliance Committee, over 11 years on the Election Committee and touched so many here in our community. He led us with his thoughtfulness, his fairness, his intellect, and his ability to help us solve some tough problems. The photo shown below on this page is of the bench we have placed in Broadmoor Park to honor Dick, which overlooks one of our beautiful ponds.

Rotonda West is now 49 years young, and we have had thousands of volunteers over the years, who have worked to make this such a beautiful and vibrant community. We wouldn't be able to say, "next year we turn 50", without those countless hours of service. Keep a look out for all the events and festivities that will help us celebrate our anniversary, including the great articles, photos, and information here in *West Ways*.



Broadmoor Park bench
which honors
Dick Duggan



Bench overlooks
beautiful pond at
Broadmoor



AUGUST 2021

SPECIAL EVENTS THIS MONTH

- B.A.T. Registry August 13th at the Park
- BOD Candidate filing deadline. August 13th at 12:01 p.m.
- Professor Levin Lecture Series. August 11th, 18th, & 25th at 1-3 p.m.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 9:30am-12:00pm > Mahjong 1:00pm > Mahjong 2pm Ukulele Club	3 9:00am GFWC RWWC Sew N Sews/Knit & Chat 1:00 Tonettes (chord group)	4 9am > Activities Committee Meeting 11:00 AM Ladies of Paradise Bridge Group 12:00pm > Wildlife Committee Meeting	5 9:00 am Sew Much Fun 1:00 PM Cribbage	6 1:00pm > GFWC RWWC Board Meeting CANCELED 8:30 am Sweatin' to the Oldies 9:00am > RWWC Creative Crafters 9:45 am > Election Committee Meeting
9 9:00 am Englewood Fishing Club Committee meeting 9:30am-12:00pm > Mahjong 1:00pm > Mahjong 2pm Ukulele Club	10 9:00am GFWC RWWC Sew N Sews/Knit & Chat 9am > Residential Modification Meeting 10:00 AM Neighborhood Watch Leadership Team Meeting 10:30am Communications Committee Meeting 1:00 Tonettes (chord group)	11 10:00 AM RW Neighborhood Watch Meeting 11:00 AM Ladies of Paradise Bridge Group	12 6:30pm > Englewood Fishing Club 9:00 am Sew Much Fun 2pm > Board of Directors Meeting	13 CANCELED 8:30 am Sweatin' to the Oldies 9:00am > RWWC Creative Crafters 1:00 PM Election Committee meeting
16 9:30 am > Budget & Finance Meeting 9:30am-12:00pm > Mahjong 1:00pm > Mahjong 2pm Ukulele Club	17 1:00 PM Building & Grounds Committee Meeting 9:00am GFWC RWWC Sew N Sews/Knit & Chat 1:00 Tonettes (chord group)	18 10:00 Aquatics/Canal Meeting 11:00 AM Ladies of Paradise Bridge Group	19 9:00 am Sew Much Fun 1:00 PM Cribbage 2:00 PM > RWWC Book Group #6 meet	20 CANCELED 8:30 am Sweatin' to the Oldies 9:00am > RWWC Creative Crafters
23 9:00 AM Fishing Club Board Meeting 9:30am-12:00pm > Mahjong 1:00pm > Mahjong 2pm Ukulele Club	24 9:00am GFWC RWWC Sew N Sews/Knit & Chat 9am > Residential Modification Meeting 1:00 Tonettes (chord group)	25 11:00 AM Ladies of Paradise Bridge Group	26 9:00 am Sew Much Fun 2pm > Board of Directors Meeting	27 CANCELED 8:30 am Sweatin' to the Oldies 9:00am > RWWC Creative Crafters 11:30 am Rotonda Garden Club Meeting
30 9:30am-12:00pm > Mahjong 1:00pm > Mahjong 2pm Ukulele Club	31 9:00am GFWC RWWC Sew N Sews/Knit & Chat 1:00 Tonettes (chord group)			

 Clubs
  FLORIDA AQUATICS
  Holiday
  Meetings
  Presentation
  Requires RWWC Membership
  Reservation
  RWA Mowers

OFFICE STAFF

Derrick Hedges,
Manager

Tammy Birdsong,
Administrator

Holly Carr,
Administrator
Deed Restrictions

Nancy Schwechel
Administrator

Penny Hanson,
Bookkeeper

Annette Casteel
Minutes Clerk

Joe Harris,
Communications
Specialist

Mike Heincelman,
Compliance Officer

Maintenance Staff

Matt Rooney

Wayne Taylor

Bill Simons

Eric Pierce

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021

Patricia Aho, President

Patti Cowin, 1st Vice President

Sam Besase, Treasurer

Jerry Eldred, Secretary

Stephen Froggatt, Director

Diane Shaw, Director

David Kelly, Director

WEST WAYS STAFF

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Barry Kean, Writer

Connie Smith, Writer

Diane Shaw, Writer

David Pulaski, Photographer

Wayne Mengel, Photographer

Nadine Clough, Layout & Design



SCHMELZ RESIGNS FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS; KELLY APPOINTED

By: Barry Kean



At the July 8 meeting of the RWA Board of Directors, Director Bernie Schmelz announced his resignation from the board and from the chairmanship of the Deed Restrictions Committee, effective immediately. Mr. Schmelz was elected to the Board in 2020 and had served only about seven months of his three year term. He cited “opportunities” as the reason for his decision.

The Board thanked Mr. Schmelz for his service and immediately took up filling the vacancy created by his resignation. David Kelly was nominated and appointed by unanimous Board vote to fill the unexpired term. Mr. Kelly is a former Board member who narrowly lost reelection in 2020. Les Goodman was appointed to fill the chairmanship of the Deed Restrictions Committee which was vacated when Director Schmelz resigned.

At this meeting the Board also heard reports from Nick Kotzalas, MSBU chair on the status of proposed repairs to the 17 bridges owned by Rotonda West. These repairs are projected to be completed over three years, before repaving of the roads in Rotonda West begins. Hank Killion provided an update on the Storm Water MSBU, noting that the Rotonda River will be assessed to determine whether it needs to be dredged for water quality.

At its July 22 meeting, the Board of Directors considered an extensive list of recommended amendments to the RWA By-Laws. Most of these were needed to bring the By-Laws into conformity with recent changes to Florida law governing homeowners’ associations (section 720, Florida statutes). The Board, however, disapproved or modified several proposed amendments not mandated by the statute.

The Board also approved the use of the Community Center for an eight week (one day a week) Life Long Learning course on Cosmology, a decision held over from the July 8 meeting pending resolution of scheduling issues. See details elsewhere in this edition.





Sheriff Bill Prummell

7474 Utilities Road
Punta Gorda, FL 33982
(941) 639-2101

Charlotte County Sheriff's Office

Integrity, Professionalism, Trust



Golf cart, Bicycle & Kayak registry is being done by the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office. This is a **FREE** event! You **MUST** bring each item you register to the event. You will fill out a basic information form, the Deputies confirm the serial number and apply a numbered ID sticker to each item. The ID sticker will assist law enforcement in identifying your item if it is ever stolen.

When: August 13th, 2021

Where: Rotonda Community Park (at the end of Parade Circle)

Time: 9-11am

Neighborhood watch contact person: David Perry @ 941-828-1584

Please contact Charlotte County Sheriff's Office Crime Prevention with any questions or to schedule this event in your neighborhood!

Crime Prevention 941-613-3227





Candidates Needed For Next Election Cycle

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.

Friday, August 13 at 12:01 p.m. is the deadline for filing your Notice of Intent to become a candidate for the Rotonda West Board of Directors Election.

Candidate packets can be picked up in the office or found online at www.rotondawest.org, under Governance, then Elections. There is a green box on the left that has all the information.

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

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



To Our West Ways Readers,

Our community is preparing to celebrate its 50th Anniversary in 2022!

There will be many special events coming your way to recognize this milestone. West Ways and Constant Contact will be here to keep you informed on all the exciting and interesting happenings.

To kick off this celebratory time, West Ways and will be running a series of articles focusing on the memories of some of our long-term residents. Featured this month is an article based on an interview with Lisa Laudadio Henschen by Diane Shaw.

Enjoy!

Nadine Clough, Editor

WEST WAYS TIME MACHINE

VISITS LISA HENSCHEN IN 1973 ROTONDA

By: Diane Shaw

Lisa Laudadio Henschen, a long-term resident of Rotonda West, takes us back to 1973 when Lisa and her parents, Joseph and Angelina Laudadio first moved from Norwalk, Connecticut to Rotonda West, Florida. At that time, a very young Rotonda West had only a little over 100 residents!

1974 Left to Right: Angie, Joe, and Lisa Laudadio at their home at 82 Rotonda Circle. Lisa is holding her niece.



Lisa's first memories of Rotonda West are those of a 17 year-old girl who was a junior at Charlotte High School in Punta Gorda. Her home was at 82 Rotonda Circle, only a few doors from the Golf Club on Rotonda Circle. Her best friend was Ruthie Stephens who lived on Caddy. At that time, there were only three entrances into Rotonda – Rotonda Blvd West, Cape Haze Blvd and Rotonda Blvd East which was unpaved. Rotonda Boulevards North and South did not exist. There were no other roads, paved or otherwise outside of Oakland Hills in Rotonda West. The bridges that were first in Oakland Hills were not humpback bridges. You could turn right out of Caddy Road and drive straight over the flat bridge – no humpback. There was no Sunnybrook Road or Rotonda Blvd. North. Parade Circle ended at the dirt road now known as Rotonda Blvd East. Oakland Hills golf course was the only golf course.

"The early residents were like family," Lisa explained. "They were friendly and helpful to one another and they had a lot of fun together. There were many clubs and lots of socializing at Don Pedro Island. My mother belonged to the Woman's Club. The only church in Rotonda was Faith Lutheran Church. We went to St. Raphael's Church in Englewood." In 1978, her parents, Joe and Angie Laudadio helped to establish St. Francis of Assisi Church in Grove City.

In 1973, the nearest grocery store was Publix in Palm Plaza. There was a police station where Merchants Crossing is now. There was no Pine St. and after you made the right turn from Placida to McCall, it was mostly a deserted road – just trees.

“There were a only a few places to dine out. One was called “Mama’s”, but it was not the “Mama’s” of today. Howards was there, but there were not a lot of restaurants. A bar called “Whiskey Corners” was in the center of the intersection of Sr 775 & 776, and was a big deal to teens at the time. After all, I was 17 and couldn't go there. Everyone went there at least once to see what it was all about even though it was mainly a rough and rowdy bar. You pretty much had to pass by there every time you left Rotonda,” Lisa explained.

There was almost no traffic. It was completely safe. People often stopped their cars to ask pedestrians if they wanted a ride. Sometimes the beaches were totally deserted. The beach itself had much more depth than it does today. An “Englewood hello” while driving was when two cars approached each other, both cars changed to the oncoming lane and passed each other before returning to the correct lane. Dearborn street was a business district with a hardware store. There was no mail delivery. Residents picked up their mail at the post office that was located near the post office of today. The nearest doctor was on Boca Grande at the clinic. She remembers Dr. Henry Wright as her doctor. She said the doctors were all very happy because they were mostly retired and enjoying life on the island.

Lisa’s high school bus picked up all of the kids in Rotonda and a few along the way on a one hour trip to Charlotte High School in Punta Gorda. Sitting three to a seat, the often rowdy students would share stories about their homes and families.

Lisa’s father, Joe Laudadio in the 1970’s. Lisa is not sure of the location or exact year. Can you guess?



I asked what teenagers did for fun back then. Her eyes lit up with excitement as she described the fun that adults and kids had on Don Pedro Island. She said that after school she and other kids would take the ferry for a twenty-minute boat ride to the island to enjoy the beach. She remembers a great birthday party at Don Pedro. Adults loved Don Pedro Island as well and there were always parties and spontaneous gatherings there.



Lisa's Graduation
picture -1975
Charlotte High
School yearbook

In the early 70's there were two movie theatres. One was near the intersection of Placida and McCall and the other was near Dearborn St. All the residents in Rotonda could swim in the pool at the Riverhouse Condominiums. One of her favorite memories was the "Superstars" television series that ran from 1973 to 1977. She remembers that she and a lot of other kids skipped school off and on to watch the competitions. She got autographs from many of the athletes, but her favorite was O.J. Simpson who posed for a picture with Lisa and seven other girls. She remembers watching Joe Frazier in the swimming competition. "He could not swim at all. He walked in in the pool splashing his arms around," Lisa said. She saw Ed McMahon, Johnnie Bench, Johnny Unitas, Muhammed Ali and other celebrities and athletes there.



Lisa- July, 2021

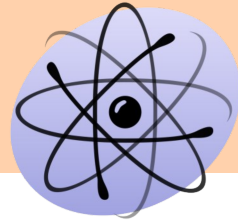
In 1986, Lisa married Terry Henschen in a ceremony at St. Francis church and the reception was at the Boca Grande club. She and her husband moved to a duplex at 135 Boundary, before building their own home in the Broadmoor section in 1996. Years after her marriage, she would become the sous chef at the Boca Grande club.

Lisa and I talked about all of the changes over the years and what it must have been like to be a teenager in the very early days of development here. She said it was pretty boring when she first arrived. She added that the biggest change is "all of the people and cars". As we finished the conversation, she said "Now that I am the same age as everyone else here in Rotonda, I really love it."



Brown University Physics Professor to Offer Free Lectures at RWA Community Center

By: Diane Shaw



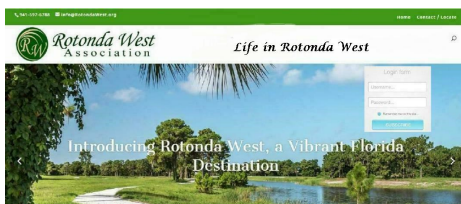
The Activities Committee is sponsoring a lecture series by Professor Frank Levin. Mr. Levin, who is a resident of Rotonda West and a retired physics professor, will be giving an 8 week lecture series from 1 – 3 PM on August 11th, 18th and 25th. In September, the lectures will be on the 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th; and in October on the 7th.

It is called “Microwave Ovens and Our Expanding Big Bang Universe”. The course begins with introductory background material and then focuses on the properties and evolution of the universe, both observational and theoretical; it is intended for people with neither a science nor a math background.

The lectures will be available both in person and on Zoom.



HUBBLE TELESCOPE



ATTENTION: ROTONDA WEST HOMEOWNERS

**The Rotonda West Website will Require a Username and Password in
September!**

Beginning in early September, you will see a login box on the Rotonda West website. Just register by choosing a username and password, and then just login in to see the entire site. We hope you like the improvements that we are making!

FRANK SANDERS TRIO ENTERTAINS CROWD WITH SOME COOL JAZZ

By: Nadine Clough



THE FRANK SANDERS TRIO

Photo by: Nadine Clough



On July 22nd, the second in the “Music in the Park” series took place at Broadmoor Park. The evening event featured the talented Frank Sanders Trio who entertained the crowd of about fifty-five people. Originally planned as an outside event, “Music In The Park” was moved into the community center due to threatening weather. Chair-person Deb Orchard introduced the talent, and reminded us that this date, July 22nd, was the fourth anniversary of the opening of the Rotonda Community Center.

The crowd enjoyed two hours of some very cool jazz. Shoulders were swaying and feet were tapping as Frank Sanders on bass, Jorge Ylisastigui on saxophone, and John Gonzalez on drums rocked the room with such favorites as “Body and Soul” by Coleman Hawkins, “Feels so Good” by Chuck Mangione, and the crowd favorite, “I Feel Good” by James Brown.

Thank you to the Activities Committee who planned and sponsored this event. Chair-person Deb Orchard stated that, “Many positive comments have been made about the ‘Music in the Park’ program.” She added that the next musical event is planned for October. Watch for more information on the upcoming programs in future West Ways.



ROTONDA RESIDENTS CHILL OUT TO SOME COOL JAZZ!

Photo by: Patti Cowin



FLORIDA BATS

WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

By: Connie Smith

Francine Prager of Tampa Bay Bats really is batty about bats and she shared some truths, as well as other details about the flying mammals, on July 19 to a full house at the Rotonda West Community Center:

- No Florida bat wants to drink your blood;
- Bats are not born with rabies and if they do contact rabies, they become paralyzed and die within a day;
- Bats do not fly into your hair;
- Bats groom themselves, just like cats, particularly their faces;
- Bats really are adorable.



Francine Prager of Tampa Bay loves the flying mammals that are often misunderstood.

There are 1,400 types of bats in the world, some mega-sized and others micro-sized. No mega bats live in the United States but an example of a mega bat is the fruit bat with a long face and big eyes. All bats in the U.S. are insect eaters and considered micro-sized. Bats also come with a variety of faces and colors. One would be surprised to learn that bats are the loudest creature on planet earth, but fortunately, the ear-splitting is higher than humans can hear. That sound enables bats to detect insects by the echo of their screaming reverberating back to them.

Another weird and wonderful characteristic of bats are their wings; their wings are actually their hands. It is their finger bones that connect the thin membrane of skin that makes up their wing, allowing them to fly.

Bats of Southwest Florida include two types most likely to occupy a bat house – the evening bat and the free-tailed bat. Prager said that there are considerations in placing a bat house that will increase the likelihood of occupancy, but it could take years. If you place a bat house top your own home, you'll be dealing with guano on your roof (bat excrement doesn't smell or carry disease, but do you really want it on your roof?). Never put a bat house in a tree (predators). A bat house placed near water is favorable to attracting occupants. Also, make sure the location has at least six hours of sun a day, is 12-20 feet off the ground and clears all vegetation by at least 10-14 feet.

Explained Prager, “one bat has to find your bat house. If it likes the house, it might show it to another bat and within a week, you’ll have five to six bats, then you’ll have 50, then 200. In short, if one or two moves in, you’ll have a lot of bats.”

Cari Hale, chairperson of the Rotonda West Wildlife Committee, said that her committee is seeking support of the board of directors for placement of one or more bat houses in Broadmoor Park. Residents who are interested in a bat house on their own property must consider association deed restrictions, so Hale suggested prospective bat house owners contact her at wildlifecommittee@rotondawest.org.



Francine Prager displays a free-tailed bat, one of two Florida bats most likely to occupy bat houses in Florida.

Other types of bats that make Southwest Florida their home are the yellow bat (they’re the same color as the dead palm fronds they live among), the red bat (looks like a dead leaf in the wind), the Seminole bat (lives in pine trees or among Spanish moss) and the tri-color bat (Florida’s smallest bat; hibernates in winter, despite the year-round warmth of Florida).

For more information about bats, go to www.tampabaybats.net, or e-mail Prager at bats@tampabay.rr.com.

Oh, and to put to rest that persistent vampire bat rap, such bats do exist, but NOT in North America. Vampire bats live in South and Central America, and some parts of Mexico. They have two sharp teeth that they use to scratch (not puncture) and draw blood. The good news is that these very small creatures can only consume a tablespoon of blood at the most!





GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club, Inc.
Projects and Upcoming Events
Donna Krabbe, Past-President



Don't Think For A Moment That We Actually Stop Our Volunteer Efforts During Our "Summer Break"



Field Trip to Chihuly Museum

Members have volunteered at **Englewood Helping Hand**, have donated to the **Jubilee Center**, had their first fieldtrip to the **Chihuly Museum** in St. Pete, had their first ever **Happy Hour**, had an incredibly productive **OneBlood Big Red Bus Blood Drive**, and ran the **Kicks for Kids Shoe and Sock Collection**. 65 pairs of brand new sneakers and 305 pairs of new socks for "Back to School" were delivered to **Kid's Needs** by our Health & Wellness Chairman Jennifer Cope!



Woman's Club volunteers making a difference in our community!



ALZHEIMER'S WALK

Look for information on our plans for an Alzheimer's Walk this October. Consider joining us as we walk in honor of our loved ones who have suffered from this disease.

You're Invited!

A few "postcards" to encourage you to join us at our first General Meeting of the year. It will be held at the Rotonda Community Center on Thursday, September 9th. Social Hour & Treats from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., then the meeting from 10 to 11:30 a.m.



HOLIDAY PLANS!



GAZEBO LIGHTING
SUNSET 5:36 p.m. on SATURDAY,
NOVEMBER 27TH

PARADE

2 p.m. SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 4TH



WEST WAYS NEWSLETTER IS LOOKING FOR WRITERS!

**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.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR UPCOMING ISSUES!

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