

# WEST WAYS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION, INC

FEBRUARY 2022



PUBLISHED BY THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION FOR ROTONDA WEST PROPERTY OWNERS.  
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**ROTONDA WEST CELEBRATES 50 YEARS**  
**1972-2022**

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



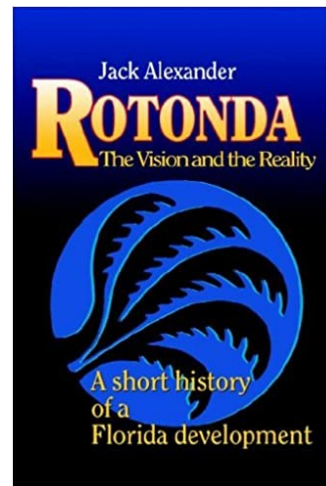
Greetings Rotonda West!

And Happy New Year!

2022 brings with the new year the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of Rotonda West. We have a rich and lively history for our beautiful community, and we hope to have a yearlong celebration with many special activities and events spearheaded by our talented and creative Community Outreach members. The next time you are in our Community Center, look at the historical documents in the display case in the lobby. These include original plans of houses, magazines, and photographs.

Knowing that this was our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, our Manager Derrick Hedges spent months working to secure the rights to our book, *Rotonda, the Vision and the Reality*. Did you notice I said, “our book”? Because thanks to Derrick’s months of sleuthing and efforts, we own the rights to the book.

We have paperback copies in the Office for sale at \$10.00 for those who have not had a chance to read the book yet. And the work by Derrick is so apropos because his grandparents were two of the first one hundred pioneers to Rotonda West, so if you see Derrick, please thank him for his work on our behalf and thank his family for working to make Rotonda our beautiful home.



# **FEBRUARY 2022**

- February 1st & 8th (Tuesdays), at 1-3 p.m.  
16th & 23rd (Wednesdays), at 1-3 p.m.  
Lectures on Global Warming by Prof. Frank Levin
- February 20th, Sunday (third Sunday of each month)  
1 p.m. BINGO! At the Community Center. Doors open  
at 12:30 p.m.
- February 24th, Thursday 5:30-7 p.m.  
Music in the Park-Jonny Puma & His Acoustic Guitar

# **MARCH 2022**

- March 19th, Saturday 8 a.m.-4 p.m.  
RWWC Charity Fashion Show

**ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**646 Rotonda Circle**

**Rotonda West, Florida 33947**

**Tel: (941) 697-6788**

**Fax: (941) 697-0788**

**Email: [info@rotondawest.org](mailto:info@rotondawest.org)**

### **OFFICE STAFF**

**Derrick Hedges,**  
Manager

**Tammy Birdsong,**  
Administrator

**Holly Carr, &  
Nancy Schwechel,**  
Administrators  
Deed Restrictions

**Penny Hanson,**  
Bookkeeper

**Annette Casteel**  
Minutes Clerk

**Sheryl Ann Nowicki**  
Administrator

**Joe Harris,**  
Communications  
Specialist

**Mike Heincelman, &  
Matt Rooney**  
Compliance Officers

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**Wayne Taylor**

**Paul McGinley**

**Pablo Guardiola**

**Dale Anderson**

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Nadine Clough, Editor

Karen Harvey, Writer

Barry Kean, Writer

Connie Smith, Writer

Thom Lisk, Writer

David Pulaski, Photographer

Wayne Mengel, Photographer

Nadine Clough, Layout & Design







## GOODMAN APPOINTED TO BOARD

By: Barry Kean

At the January 13 meeting of the RWA Board of Directors, Les Goodman was appointed to the last remaining vacancy on the Board, a one-year term ordinarily filled by appointment by Rotonda West's Developer. Because the Developer did not wish to fill the position this year, the RWA By-laws permit the Board to make the appointment by majority vote. Mr. Goodman was nominated by Director Sam Besase and was appointed by unanimous vote.

Prior to his appointment to the Board of Directors, Mr. Goodman served on the Compliance Committee, but resigned that post upon appointment to the Board. He continues to serve on the Residential Modification Committee and chairs the Deed Restrictions Subcommittee.

In other business, the Board unanimously approved requirements that subcommittee meeting agendas be posted electronically on Constant Contact and the Zoom Link, and physically in the Community Center display cabinet, at least 48 hours before the meeting, and to allow Zoom or similar electronic participation in subcommittee meetings. This parallels requirements for standing committees and removes ambiguities created recently when some standing committees were converted to subcommittees.

## RESIDENTIAL MODIFICATION-WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Rotonda West is a deed restricted community.

Please read your deed restrictions and residential modification guidelines to be aware of rules and regulations of the Rotonda West Home Owners Association. Any changes or modifications that are done to the exterior of your home or yard, other than live planting or landscaping, must be approved by the Residential Modification committee.



The committee meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of the month. All applications must be submitted by 12:00 P.M. the Friday before the meeting. If there are any questions, you may call Tammy Birdsong at the Administrative office at 941-697-1780 or [tammy@rotondawest.org](mailto:tammy@rotondawest.org). She can guide you and answer any questions you may have in regard to applying.

Applications can be found on the Rotonda West website [rotondawest.org](http://rotondawest.org) (Living Here) or at the Administration office at 646 Rotonda Circle. Failure to apply is a violation of the Rotonda West deed restrictions and is subject to a fine.

Thank you - Barbara Peszko, Chair

# BINGO IS BACK!

By: Nadine Clough

On the third Sunday of each month from 1 pm to 4 pm (doors open at 12:30 pm) , BINGO is back to being played at the Rotonda West Community Center. The first of this year's schedule of games was held on Sunday, January 16th. Although the BINGO game had tough competition from a televised Tampa Bay Buc's playoff game, it still drew a good crowd of 65 people. The gamers expressed gratitude for the return of the games, and were happy with the variety of the 15 BINGO games offered. Prize winnings averaged \$68 a game, with a nice payout of \$187 for the "Winner Take All" game. In addition, a free raffle awarded two prizes, a \$25 gift certificate for Rob's Pizza and a \$25 gift certificate to the Made in the Shade Ice Cream Shop. Refreshments were also available.



Left:  
Denise Slovinski  
calls out the  
numbers to the  
BINGO players.



BINGO Helpers



Denise assists  
Dale Hedges

Many thanks to Community Outreach Committee for organizing the event. Also, to Denise Slovinski for chairing the event, and to helpers (from left to right in above picture) Lynn Smith, Patti Cowin, Nadine Clough, and Gwen Grace for all their assistance. Special thanks to Denise Gallagher for her help with checking winning cards and handing out prize money.

Also, thank you to Manager Derrick Hedges and the RWA staff for setting up the room for the games



Residents enjoy BINGO games  
at the  
Rotonda Community Center

**NEXT BINGO GAME WILL BE ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH**

**1-4 p.m. Doors Open at 12:30 p.m.**

**Open to Rotonda West residents and guests.**

**Must be at least 18 years of age to play.**

## MUSIC IN THE PARK PROGRAMS

Submitted by: Deb Orchard

On Thursday, January 27th the Music in the Park program presented Seasons of Sound, featuring Eric & Emily Stefanik. The program was moved inside the Community Center due to threatening weather, and the residents who came to listen to the music were treated to a lively program. For added fun, the game "Name That Tune" was played with the audience, with a tie for winner between Irene Thibeault and Sam Besase.

MUSIC IN THE PARK PRESENTATION  
OF SEASONS OF SOUND



CROWD ENJOYS MUSIC INSIDE THE  
COMMUNITY CENTER



### COMING IN FEBRUARY-JONNY PUMA

On Thursday, February 24th 2022 from 5:30 p.m.-7 p.m. behind the Community Center at Broadmoor Park, the Music in the Park Program will present Jonny Puma, a local musician.

His website states, "Having an eclectic taste and passion for music, Jon applies his unique brand of acoustic flavor to cover tunes that span seven decades of music from rock, pop, jazz, and country. With over thirty-seven years of guitar playing experience and a strong vocal presence, he will have people tapping their feet and singing along to a cherished musical memory while he sprinkles an original piece of his own music here and there. Jon strives to introduce his audience to a different take on a familiar song. His goal is that after the performance the crowd will leave humming a new favorite."

**Don't miss it!**

# FIESTA ASSOCIATION PARTIES HEARTY

**By: Barry Kean**

The Rotonda West Fiesta Association held its first dinner-dance of 2022 at the Hills Restaurant on the evening of January 22. More than seventy members and guests dined on chicken parmesan and grouper mango and danced to the music of Ken Fredricks, and a good time was had by all.

The Fiesta Association is one of the oldest clubs or organizations in Rotonda West. It was established in 1971, the year the first residents moved into Rotonda West. Initially sponsoring pot luck dinners in members' homes as a way for people to meet their neighbors, it evolved over the years into its present form sponsoring monthly dinner-dances for its members and guests during the Fall, Winter and Spring seasons. Since 2009 its events have been held at the Hills Restaurant in Rotonda West.



Fiesta Club members enjoy dinner/dance event at The Hills

Membership in the Fiesta Association is open to residents of Rotonda West and surrounding areas. Annual dues are \$15 per person, and the charge per person for each dinner-dance is \$25 for members, \$30 for guests, meal included (cash bar). At present, the Association has 91 members. If you are interested in joining, please contact Judy Murdoch at 410-585-5839.



# A HISTORICAL VIDEO GEM

By: Nadine Clough

In 2015, the new offices of the Rotonda West Association at Broadmoor Park became a video studio for a day. The filming of the RWA historical program, “Rotonda, the Vision and the Reality” was made featuring three notable Rotonda residents discussing the interesting early years of Rotonda West.

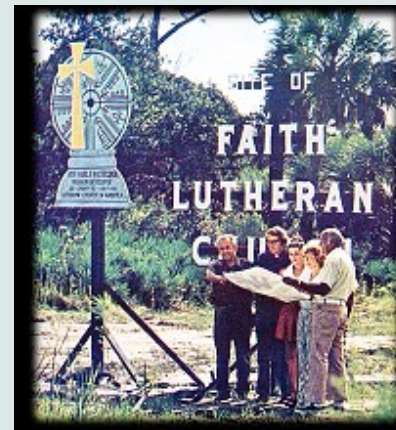


From left to right: Jay Lyons, Jack Alexander, and Rev. Carl Katreider

Produced by Don Mahon, the 56 minute video is hosted by Jay Lyons, former RWA Manager, who interviews Jack Alexander, author of the book, Rotonda, The Vision and the Reality, and Reverend Carl Katreider, an early Rotonda resident and founder of the Faith Lutheran Church, both men being respected Rotonda historians. This video is recognizing the 25th Anniversary of the Rotonda West Association, but there are many interesting facts given regarding the early history of the Rotonda community which began in 1972 with the first families moving to the new community. Some wonderful old photos are shared in the video. This video can be seen on YouTube, by typing in: “Rotonda, The Vision and the Reality”. It also is shown on CC/TV local station in Charlotte County.



Early pictures of Rev. Carl Katreider from video





## GLOBAL WARMING TRUTH & CONSEQUENCES



Above: Professor Frank Levin

This 6-week set of lectures will be taught by Frank Levin, retired Brown University Physics Professor.

Topics to be covered include: earth's climate system; denials and their refutations; and evidence that global warming is real, is human caused, has already generated deleterious consequences, and is very likely to continue doing so.

The remaining four lectures will be held at the Rotonda West Community Center from 1 -3 p.m on February 1,8,16, & 23.

If you plan to attend, please email Patti Cowin at:

[Patti.Cowin@RotondaWest.org](mailto:Patti.Cowin@RotondaWest.org) so we may have sufficient handouts available.

## SHRED IT CAME TO ROTONDA WEST

By: Karen Harvey

The Community Outreach Committee held a successful “Shred Day” on Saturday, January 29th at the Community Center. About 184 cars drove through the line and dropped off tons of paper to be shredded by Shred It. Thanks to our sponsors, Amy Gonzales of Michael Saunders Realty, Englewood Bank & Trust, and Arnold Insurance, the event was free! Two pick-up trucks were loaded with canned food for the Jubilee Center. It was a well-organized event chaired by Lynn Smith.

Food for the  
Jubilee Center



Shred-It  
Truck on site

# AFTER 50 YEARS, 4 GENERATIONS CONTINUE TO CALL ROTONDA WEST HOME

By: Connie Smith



Jean and Joe Brower were the first of four generations to move to Rotonda West. These pictures are from the couple's 70th Wedding Anniversary in 2015. In the family photo, they are pictured with their five surviving children. FRONT ROW, FROM LEFT: Darlene Lindsey, Mark Brower, Melodie Palmer. BACK ROW, FROM LEFT: Sharon Winzen, Jean Brower, Joe Brower, Dianna Hedges. INSET: The couple in 1945.

In 1971, engineer Joe Brower and his wife Jean, happened to be spending the night at a hotel in Delaware, Ohio, when the couple espied a rather elaborate display with a 3-D rendering of a proposed Florida development called Rotonda West. That moment led to four generations of the family calling Rotonda West home.

Wearying of engineering and already considering a Florida retirement, the Browsers accepted an all-expenses-paid offer to tour the model homes then on display in a Golfview cul de sac and to get a feel for the undeveloped landscape. Although the Browsers were the parents of six children, for various reasons just four of the kids made the trip. At the time, the closest accommodations were in Venice, so the Browsers traveled between there and Rotonda West for their tour.

The two oldest girls on the trip (Dianna, now Hedges; and Darlene, now Lindsey) were typical teens, so not everything their parents were planning had their total support – or attention. Recollections vary for the daughters, now parents of adult children, but the gist is that the family members viewed the proposed development by air from a “crop duster”. They don’t remember touring the model homes, but instead, spent their time in an adjacent mobile home office, no doubt listening to a sales spiel.

Brother Mark, next to the youngest, also recalls the aerial tour of Rotonda but youngest sister Melodie (now Palmer), only recalls the bad sunburn she received swimming in the pool at the Venice hotel.

Mark described his early impression of Rotonda: “when we first drove in, there were no paved roads, they were all shell. On the plane ride we got to see Rotonda. My impression was it was (going to be a) very big, giant community. But it was mostly scrub brush and palmetto. Most of it was undeveloped and I don’t remember if the canals were finished.” Added Melodie, “there were no street signs, so you never knew where you were.”

Joe and Jean initially bought a lot at 15 Fairview in the Pinemoor section, but construction on that property was not proceeding. When Rotonda developers devised a promotion to offer a free pool to the first 100 homes, the Browers traded their Fairview lot for one at 15 Golfview Road, earning their free pool.



By 1976 when the Browers were ready to move to their new Rotonda West home, Dianna was married to Dale Hedges and had settled in Columbus, Ohio. Darlene was in college. Darlene later married Terry Lindsey and moved to St. Louis, Missouri. So, it was the two youngest Browers, Mark, aged 15, and Melodie, then 12, who moved into the new house with their parents.

15 Golfview home in 1976, the year the couple moved in. The Brower’s daughter, Dianna, her husband, and children moved into the home in 1990. Dianna and Dale Hedges still reside in this home.

The Golfview house had apparently been built for some time and was rented out by the Browers until they were ready to move. Mark says their grandparents, Jean’s parents, Julia and Harold Speer of Indianapolis, arrived to assist the move into the Golfview house, helping with repairs and improvements.

Melodie recalled that first night in their Rotonda home (“the boonies, the sticks; everywhere were alligators and snakes”) as miserable. She was unnerved by the size of the Palmetto bugs in Florida. Already “devastated, leaving behind everything I knew. We drove down with our U-Haul. The house was so hot, there was glass in the pool, we were so flea bitten; it was not a good first night. The renters had not left the house in good condition.”

Both Mark and Melodie recall a difficult transition from Delaware, Ohio, to Florida, but they eventually made friends and still live in Florida. Mark worked at Publix Supermarket and Melodie loved the weather and the chance to swim everyday.

It was not many years before Harold and Julia Speer joined their daughter's family in Rotonda West. The couple lived at 279 Mark Twain until Harold Speer's death. Julia moved in with her daughter and son-in-law until she was no longer able to be cared for in the Brower home. Melodie says Harold and Julia loved being close to their Brower grandchildren.

As Rotonda West continued to develop, Jean and Joe Brower were active in the community. The couple was instrumental in the establishment of Rotonda West Community Church that is located on Rotonda Boulevard West. In a news photo of the groundbreaking for the church building, Joe Brower is present and identified as chairman of the church board. Melodie recalls her dad's love for the church and that he invited everyone to attend and to sing in the choir, regardless of their singing ability. Jean Brower was active in caring for young children in the church, no doubt allowing their mothers to enjoy uninterrupted worship. She also involved Melodie who became a popular babysitter. Both Joe and Jean demonstrated their faith by helping others.

Joe Brower also played golf and tennis every day to age 85, say Dianna and Darlene, until a broken hip led Jean to control strenuous activity; Joe then played golf only on Wednesdays. In the intervening years, Joe Brower sold real estate, but his engineering skills did not go to waste; he built and lived in two other homes in Rotonda West – 19 Sportsman Road and 164 Broadmoor. A third home at 235 Caddy that Joe and Jean lived in was already built but was updated by the Browsers.



Joe Brower works on the home he built at 19 Sportsman Road.

Dianna, Darlene and Mark all recall when Joe was building his home on Sportsman, thieves stole the copper pipe that had just been installed in the home's foundation, but not yet covered by cement. Thereafter, Joe camped at the home site with his son-in-law Dale Hedges until the next copper pipe was installed and properly buried. Dianna Hedges says the caution was well-founded. About 2:30 a.m. in the morning, a truck stopped at the site and asked for directions.



By the mid-1980s Melodie and Mark had left home but on the same weekend in June 1990, daughters Dianna and Darlene moved to Rotonda with their husbands and children. Dianna and family settled into the first Brower home at 15 Golfview where they reside today. Darlene and family moved into a home on Sportsman Road, not far from the home built by Joe Brower.

Dianna said she felt comfortable moving to her parents' former home. "I felt happy there; I've always enjoyed that house," she said. "If we hadn't moved to Florida, our kids would never have had the chance to be in band or play soccer, softball or baseball."



Easter Sunday-1982 Jean and Joe Brower pose outside at 15 Golfview Road with their two youngest, Melodie and Mark.



Daughter Dianna Hedges helps her dad, Joe Brower paint a home he built at 164 Broadmoor

Rotonda feels like home," added Darlene. "We always vacationed here, enjoying boating and the water. It was good to leave our marathon lives and allow our kids to grow up with their grandparents and cousins. It's the best thing we ever did."

All of the Brower children said over the years when visiting Rotonda West, they often marveled at its growth. Despite their history, they sometimes became lost due to the changes.

Although Dianna and Dale Hedges never visited Don Pedro Island – once Rotonda West's link to the Gulf of Mexico – until Dale had work there, Darlene said she and her husband often boated there with their two daughters.

When Joe and Jean Brower celebrated their 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, in May 2015, all of their living children and available grandchildren and great grandchildren were in attendance. Daughter Sharon (Winzen), who lives in Texas, was present but son Steve was deceased. Joe was 90 and Jean was 88. After 40 years enjoying life in Rotonda West, Joe died in 2016. Jean just missed the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rotonda, dying in February 2021.



Back in 1990, after Dianna and Darlene moved to Rotonda West, Dianna's children Derrick, Devin and Dawn, and Darlene's daughters, Courtney and Hannah, were enrolled in Vineland Elementary. They all later attended junior high at L.A. Ainger and graduated from Lemon Bay H.S. Dianna's son Derrick eventually married his sweetheart Meghan, a teacher, and the couple are the fourth generation to make Rotonda home. In a wonderful twist of fate, Derrick Hedges is now manager for the Rotonda West Association.



Derrick Hedges, Rotonda West Manager

"I have enjoyable memories of my childhood; attending the local schools, playing baseball and soccer for the local teams, fishing, golfing, swimming, going to the beaches, having campfires in uninhabited areas that are now built with houses," recalled Derrick.

"While growing up in Rotonda I was always fascinated with the street names. Reading some of Mark Twain's works in school I admired his sharp wit and I have always remembered one of his quotes that I feel is universal, 'Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.'"

Added Derrick, "Some of the (RWA) members that are still with us today would pay me a few dollars when I was a child to pull weeds and I would ride my bike to their home and complete the tasks and now they see me as their manager and I see genuine happiness in their eyes. I am fortunate to continue to live and work in the community that I was raised."





## GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club, Inc.

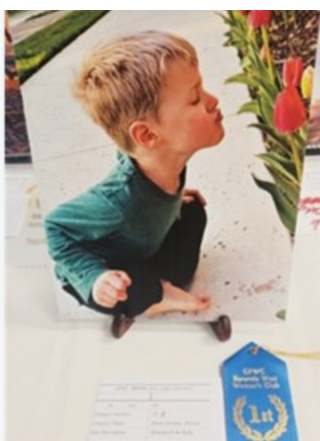
Donna Krabbe, Former-President



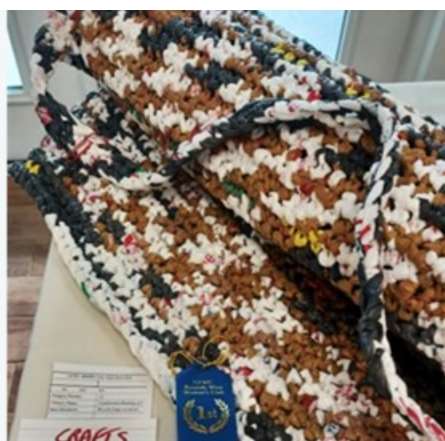
GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club and all GFWC Florida clubs concentrate on their annual Arts & Crafts competition, this year to be held at the GFWC Naples Woman's Club. Below are a few examples of their work.



Sweatshirt Jacket Jackie Miller  
also won Members' Choice Award



Edmund & the Tulip – Jennifer Cope



Placemat – Kay Morris – Crocheted using  
plastic bags – donated to homeless



Jeweled Letter R – Rosemary Collins



Christmas Tree – Diana Dudick



Cayamba Poncho – Lois LeVasseur



St. Augustine Beach – Kathy Altenburg

Entries winning Blue Ribbons at the District level continue on the GFWC Florida's Annual Convention held at the Rosen Plaza Hotel in Orlando each May. Our Rotonda artists bring home lots of BLUE Ribbons !

Best of all, our artists love to share their talent with all members, whether you join the Creative Crafters group, the Sew N Sews or the Knit & Chat group...our "artists" are there to share their talents with you. Come to the Thursday, February 17<sup>th</sup> "Hearts Afire" General Meeting sponsored by the Health & Wellness Community Service Program. Wear Red! Meet us and see if you might want to join us as we "creatively" live the Volunteer Spirit together.

***You are invited!*** General Meetings are held on the **third Thursday of the month**, September through May. RWA Activity Building. 9:00 am Social Hour – 10:00 am General Meeting.



**GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club  
Bella Williams Memorial  
Continuing Education Scholarship**

The RWWC is offering two (2) Bella Williams Memorial Continuing Education Scholarships at \$1,500 each. Applicants should be from the Englewood/Rotonda West area and pursuing advanced education or retraining in a college or vocational school. The scholarships are intended for those who have had an interruption in their studies and are returning to school.

A resume may be sent to GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club,  
Attention: Scholarship  
P.O. Box 672, Placida, FL 33946

Deadline for receipt of resumes is **Thursday, March 31, 2022**

For additional information call Debra 917-573-5512







## PET OF THE MONTH

**We love our pets!  
They are funny, loyal, and  
very photogenic!**



**West Ways would like to include your pets in our monthly  
West Ways newsletter.**

**Please send:**



**A picture of your pet  
Include their name, age,  
and breed or type**



**Tell us why they are special  
All types of pets are welcome!**

