

WEST WAYS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION, INC

FEBRUARY 2023



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Rotonda West Mourns Loss of Don Mahon- Editor, Writer, and Community Leader

By: Nadine Clough Photo By: David Pulaski

Don Mahon, passed away on January 6, 2023 leaving behind a loving family, loyal friends, and a community thankful for his many contributions. He was 90 years old.

It is said that, "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way" (John Maxwell). That philosophy fit the way Don served his community and lived his life. He was a visionary who saw the direction that his community should move, and provided leadership and guidance as he brought everyone along with him.

A celebration of life service will be held on Saturday, February 4, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. at the Rotonda West Community Center, 646 Rotonda Circle, Rotonda West.

This issue of West Ways Newsletter is dedicated to Don Mahon who captained the West Ways Newsletter for seventeen years as editor, writer, reporter, and public relations person. Biography and tributes to follow in this issue.

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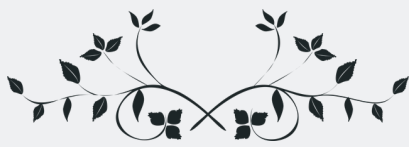
WEST WAYS NEEDS YOU!

Your Rotonda West Newsletter, West Ways, depends on people who are willing to contribute stories, ideas, pictures, reports or just about anything that is about our community.

You are not required to submit an article each month, or even to join a committee. Our newsletter would love to showcase our community members and their interests.

Please contact Nadine Clough, West Ways Editor, if you have any questions or would like to submit something.

My email: westways@rotondawest.org



DON MAHON, A COMMUNITY FRIEND,



By: Nadine Clough

Don Mahon was the driving force behind Rotonda West's newsletter, West Ways, for almost two decades. He held the positions of editor and writer for the newsletter and liaison for media publicity. He was also a supportive mentor to many new writers. He was a man well-known to many and wrote over six hundred articles about our community for West Ways. Originally from Connecticut, he and his wife of sixty-six years, Ginni, moved to Florida in 1997, and to Rotonda West in 2001. Don brought with him his rich background in the field of journalism and an abiding faith in the value of community service. Journalism has always been an important part of Don's life. Always a sports enthusiast, he began his writing career at Norwalk High School covering sporting events. His journalism focus continued at Boston University where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in that field. In his professional career, at the Perkin Elmer Corporation in Norwalk, he worked in Corporate Communications for thirty-two years until his retirement.

Soon after moving to Rotonda, he was asked to write for a small newsletter called West Ways. At that time there was only an editor, a lay-out person, and one writer, Don. He continued to be the only writer for three years, with other writers joining later on. Don edited and wrote on a wide range of topics and covered many events for Rotonda West. These articles informed and entertained the community on relevant stories, and also provided an historical written record of Rotonda West life. As acting liaison for media publicity, Don filled the important role of linking Rotonda West with the outside world through written articles published in local newspapers like the Englewood Sun and the Englewood Review.

He took pride in his involvement in writing articles that promoted the building of the Rotonda West Community Center. In addition to his work for West Ways, Don made volunteering and community service an integral part of his life. Don received numerous awards for service both in Connecticut and here in Florida. In Norwalk, he served on boards and committees that included the United Way of Norwalk, the Norwalk Rotary Club, the Norwalk YMCA, the Chamber of Commerce of Norwalk, and many other non-profit organizations.

For his work on West Ways, his media publicity endeavors, his involvement in Big Brothers / Big Sisters, and his many other contributions, Don was named Volunteer of the Year for 2017, and was awarded the honor by the previous winner and good friend, Earl Haas. Don often told the story that he was sitting at a table waiting to write down the name of the winner for an article he was preparing, when he was surprised by Earl walking up to him. He was indeed honored to have been selected from over seventy-five other worthy candidates.

It is said that volunteering and community service is the ultimate exercise in democracy. Don believed that volunteering allows you to create the kind of community that you want to live in. Don Mahon was named Outstanding Young Man of the Year at age thirty-five by the Norwalk Jaycees and was presented with its Distinguished Service Award. Here in Florida Don continued that devotion to service. He had an active role in the Rotonda West Association, serving on many committees over the years. Don was a member of the Board of Directors for Englewood's Big Brothers/Big Sisters and was a Big Brother for seven years. In 2013, 2015, and 2016, he was named Englewood's Big Brother of the Year, while in his eighties.

Although there have been many awards throughout his life, the greatest sense of pride came from his family. In addition to his wife, Ginni, he is survived by two sons, Timothy J. and Robert E. Mahon of Norwalk Connecticut, and two daughters, Wendy Dominici of Norwalk, and Cynthia Ferracci of Rotonda West, Florida. He is also survived by a sister, Joan, in Bennington, Vermont, and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

MEMORIAM MESSAGES

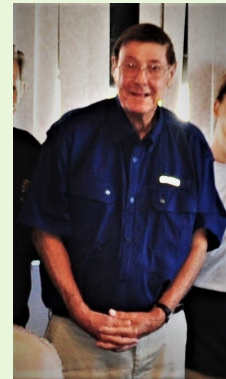
A TRIBUTE TO DON MAHON

I had to share these photos of Don from a "few" years past. Oh, the memories that came flooding back as I browsed through the dusty archives of my computer's old files. The phone rings or a message flashes on my email. Yup, it's Don. We have yet another assignment for Rotonda West's "West Ways" or the "Englewood Sun". Gotta get right on it, Don will write, I will photograph. The "Boss" and his wingman are on the way. In a day or two, after plugging away, the mission is accomplished and our efforts get "ink". Oh those thoughts, memories, and laughs surely remain.

Thank you and rest in peace, "DM"

Your wingman,

David Pulaski



Don
Photo by D. Pulaski

CELEBRATING DON MAHON

I had the privilege of meeting Don Mahon around 2008 when my friend Earl Haas invited me to help with the Rotonda Christmas Parade. What a nice man! I was impressed and nicknamed him "Dapper Don," as he was wearing a sport coat and you don't see that much.

In 2012, I went to work for Big Brothers and Big Sisters of the Sun Coast and who did I meet again? Dapper Don! He was recognized as Big Brother of the Year, and he made it a point to introduce me to "his little brother". Don was so proud of him and I was honored that he wanted to introduce him to me. Don made a huge impact on this young man!

I asked Don to be a Judge of the Little Mr. & Miss Englewood Pageant, he was the first male judge the panel had ever had. He was nervous, I told him he was the perfect choice. He did well and I was so proud.

In 2017, I came to work at the RWA, Don interviewed me and took my photo for West Ways, we were both excited about the day. I was so proud and honored.

Don would stop in the office on his way into a meeting here at RWA and we all got a hug from him.

My friend Don would help me on the QT with my buddy Earl. When I wanted to know if Earl was doing okay, Don would let me know by email or a phone call. Earl was equally efficient when I wanted to know what was happening with my buddy Don! I love these guys, they have made a special impact on my life.

Don, I am looking forward to my Hug in Heaven! Thank you for being in my life.

Love Always,

Tammy Birdsong



Parade Planning Group
Don is third from right
Photo by: W. Mengel

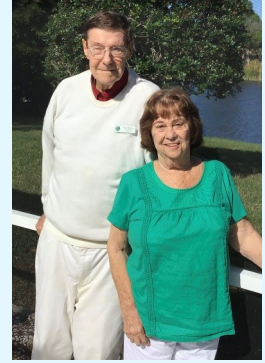
My Mentor-Don Mahon

I met Don when I began writing for West Ways in 2018. He immediately took me under his wing and became a mentor to me. Any article I wrote, he was there to guide and offer encouragement to me. Often done with humor and great insight. His guidance continued when I became editor of the West Ways Newsletter. He never missed emailing me about the latest issue, including questions, suggestions, and of course humor and encouragement. He always wanted the latest news on what was happening in Rotonda West, especially any committee and BOD news.

We became good friends, and I could always count on him to be “in my corner”. He was a special person, and he will be missed by many. Rest in Peace dear friend, I will miss our conversations.

Nadine Clough

*“It will be a long time without you my friend,
But I’ll tell you all about it when I see you again.”*



Don and Ginni Mahon
married 66 years
Photo by: N. Clough

Don Mahon- News Person of Rotonda West Association

Don was a member of the Community Relations Committee for many years. Wearing many crowns as Editor, Reporter, Writer, and any other function that needed help. Don was always with pen and notebook. All RWA functions were reported in our West Ways Newsletter, and he had a direct line of communication with local newspapers. In 2017, he was chosen as “Volunteer of the Year” for the RWA, well deserved. Friend, You will be missed by many! Rest in Peace.

Earl A Haas



L to R: Tammy Birdsong,
Earl Haas, Don Mahon, and
Russ Kulp
Photo by W. Mengel

Don Mahon Was a Legendary Editor of West Ways

Every periodic publication has its legend and West Way’s was Don Mahon. I knew that Don had been a highly-placed public relations executive during his career and in retirement, an editor of the West Ways Newsletter. For such a small publication, during his tenure, I knew it was rooted in a basic desire to describe with excellence, the going on in our special and growing Florida community. I learned that Don did not bestow his admiration lightly.

In August, I actually met Don when I learned he had a writing assignment for me. There was a story that was dear to his heart and he had chosen me to write it. I was pleased to do the interview and write the story, but I was unable to do it immediately, as he had hoped. Travel plans and Hurricane Ian delayed the story.

Don was extremely disappointed, but accepted the delay. Maybe he knew his time was limited and feared he would not get to see it in print. When that interview is finally conducted in a month or so, and I write that article for West Ways, I’ll be thinking of Don’s confidence in my ability to achieve his standard of excellence.

Connie Smith

DON MAHON-COMMUNITY CENTER ADVOCATE

Don was a good friend and I have many fond memories of him. We worked together for many years trying to make Rotonda West a better place to live. We both were of the opinion that we needed a better Community Center other than the one that we had on Cape Haze Drive. We tried to convince the membership to support plans for a new Community Center.

After two failed attempts, we finally began construction of the community center. A generous donor made it possible to purchase our current location in Broadmoor Park. Don was adamant about getting positive publicity out there for the RWA and wrote wonderful, supportive articles on the need for the community center, and other supportive articles about Rotonda West.

Aside from the RWA, he was a "Big Brother" with the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Organization and helped us get a Big Brother for our Philip.

He was truly an asset to our community and a valued friend, and we will miss him.

Nick Gizzi



Don in middle.
Community Center Planning
Photo by: W. Mengel



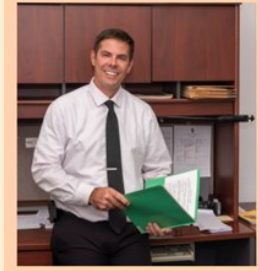
Left:
Rotonda West
Community Center
Photo by:
David Pulaski

A MESSAGE FROM DON: (Written in 2020)

In my seventeen years, I have had the great privilege of observing and writing about major milestones for the growth and well-being of our community. That does not happen without the many dedicated and talented board members, committee members, and staff members working together through the years. All deserve a bushel-basket filled with accolades for their contributions. I've met and worked with so many outstanding good people willing to give back and I will cherish those friendships now and forever. Thank you all!



MANAGER'S MESSAGE



I hope that all Rotonda West Association Members have had an excellent start to 2023. Each day progress is made in repairs and cleanup from Ian. Although our area has felt some 'winter' temperatures, the sunny and comfortable temperatures remind us how wonderful it is to live in Rotonda West. Rotonda West Association's Broadmoor Park is busy with many walkers, nature enthusiasts, artists, and others enjoying the fabulous weather; it is always a pleasure to see our members enjoying our beautiful park.

The Rotonda West Association continues to have property transfers by selling homes and vacant lots. With the transactions, in my weekly Manager's Report, I have mentioned estoppels, and I have received inquiries from members on what an estoppel is. An estoppel is an essential part of an HOA such as ours. Estoppels not only help offset the assessments, but it is an important piece of information to protect the member selling and the soon-to-be new member buying. It helps guarantee that the past member had no outstanding balances, assessments are current, the property is compliant, and the selling member does not have any Deed Restriction violations. The estoppel allows the soon-to-be buyer to ask questions that are imperative to know when buying a home. New buyers may ask if the HOA voted on special assessments, informs the buyer if the HOA has had serious lawsuits or is in financial problems, and it allows the new buyer to view the Deed Restrictions, review the HOA rules, regulations, bylaws, and covenants, and check that the Association Insurance is up to date. The Rotonda West Association is in excellent financial shape, has fully funded reserves, and has not planned any special assessments. New buyers looking in other HOA'S outside the Rotonda West Association might change their minds if they learn that the home that was interesting to the buyer was in a failing HOA.

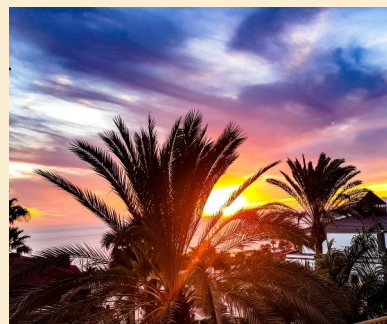
For those wondering how it works, the Rotonda West Association receives an estoppel letter from the title agency notifying that a member is selling their property and information that states when the member is selling and the closing date. By law, the Rotonda West Association must have this letter filled out and sent back within ten days of receiving it. The Association then confirms that the selling member has no past due delinquencies, liens, or violations and verifies that they are the owner. When this is confirmed, the Association will have our Compliance Officer ensure no violations on the property if the property has sheds, wooden fences, or illegal structures. If it is a vacant lot and has invasive species on it, the Rotonda West Association will not let the property sell if it is in violation, and the seller has not communicated with the Association on how the seller is going to remedy the violations. If a seller sneaks one by the Association, the new owner is now liable for the violations and monies owed to the Association. The Rotonda West Association receives **\$400** for an estoppel certificate. Last year the Rotonda West Association processed approximately **70** estoppels a month. It is too soon to tell this year. Still, in January, the Association processed **28** estoppels, and the Rotonda West Association held up three properties from selling until the owners became compliant. It is a lot of work for the compliance officers and staff to follow up with an estoppel process, and I am immensely proud of the Rotonda West Association team.

Thank you,

Derrick Hedges

Rotonda West Association Inc.,

Manager



OFFICE STAFF

Derrick Hedges,
Manager

Tammy Birdsong,
Administrator

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

Jenny Bulle,
Bookkeeper

Annette Casteel
Administrator and
Minutes Clerk

Sheryl Ann Nowicki
Administrator

Joe Harris,
Communications
Specialist

Jay Dernier
Compliance Officer

MAINTENANCE STAFF

Wayne Taylor

Dale Anderson

Bill Simmons

Craig Brown

***THANK YOU TO OUR
WONDERFUL STAFF***

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023

Andy VanScyoc, President

Les Goodman, 1st Vice President

Sam Besase, Treasurer

Patti Cowin, Secretary

David Kelly, Director

Jack Metz, Director

Karen Harvey, Director



WEST WAYS STAFF

Nadine Clough, Editor

Connie Smith, Feature Writer

Karen Harvey, Writer

Barry Kean, Writer

Grace Checuti, Writer

Lynn Smith, Writer

David Pulaski, Photographer

Wayne Mengel, Photographer

Nadine Clough, Layout & Design

Rotonda West Association

Board of Directors 2023



Sitting L to R:

Sam Besase, Treasurer; Andy VanScyoc, President;
Les Goodman, Vice President;

Standing L to R:

Patricia Cowin, Secretary; Jack Metz, Director;
Karen Harvey, Director

Right: David Kelly, Director



BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE SECOND AND FOURTH THURSDAY OF
EACH MONTH IN THE COMMUNITY CENTER AT 2 P.M.

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND A MEETING AND LEARN INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR
COMMUNITY FIRST HAND.

OR YOU MAY ZOOM THE MEETINGS FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR HOME.

Board of Directors News

January 5 and January 26, 2023 Meetings



Submitted by: Karen Harvey

- Board Members accepted the minutes of December 20, 2022 and January 5, 2023
- Treasurer, Sam Besase, reported that RWA has 2.5M in the bank as of December 31, 2022
- He also reported that 97% of RWA members have paid their annual assessments
- Lastly, the overall budget was managed well by the RWA Manager and staff and that RWA is in excellent financial condition. However, he noted that the impacts from Hurricane Ian are unknown at this time.
- RWA Manager, Derrick Hedges, reported that the maintenance staff has been very busy with continued Broadmoor Park cleanup from Hurricane Ian. Work locations in and around Rotonda can be found on the RWA Calendar.
- Office staff has been continuing to collect assessments, correct addresses, and process estoppels
- He also noted that due to Hurricane Ian, assessments are now due **February 1, 2023**
- At the January 5, 2023 it was noted that several parcels of land in the Rotonda Heights neighborhood belonging to Rotonda West need to be reclassified and that he will be working with the Rotonda Heights Association to get these errors corrected.
- The January 5, 2023 was a “town hall” style meeting. Members in good standing were able to speak about any issue. Members were given 6 minutes to speak about their issues. You can refer to the full set of minutes on the RWA website
- During the two meetings, the Board of Directors approved 9 applications for Community Center uses by the members
- Log on the Rotonda West website at www.rotondawest.org to get all the latest information

**Board meetings are held every 2nd and 4th Thursdays
at 2 p.m. at the Community Center
All members are encouraged to attend these meetings.**

FEBRUARY 2023 EVENTS

- February 16th, Thursday, TRIVIA NIGHT HOSTED BY Mr. Trivia Jim Wasowski. Thursday 6-8 p.m. at Community Center, \$15 per person. Brought to you by the Rotonda West Woman's Club
- February 18th, Saturday, RUMMAGE SALE at Community Center 6-8 p.m. brought to you by the Rotonda West Woman's Club.
- February 19th, Sunday, BINGO! 1-3 p.m. Doors open at 12:15 p.m. In the Community Center.
- February 23rd, Thursday @ 5 p.m. MUSIC IN THE PARK with Jeff Hughes Bring your lawn chairs, drinks, snacks, and bug spray. Located on the lawn behind the Community Center.

CANCELED

MARCH EVENTS

- March 13th, Saturday, CRAFT BAZAAR at Community Center. More details to follow in the March issue of West Ways.
- March 25th, Saturday at 6 p.m. MUSIC IN THE PARK with Jonny Puma. Bring your lawn chairs, drinks, snacks, and bug spray. Located on the lawn behind the Community Center.

ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Rotonda West, Florida 33947

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Email: info@rotondawest.org



SHRED IT DAY WAS AWESOME!

Submitted by: Lynn Smith

A BIG thank you to our sponsors for Shred Day!

Dave Abel and GJC Window & Door



Hard at work!

We did a total of 2 1/2 tons of paper! We received \$110. in monetary donations and many can goods for the Jubilee Center.

Thanks to all our volunteers who gave up their Saturday morning for this event. Extra thanks to John Stem for all his help!



This event was put on by the Community Outreach Committee

VOLUNTEERS L to R: Karen Harvey, Grace Checuti, Deb Orchard, Gwen Grace, Denise Slovinski, Lynn Smith, and John Stem



RWA Board Vice-President Les Goodman (left) serves as moderator during a town hall meeting that allowed residents to hear answers to their deed restriction and residential modification questions. To his right is Deed Restriction Committee member Dale Jensen.

Town Hall Draws Wide Range of Deed Restriction/Res Mod Interest

Story and Pictures By Connie Smith

Deed restriction and residential modification guidelines were the subjects of a town hall meeting that drew nearly 90 Rotonda West residents online and in person, January 19.

A joint committee representing the RWA Board of Directors, the Deed Restriction and the Residential Modification Committees conducted the session that lasted short of the scheduled two hours, but allowed residents unlimited time to ask questions or make comments:

- During the second phase of the meeting, moderator Les Goodman began with emailed questions that were received from members prior to the meeting. The first, he responded, that the developer of Rotonda West is Gary Littlestar, president of the Cape Cave Corporation. Goodman explained that Littlestar still owns property in Rotonda West and has total authority over the HOA governing documents. Right now, changes to HOA governing documents are made with the approval of the developer. If the developer were to relinquish his authority, then it would take approval of the majority of the HOA membership voting for changes to be made.
- Goodman said the developer has said he will relinquish his authority but official notice has not been received by the HOA. Included in the developer's residential authority is approval of all new construction plans. If the HOA were to take over this authority, RWA would require the knowledge and experience of home construction professionals to review and approve new home construction.
- Two questions referred to short term rentals within "The Circle." Goodman said two years ago, the deed restriction committee approved language restricting short-term rentals but the developer declined to approve it. Member Loni Kiedrowski said Rotonda Lakes and Rotonda Sands have both adopted deed restrictions limiting property rentals to 30-day minimums and now Realtors are reportedly focusing upon Rotonda West properties for sale as potential investment and vacation rental properties.

Continued on next page

Compliance Process



Above: This slide, from a presentation at the Deed Restriction and Residential Modification Town Hall meeting, demonstrates the seven steps from initial complaint to fine letter in the Rotonda West Association compliance process.

- Another resident inquired whether the HOA ever acts upon complaints about deed restriction violations. HOA Manager Derrick Hedges assured residents it does. While the name, address and telephone number of all complainants are never revealed, the HOA also tries to work with residents, to bring them into compliance with deed restrictions and residential modification guidelines.
- The committee was asked if it would ever consider changing restrictions upon detached buildings. Goodman said the Ad Hoc Committee that has been meeting on Wednesdays in looking for such input because such things as building materials, have improved, that led to prohibition of sheds and other detached buildings.
- Board of Director Member Sam Besase brought the committee's attention to a list of 26 addresses with parked travel trailers, RVs, utility trailers and boats. He noted that due to Hurricane Ian, Charlotte County is issuing permits for up to a two-year period in which trailers or RVs may be parked when a house is declared uninhabitable. Besase pointed out the permit does not include boats. Residents must obtain the county permit and the home must be uninhabitable to obtain the permit.

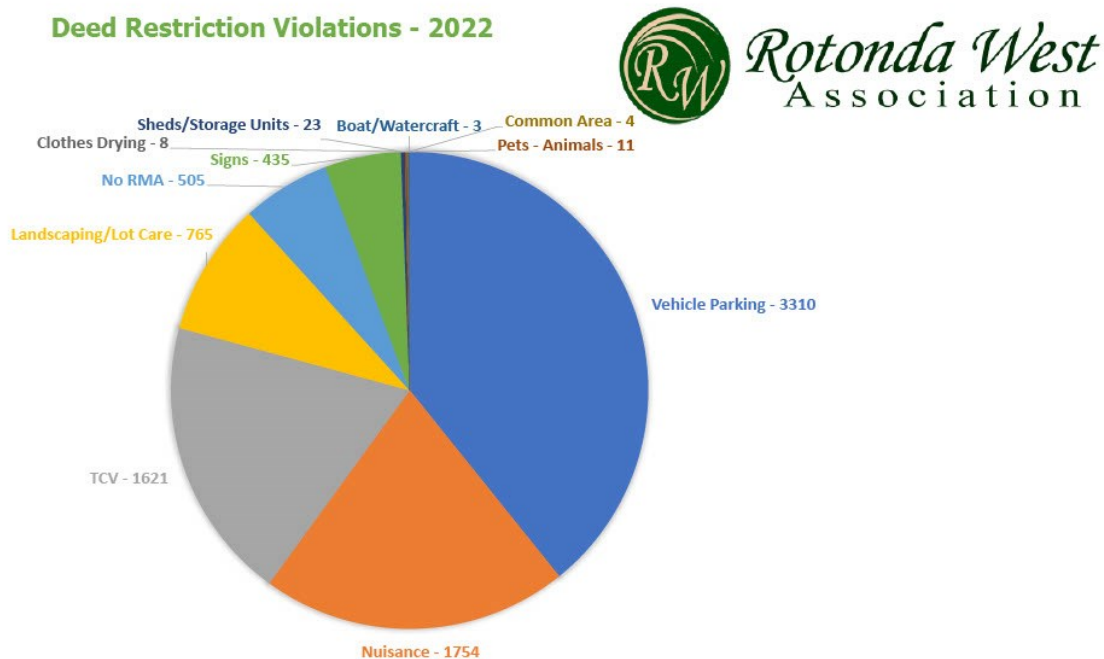
A PowerPoint presentation detailed the difference between deed restrictions (land use rules and regulations) versus residential modifications (standards for design and construction, including alterations, improvements, modifications, additions and accessory structures). Copies of both the RWA deed restrictions and residential modifications are available on the RWA web site and at the RWA administrative office.

Residential modification approval is required for improvements, alterations, modifications, accessory structures and additions to RWA property and the necessary forms are available on the RWA web site under the heading applications and forms and at the RWA administrative office. The committee meets twice monthly to consider applications. In 2022, some 2,574 applications were submitted, with the top three modifications being roofs, paint, and fences/site screens.

Continued on next page

Perhaps the most misunderstood - definitely the most controversial process maintained by the HOA - is compliance, and the committee took pains to demonstrate that any conscientious resident has little chance of being blindsided by a fine. From initial complaint to a final demand to pay a fine, includes seven administrative steps, encompassing over a month. Of 8,469 violations in 2022, only a small portion ever made it to a fine.

RWA Manager Derrick Hedges also discussed the estoppel procedure that upon a property transfer, verifies no outstanding balances, assessments or fines, ensures a property has no HOA violations and provides copies of the HOA governing documents to the buyer. He said the RWA's processing of estoppels has doubled in the last couple of years and with it, income from the process. In 2021, the HOA conducted 1,200 estoppels, earning \$300,000. Hurricane Ian, in 2022, hindered the HOA's ability to conduct estoppels, because many sales were postponed, dropping the income from estoppels to \$200,000.



Above: While deed restriction violations in 2022 totaled 8,469, just a small portion reached the point where residents were fined. This slide shows that vehicle parking received the greatest number of violations with 3,310.



SING-A-LONG BINGO

HITS THE RIGHT NOTE!

By: Grace Checuti

On Saturday evening, January 21st, the Community Outreach Committee replayed their popular Sing-A-Long BINGO event at the Community Center. There were over 85 “teenagers-at heart” attendees enjoying music from the 1950’s through the 1980’s in a wonderful mix of BINGO and “Name that Tune”, put on by Mr. Gameshow.

The event was indeed “Wunnerful, Wunnerful”, yet proved to be much livelier than the Lawrence Welk Show with the floating bubbles. It was more like what Martha and the Vandellas said in their song, “Dancing in the Streets”, where there was swinging, swaying, and record playing!

Playing Sing-A-Long BINGO kept the audience on their toes. “One, two, three, four”, Introduction to what song? One music BINGO card, no two cards the same, three games, four prizes. The game’s object was to mark the played song’s title on your music BINGO song card. Here’s the catch. At the point of the song where the title would be played, Mr. Gameshow would lower the volume, and everyone would sing the title, in tune or not, together, loud! The louder, the better and more fun! Soon, people were trying to name that tune as the needle hit the record!

The Community Center provided the perfect venue for the event. The sound system was balanced and audible. The many round tables with chairs were set up to squeeze as many as possible with room for snacks and drinks from home. I do believe some could have start their own catering business. Yumm-eee!

The fun-filled evening conjured up the spirit of Dick Clark’s American Bandstand with songs that had cool beats and were easy to dance to, as evidenced by the many people out of their seats and onto the floor, showing their best dance moves.

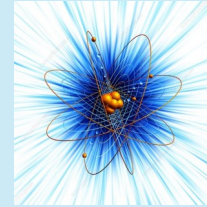
Groups of friends, families, neighbors, and strangers bonded as they were “*reachin’ out and holdin’ hands*” as they shouted, “SO GOOD! SO GOOD!” to Neil Diamond’s Sweet Caroline.

All of this fun was jam-packed into an hour and a half. Many people hung around long after the music ended, not wanting the night to end. But it was closing time. It was time to leave, and wherever they went, they took some music with them.

Rotonda West members and guests, you rock ‘n roll!!

THE UNIVERSE IN 90 MINUTES

A Lecture by Professor Frank Levin



The lecture will be held on February 22, 2023 from 1-2:30 p.m. at the Community Center.

Journey from the everyday world back to an instant after the Big Bang and out to the edge of the visible universe, no math or science background required.

Join Frank Levin, a retired Brown University physics professor, for a 90 minute lecture in which he describes how cosmology calibrates and explains our expanding universe, using among other analogs an aspirin tablet, a balloon, and a recipe for pickled Jerusalem artichokes. Learn about the interplay between theory and data that has led to a determination of the age and the far future behavior of the cosmos, to an estimate of the diameter of its visible portion, and to a timeline of the universe starting at a microsecond after the Big Bang.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Rotonda West Association Aquatics Sub-Committee
is looking for volunteers to perform water sampling
of Rotonda ponds and canals.

If you are interested, please call the RWA Office to sign up

941-697-6788

Training will be provided.

Thank you,



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH ANNUAL APPRECIATION LUNCHEON

What a great time we had at the Neighborhood Watch Annual Appreciation Luncheon held at the American Legion Post #113. We had the highest member attendance in quite a long time. The Sheriff's office attended and is extremely proud of our organization and couldn't comment enough on how important we are to the community and the Sheriff's office.



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH MEMBERS

We are pleased to Welcome our newest member Teri Erickson

Special "Thanks" to Carol Quinn and Chicki DiMattia who helped organized the location and food, David Pulaski who photographed the event, Donna Gleason who organizes our monthly newsletter, and our wonderful bakers who supplied numerous desserts for the event.. Thank You one and all.....

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. If you are interested in joining our organization, please contact David Perry at 941-828-1584 or by email president@rotondawestneighborhoodwatch.com

Protecting Rotonda West since 1981

www.rotondawestneighborhoodwatch.com

Facebook @ Rotonda West Neighborhood Watch



Broadmoor Park Proves Nature's Triumph Over Ian

Story and Pictures by: Connie Smith

A walk around Broadmoor Park's Lake Farrell on the third Monday of January proved the resilience of nature. Although the park still appeared denuded by Hurricane Ian, Naturalist Bill Dunson had no trouble spotting plants and flowers, birds and butterflies; all the while offering commentary about ways we all can encourage nature.

Looking out over Lake Farrell, he noted the underabundance of birds – just one ibis and two anhinga. The ecology of water bodies is complicated, he noted. In an effort to remove undesirable growth, desirable growth can be harmed and water's health can be jeopardized. He noted dead and sideways wax myrtle at the water's edge that had apparently been planted when lake levels had been lower. The evergreen shrub is not a wetland plant and becomes top-heavy when allowed to grow naturally, making its roots vulnerable to rot and the shrub susceptible to Ian's Hurricane-force winds.



Above right: This female anhinga dries its wings on a dead wax myrtle along the edge of Lake Farrell in Broadmoor Park. Wax Myrtles are not wetland plants, so when the lake levels rose, their roots were susceptible to rot and its heavy top branches increased its vulnerability to Ian's hurricane winds.



The *Bidens alba*, a white flowering plant that might be mistaken for a daisy, is an easily overlooked plant that appeared to be throughout the park. Each petal is actually a separate flower allowing it to attract multiple pollinators.

Naturalist Bill Dunson discusses the merits of the *Bidens alba*, whose individual petals are flowers, allowing the plant to attract the widest possible group of pollinators. The *Bidens alba* is found throughout Broadmoor Park.

Dunson noted that the very shells that fill the park's pathways are actually 3-4 million years old. Picking up a portion of a clam shell and noting its thickness, he said that clam species today has evolved so its shell is much thinner. "Climate has never stopped changing. It's a matter of how quickly it changes," he said.

Holding up a plant with “obnoxious qualities” for many humans, but beneficial seeds for birds, Dunson proved ragweed ambrosia exists in Florida.

Right: There’s no escaping the miseries of ragweed in Florida, but, as Dunson pointed out, birds love and benefit from its seeds.



He pointed out several vining plants growing on palms within the park: muscadine grapes, rosary pea (extremely toxic to humans), and Virginia creeper. Finding a Brazilian pepper (“a famous plant people love to hate”) growing on a palm prompted Dunson to comment on policies to eradicate invasive plants. “It’s a bad idea,” he said. “In a 100 years all we’ll have is carrotwood and that is 1,000 times worse.”



Hurricane Ian’s devastation of pines was a subject of head shaking by Dunson. “Some went down at the base. Seems like half of all native pines broke,” he said. He walked to a downed pine in the park that had been chain-sawed and counted the rings. It was at least 100 years old, he declared, and probably dated back to when the Rotonda West property was a ranch owned by the Vanderbilt family. “If I learned one thing from this storm, tall trees don’t work here,” he rued. “Forget it.”

Above: This pine that apparently fell in the park during Hurricane Ian was 100 years old and was a seedling when the Rotonda community was a ranch owned by the Vanderbilt family.

Birds seen in the park, either on the ground, in trees or soaring (in addition to the anhinga and ibis) include: red-bellied woodpecker, red-shouldered hawk, blue jay, fish crow, boat-tailed grackle, red wing blackbird, palm warbler, white pelican, sandhill crane and mockingbird.

Right: The nature walk group stands behind a group of Florida’s state tree, the sabal/cabbage palm in Broadmoor Park. Dunson suggested groupings of trees is a healthy way to plant that decreases their vulnerability to winds and increases their positive environmental impact for other plants, birds and animals.



The next nature walk is scheduled for February 20th (the third Monday) at 9 a.m. All are welcome to attend.



GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club, Inc.

Donna Krabbe, Former-President

WHERE COMMUNITY SERVICE MEETS FRIENDSHIP!



The first meeting of the new year with our new 2023-2024 board was a huge success. The annual art competition was the highlight. Members enjoyed viewing the arts and crafts submitted by our very talented members. The first place winners will be entered in the District 12 art competition in February. We also welcomed three new members.

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

The RWWC is offering two (2) Bella Williams Memorial Continuing Education Scholarships of \$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 adults returning to school who have had an interruption in their studies. A resume, narrative and optional letters of reference may be sent to GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club, Attention: Scholarship, PO Box 672, Placida, FL 33946.

Deadline for receipt of resumes is **Friday, March 31, 2023**.
For additional information, call Debra 917-573-5512.

Trivia Night: Thursday, February 16, 2023. Hosted by Mr. Trivia Jim Wasowski. At the Rotonda West Community Center, 6-8 pm. \$15/per person. Proceeds to benefit the GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club Scholarship Fund. Form a team and make reservations – contact Debra Sigismondo at squad7@aol.com



Rummage Sale: Saturday, February 18, 2023. At the Rotonda West Community Center, 9:00am to 1:00pm. Come and find your treasures.

Craft Bazaar: Saturday, March 13, 2023. At the Rotonda West Community Center. Beautiful handcrafted items created by our members. Basket Raffle. Light lunch available. More details available in the March WestWays.

YOU ARE INVITED... Please visit and see if you would like to join the GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club. Our next meeting is Thursday, February 16th at the RWA Community Center. A 9:00am social hour precedes the 10:00 am general meeting.

For more information about supporting or becoming a member of the GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club, see our website at www.gfwcrotondawest.org

We are a 501-3 nonprofit organization.



OUR NEW BOARD

Sitting: Gwen Grace, President

Standing: left to right: Jo Ann Hopkins, Recording Secretary; Jane Tumanic, Corresponding Secretary; Gloria Rogoski, First Vice President; Anne Vickery, Treasurer; Jean Howard, Assistant Treasurer; Jennifer Cope, Second Vice President.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS



Charlene Marcus



Ann Marie D'Ambrosca



Linda Bloom



U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Public Affairs



29 Jan 2023

Contact: Charles Truthan
Public Affairs Officer
941-249-5848
ctruthan@gmail.com
<http://cgaux.org>

News Release

DATELINE –
Flotilla 99, Cape Haze

Start off your new year with a **FREE Vessel Safety Check** to keep you and your loved ones safe on the water. You can also take the **Boat America** class MONDAY February 6, Feb 18 **Suddenly In Command**; Mar 11 **GPS for Mariners**; Apr 15 **Paddle craft Safety** at the South Gulf Cove HOA building 14859 Ingraham Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL 33981.

For more information about these classes, membership or a **Free Vessel Safety Check** at your house or dockside, please call the Flotilla 99 general number at 941-249-5848 and leave a voice mail. The proper Flotilla Staff Officer will call you back as quickly as possible (Our goal is within 24 hours).

For more information on Boating Safety or to join the Auxiliary, call 941-249-5848 or visit www.cgaux.org

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RWA MEMBERS

JOIN CONSTANT CONTACT

FULL RWA WEBSITE ACCESS

&

DELIVERED TO YOUR E-MAIL

WEST WAYS NEWSLETTER
ANNOUNCEMENTS
COMMITTEE MEETINGS
EVENTS AND FUNCTIONS
GENERAL INTEREST

**Administrative Office - Community Center
Broadmoor Park**

**646 Rotonda Circle
Rotonda West, Florida 33947**

**Office Hours: 8:00AM - 4:00PM M - F
TEL: (941) 697-6788**



COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE

HOW TO REGISTER

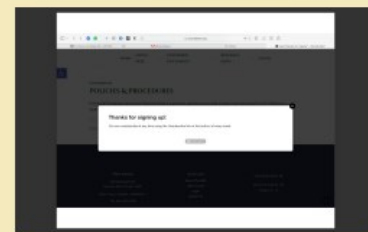
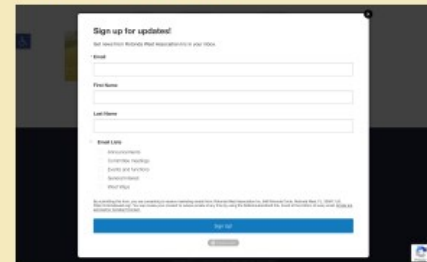
Step 1.

**On any device with
website access go to:
rotondawest.org**



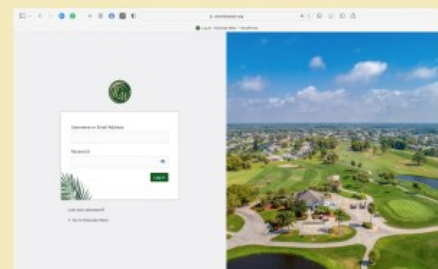
Step 2.

**Fill out the pop-up screen
information.
Enter "Sign-up"
Close screen**



Step 3.

**To enter into website,
log-in again at
rotondawest.org**



NEED HELP? CALL 941-697-6788