

WESTWAYS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION, INC.

Emailed to 5,206 Rotonda Residents

APRIL 2026



E-NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION

RWA NAMES CARL WILLIAMS VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

By: Nadine Clough

Photos by: David Pulaski



Volunteer of the Year
Carl Williams stepping
forward to receive his
award as Meg Harris
applauds.

The annual Volunteer Dinner was held at The Hills Country Club where Carl Williams was named the Rotonda West Association's Volunteer of the Year.

Carl Williams began volunteering by helping with the Christmas decorating about 2 years ago. He has been involved with all aspects of decorating including being Santa for the Gazebo Lighting and Boat Parade. He also volunteers his time working with the maintenance crew of Rotonda West mowing, pruning trees, and painting. This past year he played an integral part in the Christmas Parade by handling all of the outdoor logistics.

Thank you Carl for all your time and energy and all of your contributions to Rotonda West.

VOLUME 30 ISSUE 4

NEWSLETTER

SECTIONS

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR & DINNER

RWA COMMITTEES

WHICH COMMITTEE FITS YOU?

BOD MEETING

APRIL CALENDAR

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN TOWN?

CITIZEN'S POLICE ACADEMY

HANDWRITING ANALYSIS

RECAP/TALENT SHOW

FUN & GAMES

GARAGE SALE RECAP

NATURE NEWS

WOMAN'S CLUB

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

CHARLOTTE COUNTY NEWS

STAFF

Rotonda West Administrative
Office-Community Center
Broadmoor Park
646 Rotonda Circle
Rotonda West, FL 33947
Office Hours: 8 am-4pm M-F
Tel: (941) 697-6788

Website address:
www.rotondawest.org

RWA VOLUNTEER DINNER

MANY THANKS TO:

RWA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOD PRESIDENT ANDY VAN SCYOC

RWA MANAGER DERRICK HEDGES,

ASSISTANT MANAGER

ANNETTE CASTEEL,

RWA STAFF

COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

GWEN GRACE, EVENT PLANNER

AMANDA STUEVER, EVENT PLANNER

SAM BESASE, EMCEE

ERIC STEFANIK, MUSIC

BRIAN ARMAN, INVOCATION

STAFF AT THE HILLS

AND ALL THE VALUED VOLUNTEERS!



AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Left: Carl Williams receives Volunteer of the Year Award.

Right: Nadine Clough receives award for nine years with West Ways.





RWA COMMITTEES AT WORK- MEETING SCHEDULE



ALL MEETINGS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE ON ZOOM

<u>COMMITTEE</u>	<u>DAY</u>	<u>TIME</u>
BOARD OF DIRECTORS	2ND THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH	NEW TIME 11 A.M.
ADMINISTRATIVE/PERSONNEL COMMITTEE	“AS NEEDED” BASIS	TBA (not on zoom)
BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE	4TH MONDAY OF EACH MONTH	9:30 A.M.
BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE	2ND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH	10:30 A.M.
COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE	1ST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH	9:30 A.M.
COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE	DATES VARY (CHECK CALENDAR)	2 P.M.
DEED RESTRICTION COMMITTEE	4TH WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH	9 A.M.
ELECTION COMMITTEE	SPECIFIC TO ELECTION SCHEDULE	CHECK CALENDAR
RESIDENTIAL MODIFICATION COMMITTEE	2ND & 4TH TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH	9 A.M.
RW NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH	3RD TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH	10 A.M.

STEP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

Rotonda West's Real

★ STARS

ARE OUR VOLUNTEERS



Become a Star in Rotonda West!
Find Your Perfect Role Inside!

SUBMITTED BY: AMANDA STUEVER

Which Committee Fits You?

BUDGET & FINANCE

Interim Chair: Colleen Koppenhaver

Oversees the Association's budget, financial planning, and reporting. Perfect for those who enjoy working with numbers, spreadsheets, and financial strategies.

*If you are interested in volunteering please email

budgetandfinance@rotondawest.org

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

Chair: Sam Besase

Cares for community properties, grounds, and facilities. Ideal for those who appreciate detailed landscaping, maintenance, or projects.

*If you are interested in volunteering please email

buildingsandgrounds@rotondawest.org

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Chair: Gwen Grace

Plans community events like Christmas Parade, BINGO, Music in the Park, Food Trucks, Garage Sale, Talent Show, and more. Great for you if you enjoy organizing events, socializing, and uniting people.

*If you are interested in volunteering please email

communityoutreach@rotondawest.org

COMPLIANCE

Chair: Barb Peszko

Handles formal violation hearings and promotes fair enforcement processes. Ideal for those who value fairness, clear rules, and thoughtful decision-making.

*If you are interested in volunteering please email

compliancecommittee@rotondawest.org

ELECTIONS

Chair: Position Open

Oversees Board elections and yearly voting processes. Ideal for you if you're organized, detail-oriented, and enjoy managing procedures.

*If you are interested in volunteering please email

electioncommittee@rotondawest.org

RESIDENTIAL MODIFICATIONS

Chair: Barb Peszko

Reviews and approves homeowner exterior modification applications. Ideal for those with an eye for design, standards, or plan reviews.

*If you are interested in volunteering please email

residentialmodifications@rotondawest.org

SUBMITTED BY: AMANDA STUEVER



ROTONDA WEST ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Andy Van Scyoc

Karen Harvey

Sam Besase

Deb Orchard

David Kelly

Peter Traverso

Gwen Grace

PRESIDENT

VICE PRESIDENT

TREASURER

SECRETARY

DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR

ATTENTION:

**TIME CHANGE FOR BOARD OF
DIRECTORS MEETINGS
2ND THURSDAY OF THE MONTH
NEW TIME 11 A.M.**

Please note: BOD meetings are zoomed and are available to residents on the website along with the minutes of the meeting.

Go to page 8 of this West Ways issue to find how to sign up for the Rotonda West Website.

APRIL



- 4/2: Thursday, 6:30-8 pm: Music Bingo**
- 4/3, 4/10, 4/17, 4/24: Friday, 10-11 am: Tai Chi/Yin Yoga**
- 4/4: Saturday, 9-11 am: Nature Walk in Broadmoor Park**
- 4/6, 4/13, 4/20: Monday, 10-11 am: Pilates Mat Fitness**
- 4/8: Wednesday, 5-7 pm: Lakewatch Meeting**
- 4/9: Thursday, 9:30-10:30 am: Sound Meditation w/ Crystal Bowls**
- 4/15: Wednesday, 2-3:30 pm: Senior Programs & Anti-theft Programs**
- 4/15: Wednesday, 6-8 pm: Music in the Park**
- 4/16: Thursday, 6:30-8:30 pm: Trivia Night w/Tim (doors open at 6 pm)**
- 4/19: Sunday, 12:15-4 pm: BINGO!**
- 4/21: Tuesday, 9:30-11:30 am: RW Neighborhood Watch Meeting**
- 4/22: Wednesday, 8 am-5 pm: Earth Day Clean-up Challenge**
- 4/23: Thursday, 9 am-4 pm: RWWC *One Blood Drive* (Marina Parking Lot)**
- 4/28: Tuesday, 4:30 pm-7:30 pm: Food Truck (in front of Community Center)**

**Please Note: Events are held in the
RWA Community Center unless otherwise noted.**



To sign up for Constant Contact and receive up-to-date emails on community events and notifications, follow these simple steps.

First, scan the provided QR code using your smartphone's camera or a QR code scanning app. This will direct you to the Rotonda West Association website.

Once there, scroll to the bottom and look for a button labeled **“Join Our Email List”**. Click on it to proceed to the registration page.



Fill in the required fields with your name and email address. Make sure to read through any terms and conditions or privacy policy, and then check any boxes to sign up for the email lists. Finally, submit your information by clicking the **“Sign Up!”** button.

You should receive a confirmation email shortly, verifying your successful subscription. Now, you’ll be all set to stay informed about the latest community events and notifications!

SUBMITTED BY: AMANDA STUEVER

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN?

Rotonda West offers a vibrant community life with a variety of events and activities to engage residents and visitors alike. Whether you're interested in attending social gatherings, participating in club meetings, or enjoying recreational activities, the Community Center serves as a hub for all things happening around town.



To stay updated on the latest events, simply scan the QR code provided to access the comprehensive calendar of events. This digital tool ensures you won't miss out on exciting opportunities to connect with others and make the most of your time in Rotonda West.

SUBMITTED BY: AMANDA STUEVER



Charlotte County Sheriff's Office
Integrity, Professionalism, Trust

Sheriff Bill Prummell
7474 Utilities Rd.
Punta Gorda, FL 33982
(941) 639-2101



Community Outreach Committee
Presents

CITIZEN'S POLICE ACADEMY

Have you ever thought about the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office and wondered how and why we do things in certain ways? For 27 years, we have offered the Citizen's Police Academy, a highly respected program to help our community understand and experience what goes on "behind the badge". CPA provides a unique opportunity for the residents of Charlotte County to engage with both certified law enforcement and civilian representatives from many of the agency's most interesting units, including Aviation, K-9, Major Crimes, Marine, e911/Communications, Economic Crimes, the Charlotte County Jail, and S.W.A.T., as well as a personal presentation by your Charlotte County Sheriff, Bill Prummell. Sheriff Prummell will share details regarding how the agency runs, including an in-depth look at our budget and exactly where your taxpayer dollars are going!

There will be one class in which you will travel to Punta Gorda. The Aviation, Jail and Training presentations will be held in their respective locations, as we want you to receive the full experience these units have to offer. The three locations are near one another, and detailed driving directions will be distributed prior to this class.

There will be one class in which you will travel to Port Charlotte. The e911/Communications and R.T.I.C. presentations will be held in their respective locations in the new Administration Building, as you will be touring both units during their presentations. Detailed driving directions will be distributed prior to this class.

Please contact Mary Sharp of the Community Affairs Unit at The Charlotte County Sheriff's Office by telephone: (941) 575-5345 or by email: msharp@ccsofl.net with your thoughts, questions or interest in attending. We look forward to hearing from you and to bringing the Citizen's Police Academy to the Englewood / District 1 Office!

The CPA application can be completed online by going to the CCSO website at: <https://ccso.org/News/cpaApplication.cfm> and submitting the form electronically.

Handwriting Analysis Presentation

by Pat Carter

By: Deb Orchard

For those of you who missed Pat's presentation on Handwriting Analysis ABC and XYZ for our own personality assessment and helping us to understand others, it was a wonderful presentation. We each participated by writing a sentence and adding our signature. She then gave us the tools so each of us could analysis our own personality traits based on our writing style. It was a look at what's "under the iceberg" getting past the surface and looking at our self-portrait of how we express ourselves through our handwriting.

Along with our own handwriting analysis, she gave us clues into the personalities of Barbara Bush who's writing indicates she is reserved, keeps people at a distance and can even seem aloof to those who don't know her well. Oprah Winfrey who is outgoing and future looking, but also private. And, Tiger Woods who's precise, has a lot of pride, independence and determination. Take time to find samples of their writing and see if you can pick out those traits based on the "look" of their handwriting.

It is believed that handwriting versus typing connects us together. Just as printing, the spacing between letters is not connecting us to others; and, cursive, the linking of letters together as we write encourages us to be together with others. And, she closed the day with this "Be Yourself because everyone else is already taken."



ROTONDA HAS TALENT!



Rita Lopienski
Hosted Event

Annual Talent Show Hits the Mark

Article by: Nadine Clough

Pictures by: David Pulaski



Andy VanScyoc
Show Sound

It was standing room only for the Rotonda West Has Talent 2026 production on Saturday, March 7th. The audience was entertained by eight acts showcasing a variety of talent. The popular event was produced and hosted by Rita Lopienski and presented by the Community Outreach Committee.

TALENT SHOW WINNERS WERE:

1st Place

**Mark Richardson on
Keyboard**



2nd Place

**Elizabeth Bernardini
Singer-Guitarist**



3rd Place

**Mike Roller & Steve
Cleary on Ukulele
and Guitar**



Rotonda Talent Show cont.

**THANK YOU
TO ALL THE
CONTESTANTS
GREAT JOB!**



**DAVE MARCUS
ON KEYBOARD**



**CHARLIE SHELTON
COMEDY**



**MICHAEL MEEHAN
SINGER-GUITARIST**



**HARRY WITT
MAGIC**



**CLEO OLSON
LIP SYNC**



**THANK YOU JUDGES!
LEFT TO RIGHT:
JUDY LONG
PATTIE MIHALIK
DOUG IZZO**

THANK YOU TO THE GUEST PERFORMERS!



VICTORIA RIDDLE



**RITA LOPIENSKI &
CHERI WASZ**



**ANDY VAN SCYOC &
JACKIE RIDDLE (2025 WINNER)**

MUSIC IN THE PARK IS BACK!

Wednesday, April 15, 2026
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

Rotonda West Community Center
646 Rotonda Circle



Featuring: PAUL DUFFY

Multi-talented musician, composer & vocalist
Performed worldwide with the legendary Irish band

THE COMMITMENTS

Welcome Rotonda West residents, owners and their guests!

 **Bring a Lawn Chair • Bring Your Favorite Beverage**

 *In the event of bad weather, the event will be held indoors.*

Questions?

Community Outreach Committee
communityoutreach@rotondawest.org

Please do not contact the RWA Admin Office.

FUN & GAMES

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE

FUN & GAMES

April

2026

02
APR

MUSIC BINGO WITH TINA

6:30pm - 8pm (Doors open at 6pm)

16
APR

TRIVIA WITH TIM

6:30pm - 8:30pm (Doors open at 6pm)

19
APR

BINGO

1pm - 4pm (Doors open at 12:30pm)

All located at the Community Center
646 Rotonda Circle

FUN & GAMES

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE



Winning Trivia Team

TRIVIA WINNERS!

Article and photo by: Deb Orchard

“The Tournys” -winner of March’s
Trivia with Tim night!

THE THEME WAS “UP”

TEAM MEMBERS: Peggy Wagner,
Charlie Wagner, Tom Haselhorst,
Tracy Haselhorst, Sue Pugliese,
Anita McGough, Hugh McGough,
Vivian Power, and Tom Fowles



BINGO

Enjoying March 15th BINGO games at the Community Center!

Next Bingo game date is Sunday, APRIL 19th



Rotonda West
Association
Presents...

TUESDAY, APRIL 28
4:30 PM - 7:30 PM

FOOD TRUCK TUESDAY

ROTONDA WEST COMMUNITY CENTER
646 ROTONDA CIRCLE

Live Music
on the back
patio

Food Trucks

Casa De Uruguay

BBQ Art Co

Taste of Poland

Travelin' Tom's Coffee Truck

Uami Twist

Little Etna

Sweet Addy's

No outside food or
beverages. The Hills golf
course will be operating
a bar.
Restrooms will be open.

Please do not contact the RWA office. They do
not have information. For questions email:
communityoutreach@rotondawest.org

LEAVE THE COOKING TO US!

DON'T MISS ROTONDA'S

FOOD TRUCK TUESDAY.

APRIL 28TH 4:30-7:30 PM

**RWA
Strong
Health &
Wellness
Initiative!**

Celebrate Earth Day! **Bike Ride Litter Clean-Up Challenge**

April 22nd, 9:00 am

Rotonda Community Park Pavilion, 100 Boulevard E.

- You are invited to enjoy biking in our beautiful community and pick up any litter you find along the way, especially using the bike paths on Rotonda Blvd E, N & W. Afterwards you can return with the bagged litter and dispose of it at the garbage and recycling bins in the Park.
- Not able to join the group? Go on your own.
- Take a photo and send it with your litter count (estimated # of pieces of litter picked up) by midnight to be included in the May Westways newsletter:
communityoutreach@rotondawest.org



*Ride individually, as a family, a club, or with friends!
Do it for health, fun, or a purpose.*

*Invited are RWA property owners, renters, and their guests
Remember to invite your vacationing neighbors.*

For more information, contact the Community Outreach Committee at communityoutreach@rotondawest.org

Please do not contact the RWA Office. They do not have information.



kab.org/our-signature-programs/great-american-cleanup



Community Outreach Committee

RWA 3rd Annual Spring Community Garage/Yard Sale a Success!

Article and Photos by: Rita Lopienski, Event Planner



Rita Lopienski

RWA Garage Sale
Event Coordinator

At least 130 homes participated in Rotonda West Association's 3rd Annual Spring Community Garage & Yard Sale on March 13th & 14th.

The weather cooperated and participants enjoyed the camaraderie that the event provided for buyers and sellers alike.

Despite Charlotte County roadwork that was taking place on some major roads, people managed to find the locations that were posted online and at Broadmoor Park!

Many people thanked the Community Outreach Committee for planning this event.

We look forward to the 4th Annual Fall Sale, targeted for the first weekend of November.



BROADMOOR PARK NATURE/BIRD WALK

Kaitlin Causey Charlotte County Environmental Lands Specialist
Saturday April 4, 9am
Rotonda West Community Center 646 Rotonda Circle

ALL AGES WELCOME



- Tour butterfly garden
- Leisurely stroll around park and ponds
- Meet nature enthusiasts
- Identify animals, birds, butterflies and plants
- Make a checklist of what we see
- Learn about habitat
- Find a great horned owl nest
- No dogs please

Join us Easter weekend and explore beautiful
Broadmoor Park!



There are several free apps that can be used for identification:

Birds: Audubon, Merlin, EBird **Plants:** Plantnet **All species:** Seek

What to bring: binoculars, smart phone, water, sun gear and questions

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

NATURE NEWS/FLORA

Recap: Invasive Plants to Avoid and What to Grow Instead

Presented March 11, 2026

by Merrill Horswill



Mark Thurmond, Rotonda West resident, retired USDA Plant Protection Quarantine Officer (PPQO) and National Specialist Botanist for nearly 34 years explained that an invasive species is a non-native species that has a negative impact on the economy, environment, or humans. More than a third of all endangered and threatened species are declining because of invasive species such as *Lantana camara*, left.

Of the 857 plants evaluated by the UF/IFAS Assessment, 73% are okay to recommend for use by gardeners. Of the remaining plants in their database, 15% are “caution plants,” meaning they should be managed to prevent escape, 7% are invasive, and 5% are prohibited. Invasive and prohibited plants should not be promoted or planted in Florida. When populations of non-native species encroach on natural areas, land managers are left with an expensive and difficult task. As populations expand, harm to the ecosystem and cost to control increases while the likelihood of eradication decreases.

Where can you find out if a plant is invasive? The [UF/IFAS Assessment of Non-native Plants in Florida Natural Areas](#) offers an easily searchable database of plants. You can filter the results by your area of the state (North, Central, or South) or by the conclusion type (e.g., not a problem species, invasive, prohibited).

It is illegal to transport or plant species included in Florida’s prohibited and noxious weed lists. Plants that are labeled prohibited on the IFAS Assessment are prohibited from use in the state according to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services [Noxious Weed List](#) or the [Prohibited Aquatic and Wetland Plants List](#).

To be safe, it’s best to plant native plants, species that occur naturally within a geographic region or area such as the Beach Sunflower, right. Any plants that were present prior to the arrival of Europeans in Florida are considered native: see Florida Native Plant Society: fnps.org

For more information on native plants, see article on Why Plant Native.



NATURE NEWS /FLORA

Landscape With Native Plants

by Merrill Horswill, Florida Master Naturalist



Monarch Butterfly on Firebush

What is a Florida native plant?

A Florida native plant refers to a species occurring within the state prior to European contact. Florida native plants include indigenous species, occurring in habitats that existed prior to significant human impacts of the landscape.

Without native plants, there would be no insects and without insects there would be no wildlife. Birds and many other animals rely on insects that have evolved with native plants to feed their young. Native plants also provide food and shelter for wildlife. Once established, native plants need minimal water and no fertilizer or pesticides which damage our natural habitat and waterways

Why Plant Native?

- They preserve the character of the Florida landscape. Why grow a landscape more appropriate to the tropics when we have something unique and more special here?
- They support native animals including butterflies, wild bees (and economically valuable honey bees), other insects, birds, and wildlife.
- They are beautiful and diverse, unlike monocultures of grass and non native species
- Don't need fertilizer, pesticides or amended soil
- Don't need water, once established
- Save money and time instead of replanting species that don't thrive here
- Native plants support the economy: tourism to natural places
- Protect waterfront

Where to purchase native plants: Florida Native Plants, Sarasota; Sweet Bay Nursery, Parish; All Native Nursery, Fort Myers are 3 and our local nursery, A&G on Placida Rd. has some native plants and can order on request. The recommended Florimulch, made from the invasive malaleuca tree can be purchased at GoMulch in Englewood.

For native plant alternatives to common invasive plants, see:

<https://ixia.fnpschapters.org/data/uploads/documents/alternatives-native-plant-substitutions-for-common-invasive-plants.pdf>

NATURE NEWS/FAUNA

Community Outreach Nature Sponsored by GFWC Rotonda West Women's Club

Peace River Wildlife Center Presentation Recap Wednesday, March 25, 2026
by Merrill Horswill
Tammy Gerringer, Operations Manager with Ambassador Jaxon

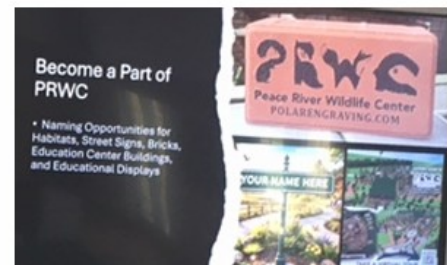


Their mission is to contribute to the survival of native Florida wildlife through rescue, rehabilitation and education.

For forty years PRWC has managed their dual mission of educating the public about wildlife and rescuing and rehabilitating wildlife at their center and hospital. After hurricane damage to the current building, PRWC is building a new education center as shown in the rendering above, scheduled to open in September.

What can you do to help prevent harm to wildlife?

- Give wildlife space, they are part of our natural world
- Do not feed, it's dangerous to wildlife and humans
- Keep outside pets fenced or leashed
- Be careful with fishing supplies
- Dispose of litter and garbage responsibly
- Safely brake for wildlife and let them cross
- Don't relocate wildlife
- Don't use poison or glue traps, you'll kill more than rodents
- Contact PRWC if you find an animal that needs rescuing: <https://prwildlife.org/>



You're Invited!

RSVP:

amanda@rotondawest.org



LAKEWATCH VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

Join us for our annual
volunteer appreciation dinner



Rotonda Community
Center: 646 Rotonda Cir.
Rotonda West, Fl.



4/8/26
5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

FEATURED TALK

Mercury in Florida Freshwater

RSVP BY 4/5/26

Please RSVP to help us ensure enough food for everyone
and improve our service during the meeting. Thank you!



— RWA Community Outreach Committee *presents* —

“Sound Bathing Meditation with Crystal Bowls”

by Donna Kester Phillips

Thursday, April 9 at 9:30am

Community Center
646 Rotonda Circle



Relax and let soothing and healing sounds of Crystal Bowls clear your mind and open your heart for *better health and vitality*.

Optional: Bring a mat, blanket, neck pillow, eye cover, or chakra stones to help create your own space.

For RWA members.



GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club, Inc.
GWEN GRACE, PAST PRESIDENT



GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club – April 2026

By Gwen Grace, Past President

Welcome Spring! March was an especially busy month for the GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club. Members gathered for a Blue Zone luncheon, and our six book clubs and special interest groups—including Sew 'n Sews, Knit 'n Chat, and Creative Crafters—met throughout the month. Volunteers dedicated their time to food pantries, health centers, non-profit thrift stores, and other organizations, offering valuable support during the winter season.

Our guest speaker for March was from Fandango Animal Sanctuary, a non-profit in Englewood. Iris Beauguard has been rescuing farm animals. She began this mission 33 years ago with Novell the donkey in Germany. She felt sorry for him because he was standing alone in the snow with no food or shelter and decided to take him home. Since moving to the U.S., Iris started Fandango Sanctuary which has grown into a safe haven for over 100 animals—chickens, horses, pigs, cats, dogs, turkeys, cows, and goats—all given the love and care they deserve! Our club helped by donating \$500 to Fandango. The Sanctuary is open to the public by appointment that can be made on their website.



Our two fundraisers in March were “Show Me the Money” and the annual Rummage Sale. Both were well-attended and we thank all those who came out to shop or to win money.

Our next Blood Drive is scheduled at the RW Marina at 100 Rotonda Circle on Thursday, April 23rd from 9am to 3pm.

The next General Meeting will take place on Thursday, April 16th at the RWA community center. Everyone is welcome to join us for a social gathering at 9:30 AM, followed by the business meeting at 10:00 AM.

For more information about our club's events and activities, please visit our website at www.gfwcrotondawest.org. We can also be found on Facebook under GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Group. All are welcome to attend our general meetings!



DONATE BLOOD

GFWC Rotonda West Woman's Club

Thursday, April 23

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

All donors receive*:

- **\$20 eGift Card**
- **Umbrella**
- **Chick-fil-A Coupon**
- **Wellness Checkup** including blood pressure, pulse, temperature, iron count, and cholesterol screening.

*Location: Rotonda Marina 117 Rotonda Circle
Rotonda West, FL 33947*

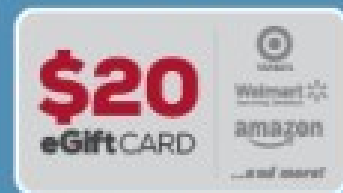


Appointments are encouraged, please visit oneblood.org/donate-now and use sponsor code **39275**

ID REQUIRED

*One offer per donor per donation. No cash value. Not-transferable. Gifts may vary. For more information please visit oneblood.org/details.

Donors
Receive



- PLUS -



- PLUS -



oneblood
Share your power.

MARCH EVENTS

3/24: Author Judith Pearson spoke about her latest award-winning book, *Radical Sisters*, an inspiring account of the women who changed how breast cancer is understood and treated.



3/18: Charlotte County Sheriff's Office program on the Citizen's Police Academy



3/26: Adam Howard, Rotonda West resident and 4 time Emmy Award winning visual effects supervisor presented "Nothing is Impossible", about his career working on major motion picture & television productions



3/27: Charlotte County Fire Inspector Max Lopez of Charlotte County Public Safety presented AED and Hands-Only CPR





Information for the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office

CCSO non-emergency phone number: 941-639-2101

<https://www.ccsso.org/> <https://www.youtube.com/@CCSOFLSheriff>

Volunteering with Neighborhood Watch is also a way to connect with your community. You get to know your neighbors, build trust, and take pride in helping keep our area safe and welcoming. It's one of the simplest ways to give back.

So, if you've ever thought, **"Someone should be watching out for this neighborhood"** that someone can be you. We're not asking for perfection—just participation—but we need more people willing to step up. Every volunteer reduces the burden on others. Every patrol strengthens our community. And every night we're visible is a night our neighborhood is safer.

I know you care about this community, if you want to protect what we've all invested in, now is the time to act—not later, not when it becomes a problem.

Ask questions. Learn more. There's no obligation, just an opportunity to help. If you're interested, or even just curious, please reach out to any of us.

Thank you for your time and thank you for caring about our neighborhood.

David Perry~President~~president@rotondawestneighborhoodwatch.com 941-828-1584

Tom Bailey~Vice President ~vicepresident@rotondawestneighborhoodwatch.com

Greg Banks~Treasurer~~treasurer@rotondawestneighborhoodwatch.com 603-848-7867

Terri Lawson~Secretary~secretary@rotondawestneighborhoodwatch.com 571-243-8458

Judy Murdoch~Base Coordinator~~941-479-1953

Protecting Rotonda West since 1981



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

Charlotte County Sheriff's Office
 Integrity, Professionalism, Trust

Training Announcement

"Citizen* Handgun Safety Course"

Must be a resident of Charlotte County

Dates & Times:

April 11, 2026	9am – 3:30pm
May 16, 2026	9am – 3:30pm
June 20, 2026	9am – 3:30pm

Location: Charlotte County Sheriff's Office – Training Range
 25520 Airport Road, Punta Gorda, FL 33982

Instructor(s): CCSO Firearms Instructors

Program:

- Class participants will be taught NRA's three rules for safe gun handling, primary causes of firearm accidents, firearm parts, how to properly unload and load a firearm, cleaning and maintenance, and safe storage of firearms in the home.
- Class participants will be provided with an overview of the local requirements for owning and purchasing a firearm.
- Class participants will be provided with an overview of Florida's Laws and Statutes governing the safe and recreational use of firearms, including self-defense.
- Class participants will learn and practice the fundamentals of marksmanship to include stance, grip, breath control, sight alignment & picture, trigger control.
- Class participants will have the opportunity to practice the fundamentals of marksmanship with live fire on our range.

Program:

- Class participants will be taught NRA's three rules for safe gun handling, primary causes of firearm accidents, firearm parts, how to properly unload and load a firearm, cleaning and maintenance, and safe storage of firearms in the home.
- Class participants will be provided with an overview of the local requirements for owning and purchasing a firearm.
- Class participants will be provided with an overview of Florida's Laws and Statutes governing the safe and recreational use of firearms, including self-defense.
- Class participants will learn and practice the fundamentals of marksmanship to include stance, grip, breath control, sight alignment & picture, trigger control.
- Class participants will have the opportunity to practice the fundamentals of marksmanship with live fire on our range.

Materials to Bring with you: Note Taking Materials; Firearm & Ammunition; Closed toe shoes (sneakers or boots are preferred) and long pants are required. We will supply hearing protection and eye protection if you do not have your own.

Class Size: 18

Registration: Application must be submitted to Jillian Reich (jreich@ccsofl.net) **by no later than the Monday prior to the class beginning**. Applicants will be contacted to confirm your registration after your background check has been completed.



CHARLOTTE COUNTY NEWS ITEMS – APRIL 2026

By Sam Besase

- **BRIDGE** – Rotonda Blvd South - Charlotte County Commissioners unanimously voted on Wednesday February 25, 2026 to begin the work to **REPLACE** the Rotonda Boulevard South Bridge due to damage from Hurricane Ian (3 years and 6 months ago!). The latest offer from FEMA is **\$769K**, well short of the latest estimate of \$2.7 million. The additional **\$2 million** funds shall likely come from the MSBU. Meanwhile, Charlotte County shall continue to discuss with FEMA in an attempt to secure MORE funding, possibly thru another lawsuit. Also, the Army Corps of Engineers still needs to provide a **PERMIT**. What happens now is that the engineering specification to **REPLACE** the bridge shall soon be sent to responsible bridge construction firms for their bids. Bid review should be in the **next 60 days** and perhaps actual groundbreaking and WORK might start in the **May/June 2026** timeframe. The estimated construction time to **REPLACE** the bridge is approximately **9 months** so the completion and opening of the bridge is estimated by me for the **2nd quarter of 2027**. **US Government shutdowns (43 days + 41 days) have affected the start of this project!!!** Information shall be updated monthly in this newsletter.
 - **PAVING** - Rotonda West PAVING began on **MONDAY July 21, 2025**. ~\$17 million
 - ~80 miles of paving has been completed for all sections. Remaining work are PUNCH LIST items: **MANHOLE COVERS, SOD REPLACEMENT & SOD WATERING, LANE & CENTER STRIPING** and clearing up remaining resident driveway issues.
 - Charlotte County Paving Project Manager is **James Layport** and his phone number is: **941-628-8084**
 - Remaining 4 bridges, (#110-#111-#112-#123) are scheduled for **3Q/4Q 2026 & 1Q of 2027**.
 - Traffic lights at Gasparilla & Rotonda Boulevard East NOW scheduled for installation - **4Q 2026**.
 - Traffic lights at Gasparilla & Ingram/Ingraham are also to be installed in the **4Q 2026**.
 - Watering restrictions are in effect due to the severe drought conditions, check with **CHARLOTTE COUNTY UTILITIES** website for specific information. **WATER 1 DAY A WEEK!**
 - G.C. HERRING Park near the Rotonda American Legion is getting a major \$2.5 million facelift.
 - SouthWest Florida Water Management District (SWFTMUD) announces that a **CAPE HAZE ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECT** shall begin in late spring, 2026 with a 24-month completion. A **VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING** is scheduled for Friday, April 3, 2026, register at: <https://bit.ly/CapeHaze>
 - Visit the SWFTMUD webpage at: WaterMatters.org/Projects/Cape-Haze-Restoration-Project
 - Charlotte County Commissioners Rescinded the Burn Ban in late March 2026, due to recent rainfall that reduced the risk of wildfires.
 - Watch your speed in School Zones – **Cameras** – Automatic Fines starting April 1, 2026
- Respectfully, Sam Besase – Advisory Board Member–Rotonda West Streets & Drainage MSBU. (questions, please call me 281-923-4041, I'll try to get an answer)
- **Other MSBU Members:** Laura Ingrassia, Nick Kotzalas, Carol DeLuca, Leo Van Orden

OFFICE STAFF

Derrick Hedges
Manager

Annette Casteel
Assistant Manager

Tammy Birdsong
Administrator

Jenny Bulle
Bookkeeper

Sheryl Ann Nowicki
Administrator

Kelsey Stewart
Administrator

Denise Huffman
Minutes Clerk

Joe Harris
Communications Specialist

Travis Green
Aquatics

Amanda Stuever
Administrator

MAINTENANCE STAFF

Wayne Taylor

Dale Anderson

Craig Brown

Doug Smith

**THANK YOU TO OUR
WONDERFUL STAFF**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2026

Andy VanScyoc, President

Karen Harvey, Vice President

Sam Besase, Treasurer

Deb Orchard, Secretary

David Kelly, Director

Peter Traverso, Director

Gwen Grace, Director



WEST WAYS STAFF

Nadine Clough, Editor
westways@rotondawest.org

Connie Smith, Writer

Pattie Mihalik, Writer

David Pulaski, Photographer

Nadine Clough, Layout & Design

CONTRIBUTORS THIS MONTH:

Amanda Stuever

Gwen Grace

David Perry

Rita Lopienski

Merrill Horswill

Deb Orchard

Ann Weaver

Sam Besase