

SOUTHWEST RANCHER

Preserving Our Rural Lifestyle



HAPPY
THANKSGIVING

COMING SOON...

6th Annual
December Holiday
Lights Contest

See the back cover

Annual Chili Fest
& Car Show

See the back cover

Annual Southwest Ranches
Country Fair & Carnival

See the back cover

NOVEMBER 2023

In Touch

TOWN HALL: 13400 Griffin Road / Southwest Ranches, FL 33330 • **PHONE:** (954) 434-0008 • **FAX:** (954) 434-1490

TOWN HALL OFFICE HOURS: Monday - Friday / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm • **TOWN WEBSITE:** www.southwestranches.org

TOWN HALL TWITTER ACCOUNT: @SWR_Gov • **YOUTUBE:** Town of Southwest Ranches Official Channel • **FACEBOOK:** facebook@SWRGOV

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mayor Steve Breitkreuz	(954) 343-7462	sbreitkreuz@southwestranches.org
Vice Mayor Jim Allbritton	(954) 343-7461	jallbritton@southwestranches.org
Council Member Bob Hartmann	(954) 801-1758	bhartmann@southwestranches.org
Council Member Gary Jablonski	(954) 343-7456	gjablonski@southwestranches.org
Council Member David S. Kuczenski	(954) 343-7472	dkuczenski@southwestranches.org

TOWN STAFF

Andy Berns, <i>Town Administrator</i>	(954) 434-0008	aberns@southwestranches.org
Danielle Caban, <i>Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator</i>	(954) 343-7474	dcaban@southwestranches.org
Russell Muñiz, <i>Assistant Town Administrator/Town Clerk</i>	(954) 343-7450	rmuniz@southwestranches.org
Debra M. Ruesga, <i>Deputy Town Clerk</i>	(954) 343-7451	druesga@southwestranches.org
Dan Stewart, <i>Records and Administrative Coordinator</i>	(954) 343-7443	dstewart@southwestranches.org
Tom Holste, <i>General Services Manager</i>	(954) 343-7476	tholste@southwestranches.org
Angelica Arosemena, <i>Administrative Assistant</i>	(954) 434-0008	aarosemena@southwestranches.org
Emil C. Lopez, <i>Town Financial Administrator</i>	(954) 343-7473	elopez@southwestranches.org
Rich Strum, <i>Town Controller</i>	(954) 343-7442	rstrum@southwestranches.org
Venessa Redman, <i>Senior Procurement & Budget Officer</i>	(954) 343-7467	vrredman@southwestranches.org
Arianna Durbreej, <i>Town Accountant</i>	(954) 343-7477	adurbreej@southwestranches.org
Keith Poliakoff, <i>Town Attorney</i>	(954) 909-0580	kpoliakoff@southwestranches.org
Rod Ley, <i>Public Works Director</i>	(954) 343-7444	rley@southwestranches.org
Emily McCord Aceti, <i>Community Services Manager</i>	(954) 343-7453	eaceti@southwestranches.org
Susan Kutz, <i>Administrative Specialist, Newsletter Editor & Graphic Designer</i>	(954) 343-7460	skutz@southwestranches.org
Joyce Marques, <i>Engineer Inspector</i>	(954) 343 7441	jmarques@southwestranches.org
December Lauretano-Haines, <i>Parks, Recreation & Open Space Manager</i>	(954) 343-7452	dlauretano@southwestranches.org
Melinda Stringer, <i>Administrative Assistant</i>	(954) 343-7454	mstringer@southwestranches.org

TOWN SERVICES / BUILDING DEPARTMENT PERMITTING – (CAP GOVERNMENT)

Brian Dillon, <i>Building Official</i>	(954) 665-4392	M-F 8:30 am - 4:00 pm
Jennifer McCarty, <i>Permit Technician</i>	(954) 343-7445	swrinspections@southwestranches.org
Derlin Guevara, <i>Permit Technician</i>	(954) 343-7446	swrinspections@southwestranches.org

PLANNING

Jeff Katims	(954) 475-3070	jkatims@transystems.com
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ZONING/PERMITTING

Julio Medina	(954) 343-7458	zoninginfo@southwestranches.org
CODE		
Julio Medina, <i>Code Enforcement Director</i>	(954) 343-7458	jmedina@southwestranches.org
Code Enforcement Hotline	(954) 343-7449	
Concepcion Campos, <i>Code Enforcement Officer</i>	(954) 343-7457	ccampos@southwestranches.org
Ruth Miranda, <i>Administrative Coordinator</i>	(954) 343-7459	rmiranda@southwestranches.org
Manfred Velette, <i>Assistant Code Enforcement Director</i>	(954) 343-7440	mvelette@southwestranches.org

WASTE/BULK/RECYCLING SERVICES

WM (Waste Management)	(954) 974-7500	
REFLECTIVE ADDRESS MARKERS – Chief Bennett	(954) 868-2057	lbennett@southwestranches.org
MOSQUITO CONTROL	(954) 765-4062	
LOST AND FOUND ANIMALS	(754) 224-0877	Facebook@SWRLostandFoundAnimals

PUBLIC SAFETY

EMERGENCY	911	
Non-Emergency	(954) 764-4357 (HELP)	
Davie Police Department	(954) 693-8200	
Eddie Velazquez, <i>Detective</i>	(954) 693-8290	evelazquez@davie-fl.gov
Cheryl Danner, <i>Police Services Coordinator</i>	(954) 693-8352	cdanner@southwestranches.org
Davie Fire Rescue Station 112	(954) 952-4608	
Volunteer Fire Rescue – Chief Bennett	(954) 868-2057	
TRAFFIC AND ROADWAY SERVICES		
Potholes and Signs Down – Public Works		publicworks@southwestranches.org
Illicit Discharge – Environmental Response Line:	(954) 519-1499	online complaint form at: http://www.broward.org/Environment/Resources/Pages/EnviroComplaint.aspx

OTHER

WATER DISTRICTS - CANALS

Central Broward Water Control District	(954) 432-5110	www.centralbrowardwcd.org
East of SW 148 Avenue (Volunteer)		
South Broward Drainage District	(954) 680-3337	www.sbddd.org
West of SW 148 Avenue (Volunteer)		

Mayor Steve Breitkreuz



Holiday Season

As we enter November, we are also turning our attention away from hurricanes (Hopefully, fingers crossed, knocking on wood!) and we are turning our attention to the wonderful season ahead of us with cooler temperatures and lots of community events.

This is a fantastic time of the year when it is more enjoyable to get out and spend time with other friends here in our Town. I wanted to highlight a few opportunities to get more involved. If you have lived in the Ranches for many years, you may be familiar with these events, but if you are new, this is a great way to get involved and start getting to know more of your neighbors and future friends!

First, I wanted to give a shout out to the Farmers Market. This is an event that I helped pull together after a tremendous amount of support from our residents and the Town Staff that helped it all become reality. Starting in October, the hours are longer, and you can find the market humming away from 10:00 until 3:00 every Saturday. There is a wide variety of local items sold. There is also a growing produce section that offers healthy and delicious fruit and vegetables. So, if you have time on a Saturday, please stop in and enjoy, and meet some of your neighbors.

Second, we have our annual holiday lights event. For those of you that put your own holiday lights into place each year, why don't you consider letting more of your neighbors hear about it and enjoy them! We have a contest each year for the best amateur holiday light display. It's a lot of fun and a great way to share your holiday spirit with your neighbors.

Finally, I want to introduce something new that we are planning for 2024. We have some VERY awesome kids in our Town. So, to help them grow and to get a stronger Town identification, we will be starting a program this coming year that will help our youngest

Ranchers get involved in the initial sports league. This will start small, but the plan is to have it grow over the next few years. The goal is to have a Southwest Ranches soccer team ready to go for next Fall. If you are potentially interested in having your child participate, I urge you to contact Town Hall at 954-343-7452. Along these same lines, we also have recognized the need to more coordinated activities for our seniors in Town, and while this is also in the development stage, we are expecting this to be underway by next Fall as well. We have a great community of Ranchers. But the more we get to know each other through community events including sports, the stronger we become as a community and the better equipped we become to preserve our rural lifestyle.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Mayor.

Steve (954) 296-6018

May you and your family have a
**HAPPY
THANKSGIVING**



TOWN TALK

Want to stay in touch and receive information on TOWN EVENTS?

Send your email address to:
druesga@southwestranches.org



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Council Member David S. Kuczenski



Howdy Ranchers,
November brings
us Thanksgiving
and the begin-
ning of the holi-

day season. At the beginning of last month, several new state laws came into effect which may impact many aspects of our lives. Here are a few noteworthy laws:

Death penalty in child rapes: HB 1297 would allow the death penalty for those who commit sexual batteries on children under age 12. Since judicial precedent at both the Florida Supreme Court and the US Supreme Court have barred death sentences for rapists, it is expected that this measure will lead to Court challenges.

Interfering with sports events: HB 319 sets a maximum fine of \$2,500 for interfering with participants in athletic or artistic events or entering fields or stages without authorization. The law further prohibits people from making money off such exploits on social media.

Solicitation of minors to commit lewd acts: HB 431 makes it a third-degree felony for a person aged 24 and older to solicit a 16- or 17-year-old in writing to commit a lewd or lascivious act.

Minors and golf carts: HB 949 requires a learner's permit or driver's license for anyone under age 18 to operate a golf cart on a public road in Florida. Currently, golf-cart operators must be at least 14 years old when on public roads designated for golf-cart use, but driver's licenses are not required.

Violations will be noncriminal traffic infractions, similar to moving violations.

County bans on pit bulls: HB 942 effectively stops local governments from banning specific dog breeds like German shepherds or pit bulls. Previously, a county could restrict owners from having a dog over a certain weight or size if the dog posed a safety and welfare concern following an attack as long as the ordinance was not breed-specific. This new law adds weight and size as prohibited topics in ad-

dition to breed. The new law also authorizes public housing authorities to adopt certain policies relating to dogs.

Fentanyl dealers: HB 1359 increases penalties for fentanyl dealers and manufacturers. The law imposes mandatory minimum 25-year sentences and \$1 million fines for adults selling at least four grams of fentanyl to minors through products such as those that resemble candy.

Guns and human trafficking: HB 1465 includes increasing potential sentences for people who possess or discharge guns while involved in human trafficking. Such people will be subject to the state's "10-20-Life" mandatory-minimum sentencing law.

Expanding litter law: HB 1367 expands a litter law to prohibit dumping litter at water-control district properties or canal rights-of-ways unless given approval.

Protection of Specified Personnel: HB 67 creates a law prohibiting specified threats against a judge, judicial assistant, clerk of court, or clerk personnel or family member of such person; prohibits specified harassment of certain personnel with intent to intimidate or coerce such person to perform or refrain from performing lawful duty.

Exploitation of Vulnerable Persons: SB 232 creates conditions under which a person commits exploitation of a person 65 years of age or older. Among other provisions, the law specifies that not knowing the age of a victim is not a defense to such crime.

Offenses Against Certain Animals: HB 1047 Prohibits committing violence against po-

lice horses or police canines in certain circumstances. The law increases classification of specified criminal offenses committed against police canines, fire canines, SAR canines, or police horses.

Dosage Form Animal Health Products: HB 959 includes dosage from animal products as a regulated feedstuff under the Commercial Feed Law, thus requiring such products to be subject to regulation by DACS. It also clarifies that such products do not include certain drugs, biologics, parasiticides, medical devices, or diagnostics used to treat or administered to animals under federal law. The law exempts products sold solely as a dosage form animal product and guaranteed as specified in the Commercial Feed Law from showing a guaranteed analysis. Finally, the law provides specific product labeling requirements.

Driver License, Identification Card, and Motor Vehicle Registration: HB 965 expands the categories to include law enforcement agencies and their contracted service providers to obtain confidential crash reports. The law requires motor vehicle registration forms and registration renewal forms and driver licenses or ID cards application forms, respectively, to include an option to make a voluntary contribution to "Best Buddies International." The law defines the terms "control" and "motor vehicle dealer's leasing or rental affiliate", etc.

Assault or Battery on Hospital Personnel: HB 825 reclassifies listed offenses committed against hospital personnel while engaged in performance of their duties as prohibited criminal activities.

The above are summaries of several laws that have been enacted. For more detail, you are urged to read the statutory language and consult with legal counsel for a determination of the application of the law to specific facts. No legal advice is intended.

As your Town Council Member, I aim to preserve Southwest Ranches' unique rural lifestyle and minimize any changes to it. Together, let's protect and maintain what makes our community special. I also strive to return all phone calls within 24 to 48 hours. If you have questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me. As always, it has been an honor to serve as your voice on the Council.

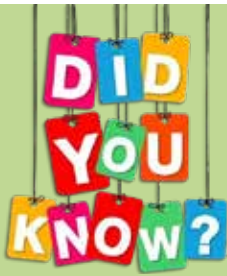
*Very Truly Yours,
David S Kuczenski
Council Member District 4*



STAY IN TOUCH WITH ENGINEERING

Fill for horse stalls does not require a fill permit. In addition, a permit may not be required if a small amount of sand is required to replenish a horse arena. However the Town recommends that a property owner or leasee contact our office to assure that the type of work being performed falls under this criteria prior to performing the work. A phone call to us will help prevent a possible warning from Code Enforcement and double fees when it comes to acquiring the required permit.

Please call: (954) 434-0008 or
Email: publicworks@southwestranches.org



All Town projects greater than \$25,000 are required for awarding to follow a competitive bidding process. A few examples of Town projects during FY 2022-2023 that were awarded after being competitively bid are listed below:

Description	A Market Value (Average Bid Price)	B Awarded Amount	A-B Cost Avoidance
VFD Modular Floor encapsulation	\$ 38,270.00	\$ 24,999.00	\$ 13,271.00
Chambers Network Switches	\$ 74,384.50	\$ 35,474.50	\$ 38,910.00
Town Hall Parking Lot	\$ 285,271.04	\$ 233,369.00	\$ 51,902.04
SW 54th Drainage Improvements	\$ 539,387.29	\$ 462,000.00	\$ 77,387.29
SW 63rd Drainage Improvements	\$ 840,572.29	\$ 747,706.00	\$ 92,866.29
	\$ 1,777,885.11	\$ 1,503,548.50	\$ 274,336.61



Clerk's Corner by Russell Muñiz

BRIEF LEGISLATION FROM THE SEPTEMBER 14, 2023 TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET HEARING:

Brief legislation from the September 14, 2023 Town Council Budget Hearing:

- Adopted Resolution 2023-074 approving the Fiscal Year 2024 Fire Assessment.
- Adopted Resolution 2023-075 approving the Fiscal Year 2024 Solid Waste Assessment.
- Adopted Resolution 2023-076 approving the Fiscal Year 2024 Tentative Millage Rate.

Brief legislation from the September 14, 2023 Town Council Regular Meeting:

- Adopted Ordinance 2023-006 amending the Town Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) modifying shared driveway standards.
- Adopted Ordinance 2023-007 amending the Town Code of Ordinances pertaining to the use of fireworks in the Town.
- Adopted Ordinance 2023-008 amending the Town Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) regarding vacation rentals within the Town.
- Adopted Ordinance 2023-009 amending the Town Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) regarding home-based businesses within the Town.
- Adopted Resolution 2023-077 authorizing the Town to submit a grant application to the Resilient Florida Program to help fund a vulnerability and sea level rise assessment.
- Adopted Resolution 2023-078 approving an agreement with Huurr Homes to complete the SW 63rd Street and SW 185th Way Drainage Improvement Project.
- Adopted Resolution 2023-079 approving the selection of Russell Muñiz for the position as Town Administrator.
- Adopted Resolution 2023-080 authorizing the purchase of Cisco network switches from Presidio, Inc.

Brief legislation from the September 28, 2023 Town Council Budget Meeting:

- Adopted Resolution 2023-081 approving the Fiscal Year 2024 Final Millage Rate.
- Adopted Ordinance 2023-010 approving the Fiscal Year 2024 Final Budget.

Brief legislation from the September 28, 2023 Town Council Regular Meeting:

- Adopted Ordinance 2023-011 amending the Town Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) prohibiting the use of phosphogypsum to create or repair Town or private roads.
- Adopted Resolution 2023-082 approving an agreement with Absolute Construction to complete the SW 54th Place from Dykes Road to the Ivanhoe Canal Drainage Improvement Project.
- Adopted Resolution 2023-083 approving a water service agreement with the City of Sunrise for 5301 Hancock Road.
- Adopted Resolution 2023-084 opposing the creation of a mass burn facility plant (incinerator) by Miami-Dade County.

To view these approved items in their entirety please visit the Town Clerk's Department page on the Town website and click on the Resolutions and/or Ordinances link.

DRAINAGE PROJECT COMMENCING IN COUNTRY ESTATES

The Town of Southwest Ranches recently approved a contract with Huurr Homes LLC to complete a drainage improvement project in the Country Estates neighborhood. With the help of Congresswoman Robin Bartleman and Senator Lauren Book and approval of Governor Ron DeSantis, Southwest Ranches was successful in obtaining \$479,306 in funding for the SW 63rd Street and SW 185th Way Drainage Improvement Project from the State budget.

The project will remove flood waters from roadways in the heavily travelled area of Southwest Ranches. It will provide critical drainage capacity for storm-water runoff, thereby reducing roadway flooding.

Once work commences, the contractor will have 150 days to complete the project. We appreciate your patience during construction. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Emily Aceti at (954) 343-7453 or eaceti@swranches.org.



SUPPORT THE BUSINESS DIRECTORY

found on the Town website by visiting the Historical Society page or using this link:

<https://www.southwestranches.org/southwest-ranches-resident-business-directory/>





November is not only a time to celebrate Thanksgiving, but also a time to honor our Veterans.

Veterans Day

Since the start of my tenure as a state legislator, the Legislature passed 19 bills to improve the lives of our veterans. Florida has one of the highest veteran populations nationwide, and it is important that we take care of these brave individuals who have done so much for our country. In the most recent legislative session, I cosponsored HB 635 to establish a grant program for veterans who do not qualify for dental assistance through the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). The VA estimates only 15% of veterans receive dental coverage through VA programs. This law creates a mechanism for our veterans to get necessary dental care.

Some veteran resources provided by the state and federal government are listed below:

- National VA Homeless Hotline (24 Hour)
 - Toll Free at 1-877-424-3838
 - [https:// www.va.gov/homeless/](https://www.va.gov/homeless/)
- Veterans Crisis Line (24 Hour)
 - Toll Free at 988, Press 1
 - www.mentalhealth.va.gov
- Change Direction: Give An Hour Campaign - Know the Five Signs!
 - [https:// giveanhour.org/military/](https://giveanhour.org/military/)
- Florida Veterans Support Line
 - 1-844-693-5838 or 2-1-1
- Hope for Healing Florida
 - [https:// www.hopeforhealingfl.com/](https://www.hopeforhealingfl.com/)
- The Recovery Village
 - [https:// www.therecoveryvillage.com/treatment-program/online-counseling/telehealth-app/](https://www.therecoveryvillage.com/treatment-program/online-counseling/telehealth-app/)
- VA Caregiver Support Line
 - 1-855-260-3274
 - [https:// www.caregiver.va.gov](https://www.caregiver.va.gov)

It is an honor to serve you and we are here to assist with any issues or concerns you may have. I welcome ideas and suggestions. Feel free to contact me anytime at robin.bartleman@myfloridahouse.gov or our office at (954) 424-6828. You can also reach me on my personal cell at (954) 668-3662

The Town recently completed construction of the Town Hall parking lot resurfacing and drainage improvements. The parking lot would flood even after minor rain events, which had created potholes and uneven pedestrian pathway surfaces. The project was funded in part by FEMA (\$179,031) and the State of Florida (\$9,946).




PESTICIDES, HERBICIDES AND FERTILIZERS

Pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers are commonly used in agricultural areas. However, we should take care to when using them as they can have adverse consequences. Pesticides and herbicides are typically used in the maintenance of lawns and gardens. Improper use can hurt beneficial insects, animals, as well as the applicant. Additionally, overuse of pesticides and herbicides can cause pests and unwanted vegetation to become resistant against it. Caution must be taken as pesticides and herbicides can seep through soil and contaminate the groundwater.

Fertilizers are often rich with nitrogen and phosphorus, ingredients that are beneficial for plant growth. However, if care is not taken fertilizers can run off into adjacent water bodies such as canals and lakes. This can harm water bodies by altering their composition and causing a rapid growth of algae. The increased algae will in turn reduce oxygen levels which negatively affects fish and other aquatic organisms. In addition to this, the nitrogen in fertilizer can also contaminate groundwater if it seeps through. Pesticides herbicides, and fertilizers should always be used as per their instruction label.



SHOW YOUR TOWN SPIRIT

SWR stickers are made for residents by the Country Estates Homeowners Association. Sticker's are \$1 each and are available at Town Hall, 13400 Griffin Rd.



Benefits to using a mulching lawn mower

(Adapted from <https://lawnlove.com/blog/benefits-of-a-mulching-lawn-mower/>)

You might wonder what lawn mowers have to do with mulch. When you first think of mulch, you'll probably think about the materials you put on your flower beds, **bushes, or trees**: shredded bark, wood chips, pine straw, etc. But mulch has a broader definition. Instead of thinking about the materials, think about what those materials accomplish: They cover the ground or soil. **Mulch** is any material that covers the soil to provide nutrients, reduce evaporation and erosion, prevent weeds, and control temperature swings. When you use a mulching mower, the finely shredded grass blade clippings serve as a mulch or covering for your lawn just as the bark is a covering for your flower beds. That's the idea behind the name mulching mower.

Benefits for your lawn

- ✓ Mulching mowers are the machines that best help homeowners "grasscycle" (return clippings to the lawn). The fine bits of grass decompose quickly, releasing nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and micronutrients **back into the soil**. This means fewer fertilizer treatments for your lawn.
- ✓ Mulching mowers enable **on-site recycling**. You're returning grass right back into the ground from which it came. It never even left your lawn.
- ✓ Mulching mowers will not contribute to **thatch** buildup (the layer of leaves, stems, and roots between the grass and the soil). Thatch buildup means your lawn has too few worms and microorganisms to break down the organic matter. The good news? Finely chopped grass clippings help increase your soil's microbial activity.
- ✓ Mulching mowers chop more than grass. Leave your rake on the pegboard; get out your mulching mower and mulch the **leaves** instead.
- ✓ If you prefer to bag or side discharge occasionally, mulching mower blades are still useful. Mulching mower blades are sometimes called 3-in-1 blades because you can use them to mulch, bag, or side discharge if your mower allows.

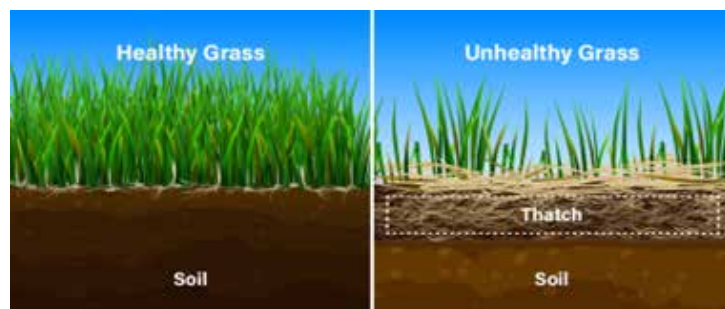
Benefits for the environment

Why should you care if the grass clippings go to the landfill?

By retaining your grass clippings on your lawn (or in your **compost pile**), you keep the grass out of the solid waste stream. It's like having a recycling facility on your property. If you were to bag the clippings and put them on the curb as green waste, they enter the municipal waste stream and increase the waste management and landfill burden in your city.

Yes, grass clippings will biodegrade, but turning them back into the lawn or composting them is a better option. Here's why: In the lawn and **compost pile**, the clippings receive plenty of oxygen and water to help them decompose into organic matter relatively quickly.

Landfills, however, are not designed to decompose materials fast like your compost pile. They are primarily designed for disposal and to keep any contaminants out of the environment.



Remember the adage, "**reduce, reuse, and recycle?**" By putting your grass clippings back in your lawn, you reduce the amount of yard waste that goes into the landfill and reuse a "waste" product to grow a healthier lawn.

Let's get back to why this is good for your lawn environment: Did you know that "grasscycling" throughout the growing season (when you mulch the clippings back into the lawn), adds the equivalent of one synthetic fertilizer treatment to your lawn each year? That's right, you can rely on this free mowing by-product to break down and provide valuable nutrients to your lawn or garden beds.

Benefits for you

The lawn and environment are important, but what about you? Here's how a mulching lawn mower provides value for you, the homeowner:

- ✓ Saves time: No need to bag your clippings or put them on the curb
- ✓ Saves hassle: No more heavy, clumsy bag attachments to empty
- ✓ Saves money: **One free fertilizer treatment** goes into your lawn every year just by mowing the lawn
- ✓ Helps build a healthy lawn: Mulched clippings help build the soil over time and reduce erosion
- ✓ Saves on your water bill: Mulched clippings reduce evaporation in your lawn





- **Do not walk through flowing water.** If you must walk in standing water, use a pole or stick to ensure the depth of the water ahead.
- **Do not drive through a flooded area.** Do not drive around road barriers; the road may be washed out.
- **Stay away from power lines and electrical wires.** Electrical current travels through water. If possible, report downed powerlines to FPL. Do not use appliances or motors that are wet unless they have been taken apart, cleaned and dried.
- **Look out for animals, especially snakes.** Small animals that have been flooded out of their habitat may take shelter in your home.
- **Look before you step.** After a flood, the ground and floors can be covered with debris. Surfaces that have been covered with mud can be very slippery.
- **Be alert for gas leaks.** If your house is serviced by gas, do not smoke, use candles or open flames unless you know the gas has not built up. Make arrangements to turn off your electricity and gas.

To sign up to be notified via voice message, text and email for important public safety information during a storm visit <http://southwestranches.org> and Broward.org/Emergency/Pages/AlertBroward.aspx.



Financial Assistance Advice

If your home or business is damaged by a flood, you may be required to meet certain building requirements to reduce further flood damage by coming into compliance with local, state, and federal criteria. To help with these costs, financial assistance such as grants, loans, rebates and the NFIP's Increased Cost of Compliance Coverage may be available.

For assistance regarding financial assistance options, please contact the Town's Engineering Department at (954) 434-0008, Broward County's Mitigation Coordinator at (954) 831-3900 or visit Disasterassistance.gov.



National Flood Insurance Program Changes

In accordance with 2014 Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is continuing to gradually phase out flood insurance premium subsidies on certain policyholders. The changes have and will have the greatest impact on properties located within a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) that were built prior to the adoption of Broward County's first FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) on October 26, 1972, or prior to December 31, 1974, without elevation certificate information. For more information on the National Flood Insurance Program changes visit FEMA.gov/flood-insurance-reform.



Get a Flood Insurance Policy

Replacing household contents damaged by floods could place a significant financial burden on a homeowner or renter without flood insurance. Just a few inches of water from a flood can cause tens of thousands of dollars in damage. Homeowner's insurance policies do not generally cover damage from floods. However, because the Town of Southwest Ranches participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), you can purchase a separate flood insurance policy from an insurance agent and benefit from the premium discount available to all Southwest Ranches residents. Flood insurance is backed by the federal government and is available to everyone, even for properties that have been flooded previously. Please note that unless there is a special condition of the mortgage, there normally is a 30-day waiting period between the time flood insurance is purchased and the time coverage is in force. Though all home and business owners in these areas with mortgages from federally regulated or insured lenders are required to buy flood insurance, all residents should consider flood insurance to protect against significant financial losses.

If your property is in the SFHA and you have a mortgage from a federally regulated or insured lender, flood insurance is required. Even if you do not have a mortgage and you live in the SFHA or you live outside of the SFHA, all property owners and renters should carefully consider the benefits of flood insurance to protect against significant financial losses from floods. For more information visit the following sites: Floodsmart.gov and FEMA.gov/national-flood-insurance-program.

If you would like to know if your property is in a SFHA you can use the interactive map viewer. Visit <http://southwestranches.org/departments/town-engineering/flood-insurance-information/> and select Flood Maps. You can also call (954) 434-0008, provide your address and zip code, and Town staff will assist you in determining SFHA information specific to your property.



Elevation Certificate Information

Elevation certificates for buildings are on file and may be obtained by visiting <http://southwestranches.org/departments/town-engineering/flood-insurance-information/>.



Water Quality and Flood Control Effects of Drainage Systems

The success of the drainage system in your neighborhood depends on proper maintenance of the system. The swales that are commonly located between your yard and street are part of the neighborhood's storm water management system.

Gutters, storm drain pipes, lakes, wetlands, swales and canals should be kept free of debris. It is against Town Code to dump trash in waters. The drainage system may provide both water quality and flood control benefits. Lakes, wetlands, swales and canals filter pollutants from runoff or allow pollutants to settle out. Check with the Town's Engineering Department before paving, regrading or altering swales.



Protect Property from Flooding

Losses due to floods can be reduced by implementing property protection measures. Furniture, appliances, clothing, and other movable items can be elevated within the structure or relocated away from potential flooding if time permits. You should also make an itemized inventory of your belongings including costs, dates of purchase and serial numbers.

There are several ways to protect a building from flood damage if feasible. One way is to make sure your lot is graded in a manner that will direct runoff away from your building. Another approach is to make your walls waterproof and place watertight closures over the doorways. This method is not recommended if water will rise to a depth of two feet or greater. A third approach is to raise the house above flood levels. Prior to making these modifications, consult with a certified contractor.



Build Responsibly

Strict regulations govern substantial improvements to structures in the flood plain. According to NFIP, "substantial improvement" means the cost of any repair, reconstruction, or improvement of a structure which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure either before the improvement is started or if the structure has been damaged and is being restored.

Please be advised that any new development or improvement on a property will be subject to current Town regulations and may also be subject to state and federal regulations. Please contact the Southwest Ranches Building Code Services Division at (954) 434-0008 for specific information and to report unpermitted construction activities.



Flood Risk Specialist Available to Assist Residents

The Town of Southwest Ranches wants to ensure that residents who have questions about flood risks, flood insurance, and retrofitting techniques, get answers in a timely manner. The Town Engineer is available to assist in the following areas: 1) Flood Insurance; 2) Flood Zone interpretation including base flood elevation and/or flood depth; 3) Additional FIRM information; 4) Problems not shown on FIRM; 5) Special flood related hazards; 6) Historical flood-related data; 7) Natural flood-plain functions; and 8) Property protection measures. Please call the Engineering Department at (954) 434-0008 and ask to speak to the Town Engineer. You may also schedule a site visit to review flooding, drainage, and

storm sewer problems, and to obtain advice on retrofitting techniques to provide additional protection. Go to <http://southwestranches.org/departments/town-engineering/flood-insurance-information/> for additional information.



Local Flood Hazards

Floods resulting from prolonged, heavy rainfall can occur in rivers and canals that drain inland areas into the Atlantic Ocean when waterway capacities are exceeded. Flooding from heavy rainfall occurs in low-lying areas and areas near rivers and canals.

The severe flooding that occurred as a result of the exceedingly wet summers and the hurricanes of 1947 was the basis for creating what is now the South Florida Water Management District. South Florida's five-month rainy season brings more than two-thirds of the region's annual rainfall. The rainy season can also bring flooding, which may occur when large amounts of rain fall over a short period of time or from a single heavy storm, tropical system or hurricane.

Since portions of Southwest Ranches have been designated as a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), it is advisable to check the interactive map viewer to see the location of your property with respect to the SFHA. Visit <http://southwestranches.org/departments/town-engineering/flood-insurance-information/> and select Flood Maps. You can also call (954) 434-0008, provide your address and zip code, and Town staff will assist you in determining SFHA information specific to your property.



Protect Natural Floodplain Functions

Although much of the natural flood plain system in South Florida has been altered and is frequently over-drained, efforts are being made to enhance many historical wetlands and canals to restore them to a more natural state. These flood plain and wetland areas buffer flood flows, remove pollutants from our surface waters, recharge groundwater and create diverse habitat systems for plants and animals. The Southwest Ranches Comprehensive Plan includes policies pertaining to flood plains and wetlands. The plan provides for protection and creation of surface waters, protection and wetlands preservation.



Map Services

Maps are an effective method of communicating information about flood hazards. Residents and businesses that are aware of potential flood hazards can take steps to avoid problems and reduce exposure to flooding. Therefore, the Town offers complementary maps to supplement and clarify the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) with information on additional hazards, flooding outside mapped areas, development regulations that affect floodplain properties, flood insurance, natural floodplain functions, and property protection measures.

A GIS mapping application for Southwest Ranches that is publicly available includes information you will need for a flood insurance policy including whether your property is in a SFHA, the community number, panel number and suffix, FIRM date, FIRM zone, base flood elevation and the elevation datum used. Additional FIRM information is also available showing areas of concern such as whether your property is located within a floodway.

The Town has mapped local drainage problem areas within the Town. In addition, the Town has a map providing information about past floods that have occurred. If you live in one of these areas, we would like to have a discussion with you regarding potential remedies.

A GIS mapping application for Southwest Ranches that is publicly available includes layers related to natural floodplain functions, specifically wetlands and fish and wildlife habitat. The map includes Broward County's wetland data to provide a comprehensive picture of where wetlands are located within the Town.

To view these interactive maps, please visit the Town's website. For more information regarding the flood maps and the Town's floodplain management program or if you would like assistance reading the maps, please call Town Hall at (954) 434-0008 or email rley@southwestranches.org.

Source: Broward County Flood News, Summer 2018, Volume 24, Issue 1



The Property Appraiser's Office does not set your tax rates, collect property taxes, or determine how the tax revenue is allocated by local government. Florida law requires our office to assess all property based on the market data on January 1 of each year. We are also able to grant tax-saving exemptions to qualified applicants. The property tax bills are mailed by the Broward County's Records, Taxes & Treasury Division. If you have questions regarding the payment of your tax bill, please contact their office at 954-357-4829 or visit their website at <https://www.broward.org/RecordsTaxesTreasury>

Where Is My 2024 Homestead Exemption?

The tax bill you received this month from the Broward County Tax Collector is for the 2023 tax year. If you acquired your home in 2023 and the previous owners of your new home were entitled to and received Homestead Exemption or any other exemption on January 1, 2023, you may have inherited their exemptions on your 2023 property tax bill. Florida Statutes require these 2023 exemptions be removed for 2024 and the property be reassessed at the full 2024 Just/Market value which may result in an increase in your 2024 property taxes. It is important that you apply for your own 2024 Homestead Exemption in your name if you believe you are eligible. Your new 2024 Homestead Exemption will be reflected next year on all 2024 property records, notices, and tax bills. Any new 2024 Homestead Exemptions will show online in late-December. You can apply for Homestead Exemption and any other exemptions you may qualify for online at <https://web.bcpa.net/bcpaclient/#/HomesteadExemption>

If you have any questions regarding your Homestead Exemption or other tax-saving exemptions, please contact our Customer Service Department at 954.357.6830.

Escrow Adjustments for 2023 Tax Bills

The Property Appraiser's Office does not handle anything related to the financing of property. If you make monthly escrow payments for your property taxes, your mortgage or escrow company typically does an escrow analysis after paying your annual tax bill. After this analysis, your mortgage company will contact you directly if there is any change to your monthly payment. Should you have any questions about this, you should contact your mortgage company for assistance.

Quarterly Installment Payments

If you pay your property taxes through Broward County's quarterly installment plan, any newly approved 2023 exemptions will be applied to the 3rd and 4th installment payment amounts. Any adjustments for 2023 are made on the final two quarterly 2023 installment tax bills.

If my office can ever be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at martykiar@bcpa.net.

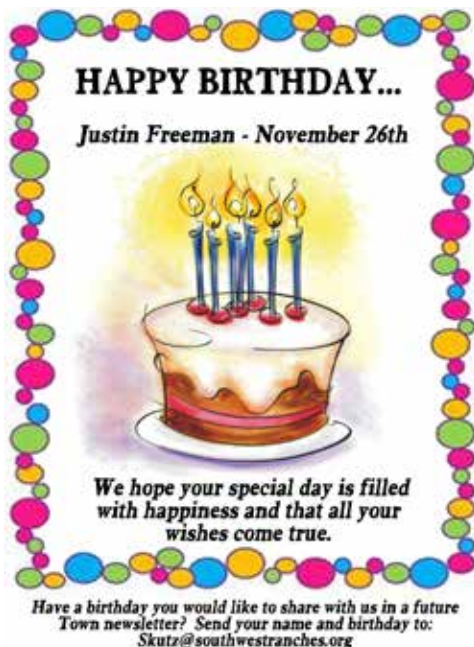
Take care,

Marty Kiar



DRAINAGE PROJECT COMMENCING IN GREEN MEADOWS

At the September 28th meeting, the Town Council approved a contract with Absolute Construction Services, Inc. to complete the SW 54th Place from Dykes Road to the Ivanhoe Canal Drainage Improvement Project. With the help of Congresswoman Robin Bartleman and Senator Lauren Book and approval of Governor Ron DeSantis, Southwest Ranches was successful in obtaining \$409,422 in funding for this drainage improvement project from the State budget. Once work commences, the contractor will have 150 days to complete the project. We understand the construction project is an inconvenience to people living and commuting in and around the area, so we greatly appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to complete construction and restoration as safely and quickly as possible.



Broward County Public School Calendar

NOVEMBER				
M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

- Tuesday, November 7th - Employee Planning (no school for students)
- Friday, November 10th - Schools and Administrative Offices Closed
- Tuesday, November 14th - Report Cards Issued
- Monday, November 20th thru Friday 24th - Schools Closed
- Tuesday, November 28th - Interim Reports Issued

FOLLOW US ON THE TOWN'S OFFICIAL SOCIAL MEDIA

- Facebook page: @SWRGOV
- Twitter account: @SWR_gov
- YouTube: Town of Southwest Ranches Official Channel

COMMENT FOLLOW

• Watch Town Council meetings
• Get updated information on Town events
• Quick notification to followers on emergency management issues

TOWN OF SOUTHWEST RANCHES
FY 2023-2024

by Emil Lopez

The Town of Southwest Ranches FY23-24 Budget was adopted by the Town Council on September 28, 2023. Copies of the Budget in brief are available at Town Hall. The FY23-24 Budget in brief can be reviewed or downloaded online on the Town's website at <https://www.southwestranches.org/departments/finance/budget-reports-faq/>

"HOW TO DO BUSINESS WITH THE TOWN"

The Town welcomes participation from all vendors qualified to do business with the Town. Please visit the Procurement page on the Town's website and complete the Vendor Application.

SW RANCHES COUNTRY FAIR & CARNIVAL

WHEN
JAN 12th-15th

WHERE
SW Meadows Sanctuary Park
16290 Griffin Road, SW Ranches, FL

FOOD & CRAFT VENDORS WANTED

SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

BENEFITING
SW RANCHES PARKS FOUNDATION

CONTACT:
SWRCOUNTRYFAIR.COM



PROTOTYPE BARN

In furtherance of the Town's goal of preserving its rural lifestyle, the Town Council has given residents a simpler mechanism to build a barn that is in compliance with Florida statutory requirements. As such, the Town contracted with an architect who agreed to create a prototype barn drawing, in compliance with the Florida Building Code, which can be permitted for residents throughout the Town. The plans are for a three stall barn with a tack room.

A Town resident looking to build a barn can simply purchase a pre-drafted architectural plan from the Town, which they then can submit, at a reduced cost, and on an expedited basis, to get a permitted barn that will be in compliance with both state and local regulations.

Please call or email Emily Aceti for more information: eaceti@southwestranches.org.



PHOTO BY: Robert Sirota

NOVEMBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
29	30	31	1	2	3	4 Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 9am-1:00 pm
5 • Country Estates HOA Meeting - Grace Baptist Church 19200 Griffin Rd. 7 pm • SWR Parks, Foundation Meeting - Town Hall 7 pm	6 BULK ZONE 7	7 • CODE Hearing - Town Hall 9 am • Broward County Property Appraiser Office - Town Hall 10:30 - 12:30 pm	8 BULK ZONE 3	9 BULK ZONE 4	10 BULK ZONE 5 HONORING ALL WHO SERVED Veterans DAY • Town Hall Closed	11 BULK ZONE 6 Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10 am - 3:00 pm
12 BULK ZONE 1	13 • Schools & Education Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7 pm BULK ZONE 1	14 • Parks, Recreation, Forestry & Natural Resources Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7 pm BULK ZONE 2	15 • Fire Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7 pm BULK ZONE 3	16 TOWN COUNCIL MEETING Town Hall 7 pm BULK ZONE 4	17 BULK ZONE 5	18 Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10 am - 3:00 pm BULK ZONE 6
19 • Rural Public Arts & Design Board Meeting - Town Hall 7 pm BULK ZONE 7	20 • Drainage & Infrastructure Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7 pm BULK ZONE 8	21 BULK ZONE 8	22 BULK ZONE 9	23 HAPPY Thanksgiving DAY • Town Hall Closed BULK ZONE 10	24 • Town Hall Closed BULK ZONE 11	25 Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10 am - 3:00 pm BULK ZONE 12
26 BULK ZONE 1	27 BULK ZONE 1	28 • Rolling Oaks Civic Association Meeting - Rolling Oaks Barn 17630 SW 56th St. 7 pm BULK ZONE 2	29 • Sunshine Ranches HOA Meeting - ZOOM 7pm BULK ZONE 3	30 BULK ZONE 4	1	2



Eagle Scout Service Projects Candidate Xavier Jackson:

A young man makes it happen. Flying our national colors is something the Town of Southwest Ranches is proud to do. On September 30th, Troop 160's latest Candidate for Eagle Scout Rank, Xavier Jackson, completed his flagpole project at Country Estates Park.

The project included a permanently mounted 20+ foot flagpole which displays the American flag in a tidy brick surround.

Thanks to Xavier and his workers from troop 160. This project makes a wonderful addition to the park!

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE, ELECTRONICS & BULK DROP OFF EVENT

Saturday, January 6th 2024 . 8:00am to 2:00pm

Location: Rolling Oaks Barn - 17630 SW 56th St., Southwest Ranches, 33331
Document shredding from 10-1pm . prescription drug drop off 10-2pm

This service is provided for Town residents only. Proof of residency is required.
NOTE: Event may be cancelled due to rain, excessive winds or other hazardous conditions as determined by the Town.

ACCEPTABLE HHW ITEMS	ELECTRONICS RECYCLING	UNACCEPTABLE ITEMS
Aerosol Cans Antifreeze/Coolant/Paint Batteries & Auto Batteries BBQ & Camp Size Propane Cleaners Fluorescent Tubes/Bulbs Garden Chemicals Latex/Oil-Based Paint Pesticides Pool Chlorine Tires (Up to 4 tires per household no rims) Used Oil & Filters	Computers, Cables DVD Players, Key Boards, Mice, Adapters, Monitors, Printers/Scanners, Radios, Stereo Components, TVs, Tape Players, VCRs	Appliances Asbestos Explosives or Ammunition Medical/Infectious Waste Non-Residential Waste

For more information call Town Hall (954) 434-0008



Town of Southwest Ranches
13400 Griffin Road
Southwest Ranches, FL 33330



Time Sensitive Material!!!

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YouTube

YOUTUBE:
Town of Southwest Ranches Official Channel



TWITTER:
@SWR_Gov

Click on QR CODE to visit us at
www.SOUTHWESTRANCHES.org



SW RANCHES PARKS FOUNDATION
PRESENTS

DEC. 9TH, 10AM - 4PM
ROLLING OAKS PARK
17630 SW 56TH ST, SW RANCHES, FL 33331
INFO@SOFLOCHILIFEST.COM

**DECEMBER HOLIDAY LIGHTS CONTEST
ENTRY FORM**

Town of Southwest Ranches
Rural Public Arts & Design Advisory Board
13400 Griffin Road
Southwest Ranches, Florida 33330

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
PHONE: _____
CELL: _____
EMAIL: _____

I UNDERSTAND, ACKNOWLEDGE, AND AGREE THAT THE SUBMISSION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH OF MY HOME, WHICH I HAVE TAKEN, TO THE TOWN CONSTITUTES A "WORK MADE FOR HIRE," AND I HEREBY WAIVE ANY AND ALL RIGHTS TO THE WORK AND THE WORK PRODUCT, INCLUDING MORAL OR OTHERWISE. THIS STATEMENT SHALL CONTROL OVER THE PROVISIONS OF 17 U.S.C. SECTION 106(A), AND SHALL CONSTITUTE A WAIVER BY ME OF ANY RIGHTS IN THE WORK SET OUT IN OR OTHERWISE GRANTED BY 17 U.S.C. SECTION 106(A), VISUAL ARTISTS RIGHTS ACT OF 1990. ALL OTHER RIGHTS IN AND TO THE WORK, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ALL RIGHTS IN THE NATURE OF "MORAL RIGHTS" RELATING TO ANY CONTINUING INTEREST I MAY HAVE IN THE MAINTENANCE OR MODIFICATION OF THE WORK, ARE EXPRESSLY WAIVED AND, INASMUCH AS SUCH RIGHTS ARE TRANSFERABLE, ARE ASSIGNED TO THE TOWN. MY WORK IS ORIGINAL AND IT COMPLIES WITH ALL APPLICABLE PATENT, TRADEMARK AND COPYRIGHT LAWS, RULES, REGULATIONS AND CODES. I UNDERSTAND, ACKNOWLEDGE, AND AGREE THAT THROUGH THE CONVEYANCE OF MY SUBMISSION THE WORK WILL REMAIN THE PROPERTY OF THE TOWN AND MAY BE USED, REPRODUCED, SOLD, OR MODIFIED BY THE TOWN IN THE TOWN'S SOLE DISCRETION.

SIGNATURE: _____ (Date) _____
SIGNATURE OF GUARDIAN FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18: _____ (Date) _____

THE RURAL PUBLIC ARTS AND DESIGN BOARD
PRESENTS...
**6th Annual
December Holiday Lights Contest**

ENJOY YOUR HOLIDAY SEASON A LITTLE MORE BY PARTICIPATING IN THIS FUN-FILLED HOLIDAY CONTEST. SEND YOUR ENTRY FORM IN NO LATER THAN
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1ST, 2023
AND BE ONE OF THE 3 MOST FESTIVE HOLIDAY DECORATED HOMES IN SOUTHWEST RANCHES.
(YOUR HOUSE DOES NOT HAVE TO BE DECORATED TO SEND YOUR ENTRY FORM IN.)

JUDGING WILL START
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5TH

AWARDS WILL BE
PRESENTED
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7TH

Call Susan: (954) 939-0008
or email:
skuez@southwestranches.org

