UP FANJES RANCHER The Official Town Newsletter

BUDGET WORKSHOP & HEARING DATES PAGE 9

B A C K

2025-26 PHOTO CONTES SUBMITTAL DUE SEPTEMBER 9TH. PAGE 8

> Wall painted by: Laura Warren

THIS BEAUTIFUL WALL OF ART, IS LOCATED AT FOUNDER'S PARK BEHIND CVS PHARMACY ON GRIFFIN ROAD. IT REFLECTS THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY AND ADDS A UNIQUE, ARTISTIC TOUCH TO THIS PEACEFUL GREEN SPACE.

AUGUST 2025

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 YOUTUBE: Town of Southwest Ranches Official Channel • FACEBOOK: facebook@SWRGOV

ELECTED OFFICIALS		
Mayor Steve Breitkreuz	(954) 343-7462	sbreitkreuz@southwestranches.org
Vice Mayor Bob Hartmann	(954) 343-7447	bhartmann@southwestranches.org
Council Member Jim Allbritton	(954) 343-7461	jallbritton@southwestranches.org
Council Member Gary Jablonski	(954) 343-7456	gjablonski@southwestranches.org
Council Member David S. Kuczenski, Esq.	(954) 343-7472	dkuczenski@southwestranches.org
TOWN STAFF Russell Muñiz, Town Administrator	(054) 434 0009	rmuniz@couthwastronchas.org
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Danielle Caban, Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator	(954) 343-7474	dcaban@southwestranches.org
Debra M. Ruesga, <i>Town Clerk</i>	(954) 343-7451	druesga@southwestranches.org
Dan Stewart, <i>Deputy Town Clerk</i>	(954) 343-7443	dstewart@southwestranches.org
Jennifer McCarty, Records and Administrative Coordinator	(954) 343-7469	jmccarty@southwestranches.org
Tom Holste, General Services Manager	(954) 343-7476	tholste@southwestranches.org
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Christina Semeraro, <i>Town Procurement Officer</i> Rich Strum, <i>Deputy Financial Administrator</i>	(954) 343-7442	rstrum@southwestranches.org
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Keith Poliakoff, <i>Town Attorney</i>	(954) 909-0580	keith@govlawgroup.com
Rod Ley, Public Works Director	(954) 343-7444	rley@southwestranches.org
Emily McCord Aceti, Community Services Manager	(954) 343-7453	eaceti@southwestranches.org
Susan Kutz, Administrative Specialist, Newsletter Editor & Graphic Designer		skutz@southwestranches.org
Joyce Marques, Engineering Inspector	(954) 343-7441	jmarques@southwestranches.org
December Lauretano-Haines, Parks, Recreation & Open Space Director	(954) 343-7452	dlauretano@southwestranches.org
Gilbert Ceballos, <i>Parks and Recreation Program Facilitator</i> Mayuli Betancourt, <i>Administrative Assistant</i>	(954) 343-7468 (954) 343-7465	gceballos@southwestranches.org mbetancourt@southwestranches.org
TOWN SERVICES / BUILDING DEPARTMENT PERMITTING – (CAP GOVERNME Simo Mansor, Building Official	(954) 343-7448	M-F 8:30 am - 4:00 pm swrinspections@southwestranches.org
Derlin Guevara. <i>Permit Technician</i>	(954) 343-7446	swrinspections@southwestranches.org
Maria Perez, <i>Permit Technician</i>	(954) 343-7445	swrinspections@southwestranches.org
PLANNING		
Jeff Katims	(954) 554-8894	jeff@completecities.net
ZONING/PERMITTING		
Julio Medina, Community Development/Code Compliance Director	(954) 343-7458	zoninginfo@southwestranches.org
CODE COMPLIANCE		
Julio Medina, Community Development/Code Compliance Director	(954) 343-7458	jmedina@southwestranches.org
Manfred Velette, Assistant Code Compliance Director	(954) 343-7440	mvelette@southwestranches.org
Code Compliance Hotline	(954) 343-7449	an an a south wastranches are
Concepcion Campos, <i>Code Compliance Officer</i> Yirglhis Hernandez, <i>Code Compliance Officer</i>	(954) 343-7457 (954) 343-7459	ccampos@southwestranches.org yhernandez@southwestranches.org
Ismail Rashid, Code Compliance Officer	(954) 434-0008	irashid@southwestranches.org
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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	isennett(asouthwestrahenes.org
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	
Eddy Velazquez, Detective	(954) 693-8290	evelazquez@davie-fl.gov
Cheryl Danner, Police Services Coordinator	(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	(954) 343-7441	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	(054) 470 5110	
Central Broward Water Control District	(954) 432-5110	www.centralbrowardwcd.org
<i>East of SW 148 Avenue (Volunteer)</i> South Broward Drainage District	(954) 680-3337	www.sbdd.org
West of SW 148 Avenue (Volunteer)	(001)000 000/	

TOWN SURVEY

A MESSAGE FROM



Mayor

It is the start of a new school year and things are getting busy again. With everything going on, you're probably not looking for one more thing to do! Steve Breitkreuz However, I wanted to take a moment to make a request.

Once every 3 to 5 years, the Town creates a survey to help communicate with residents. This time we are trying something new and sending out the survey online. I know it seems like we get a lot of requests to complete surveys these days. But I hope that you will take the time to complete this one. It is key to our future planning. Our goal is to retain our rural lifestyle and within that vision, to provide the services that you will find most beneficial, as well as address the issues you are most concerned with. And this survey is the best way for

us to identify those services and issues.

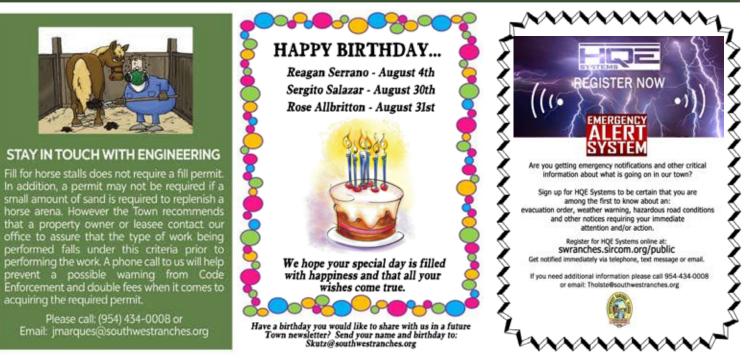
If the Town has your email address, you should have already received a request to complete the survey. However, if you missed it or did not receive it you can still take the survey through our website. Just bring up our main web page at www.southwestranches.org and then scroll down to the set of tiles under "Quick Links" and select the tile that reads "Take the Resident Survey". Click on that tile and you should be all set. If you are more comfortable, you can also find links to the survey on the Town's Facebook and Instagram pages. For those that did not receive the survey and wish to be on the Town's email list for future Town updates, click on the "Town Talk Self Registration" Form" link on the "Town Information" board on the main page of the website.

If you are not comfortable with technology and are able to get to Town Hall, a member of our staff can help you complete the survey using the kiosk that is found in the lobby of Town Hall.

"Our goal is to retain our rural lifestyle and within that vision, to provide the services that you will find most beneficial, as well as address the issues you are most concerned with. And this survey is the best way for us to identify those services and issues."

Thank you for taking the time to find and then complete this survey. We are a small Town, so trust me when I say that every survey entry is reviewed and your feedback is truly valued. With your feedback and suggestions, I believe that we can continue to build that Town that we all appreciate and can pass on to the next generation of Ranchers.

> Mayor Steve Breitkreuz 954-296-6018: sbreitkreuz@southwestranches.org X@SteveBreitkreuz



A MESSAGE FROM



Vice Mayor Bob Hartmann

Florida's 2025 Legislative Changes: WHAT THEY MEAN FOR OUR COMMUNITY

In 2025, Florida introduced more than 100 new laws that touch nearly every part of daily life—from schools and public safety to healthcare, the environment,

housing, and digital services. These changes reflect the state's shifting priorities and aim to address both long-standing concerns and new challenges. Here's a neighborly look at what's changing and how it might affect you and our community.

EDUCATION: FOCUSING ON SAFETY AND AWARENESS

This year's legislative session placed a strong emphasis on education. Several new requirements are now in place to better prepare and protect students:

• Schools must now teach CPR, disability awareness, and how to recognize and respond to human trafficking.

• Students in kindergarten through eighth grade are no longer allowed to use cell phones during school hours.

• Charter schools have been granted more flexibility in how they operate.

These updates are designed to create safer, more focused learning environments and to equip students with practical life skills.

PUBLIC SAFETY: STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY PROTECTIONS

New laws aim to make neighborhoods safer and support law enforcement:

- Florida now recognizes swatting and impersonating rideshare drivers as criminal offenses.
- Penalties have increased for distributing fentanyl and for acts of animal cruelty.
- Law enforcement officers receive additional protections and benefits.
- New criminal penalties apply to drivers who exceed 100 miles per hour or drive more than 50 miles per hour over the posted speed limit. This addresses dangerous speeding, which has become a concern in parts of our own community.

• A new alert system, called Spectrum Alert, helps locate missing children with autism and other vulnerable individuals.

These measures are widely supported for their focus on keeping communities safe and responsive to emerging threats.

HEALTHCARE: EXPANDING ACCESS AND EARLY INTERVENTION

Several healthcare laws focus on improving access to care and identifying health issues early:

- Schools will now offer more mental health services and support for students with diabetes.
- Hospitals must test for fentanyl when treating overdose cases.
- Newborns will now be screened for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, a rare but serious condition.

These changes aim to improve health outcomes and ensure timely care for those who need it most.

ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING: PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY AND LIVABILITY

Florida's natural environment and housing needs also received attention this year:

• State parks are now designated for conservation through recreation, helping preserve natural spaces. No more emphasis on luxury hotels and golf courses.

• New rules govern the use of synthetic turf and improve sewage treatment standards. (Continued on page 5)



Front Cover: Beautiful Wall of Art at Founder's Park Page 2: In-Touch Town Contact Info Page 3: Mayor's Message, Stay in **Touch With Engineering Emergency Alert System** Page 4: Vice Mayor Hartmann, Contents Page 5: Honorary Police Officer **Battling Cancer** Page 6: Council Member Allbritton, Well Check, Crossword Page 7: Council Kuczenski Page 8: Upcoming Events Page 9: Finance Academy - Budget Workshops and Hearings, Uncle Aster's Board, 25th Celebration Sponsors Page 10: Forestry & Nature Resources Page 11: 25th Birthday Pictures, Groundbreaking at Southwest Meadows Park Page 12: Robin Bartleman, Bingo, **Going on Vacation** Page 13: Turn Waste into Gold, Town Survey, AARP and Fraud Page 14: Marty Kiar, Clerk's Corner, **Boxes** Page 15: August Town Calendar, August

School Calendar

Back Cover: Council and Districts, Follow us on Social Media





Keep food and liquid out of your recycling

• Programs that support the cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated sites (brownfields) have been expanded.

• Housing laws now make it easier to permit affordable housing and remove unauthorized occupants more efficiently.

These efforts aim to protect Florida's environment while making housing more accessible and manageable for residents.

DIGITAL GOVERNANCE: EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY

Several new laws reflect Florida's move toward more digital-friendly services

• Courts and landlords can now send certain notices electronically.

• A study is underway to explore a statewide database for pawn shop transactions.

• New rules address the use of cryptocurrency and protect digital assets.

These updates are intended to modernize how the state operates and to keep pace with technological change.

CONTROVERSIAL MEASURES: RAISING QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Some laws have sparked debate and concern among advocacy groups and residents:

- HB 903 allows executions by firing squads, which has raised ethical questions.
- SB 322 gives sheriffs more authority to remove squatters without a court order, prompting concerns about due process.
- HB 1299 prohibits discrimination based on vaccination status, which may conflict with public health efforts.

These laws have drawn criticism from civil rights and legal organizations, highlighting the importance of ongoing public dialogue.

COMMUNITY-FOCUSED LAWS: EARNING BROAD SUPPORT

Several new laws have been widely praised for addressing urgent community needs:

- HB 255 creates a public database of individuals convicted of animal cruelty.
- HB 259 establishes Fentanyl Awareness Day to raise awareness about the opioid crisis.

• HB 711 launches Spectrum Alert to help locate missing children with autism.

• HB 1607 requires CPR and AED training in schools, helping students and staff respond to emergencies.

These measures have been welcomed by many for their practical benefits and focus on public well-being.

LOOKING AHEAD

Florida's 2025 laws aim to improve the state by balancing innovative ideas, safety, and community needs. Some laws have raised concerns, but many should make daily life better. As these laws take effect, they will influence Florida's future and may even guide other states.

Thank you for being part of our community and helping us keep our rural character. Your involvement makes our neighborhood a special place - without you, it wouldn't feel like home.

I'm here for you! Feel free to call me anytime if you have questions, need help with town issues, or just want to chat. Let's work together to keep our community strong and welcoming. **Bob - 954-801-1758**



DJ Daniel – Honorary Police Officer Battling Cancer

Recently, DJ Daniel, a young man who has made national news because of his passion for law enforcement, and the desire to become an honorary member of every law enforcement agency, visited local resident Louis Gregory. Mr. Gregory had just created custom challenge coins for him. This is an honored tradition by those serving on America's front line.

Wanting to make the visit extra special, Mr. Gregory reached out to contacts at Davie Police to see if Davie would bestow the title of Honorary Law Enforcement Officer to him. Davie Police Chief Stephen Kinsey arranged for it to be done immediately, and DJ was officially sworn in Mr. Gregory's driveway in Southwest Ranches. DJ and Davie Police officers exchanged challenge coin. It was a moment of mutual respect and admiration for all involved. With his newly vested "police power" DJ stated "If anybody is speeding on Dykes Rd, I'll be on their bumper." So please listen to DJ!



A MESSAGE FROM



Council Member Jim Allbritton

GOOD DAY SOUTHWEST RANCHES

Over the past couple months,

the Town has had a lot going on. Our Town's 25th Birthday Celebration, groundbreaking for the bathroom and pavilion at Southwest Meadows Sanctuary Park, dedication of the new fire attack truck, drainage projects in District #3 being completed, I-9 sports on Sundays also, just to mention a few. To find out what is taking place next, please read your Town newsletter, sign up for our Town Talk emails, or call any Council Member or Town Hall.

The Town submitted three major grant requests to the state this past legislative session, two were signed by the Governor and one was cut. The Town received \$900,000 for the building of a new Fire/EOC building and \$405,990 to provide safe turn lanes on Dykes Road between Stirling Road and Griffin Road. The proposed drainage project on SW 178th Avenue was not signed. A special "Thank You" goes out to our Town Staff, for putting together all the proper paperwork, our State Lobbyist Firm and our State

Representative Ms. Bartleman and Senator Barbara Sharief who fought for and pushed through each request. These grant requests are money from the State, not from the residents' taxes. The Town and Town Council are currently working on the proposed budget for next year and we are working hard to keep the taxes as low as possible and these grants will help.

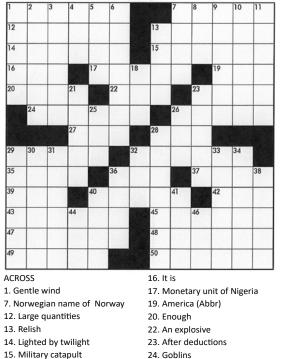
The Safety and Traffic Advisory Board was sunsetted with our last meeting in June, and I would like to thank all the board members for their service. The Board recommended and Council approved more solar powered speed signs going in, more tag readers to cover the roads in and



out of Town, and more stepped-up road patrols to help with speeding. The school bus stop on Dykes Road and SW 53rd Court will get a guardrail installed along Dykes Road and the pavement widened on SW 53rd Court to give the students a safer place to stand while waiting on the bus.

In closing, I would like to ask all my Fellow Veterans in Southwest Ranches, all 240 plus to (PLEASE CONTACT ME). I have had the pleasure of attending the Veterans Group in Davie and this has inspired me to reach out to see if there is any interest in the Vets getting together in Southwest Ranches.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at; 954-343-7461 or 305-903-7043, jallbritton@southwestranches.org



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WELL CHECK PRE-REGISTRATION INFORMATION

After a hurricane or other emergency, residents may experience prolonged power and phone outages and may not be able to leave their home or let others know that they are in need. If you feel you are at risk due to a disability, heath issue, regardless of age, and would like a "WELLNESS CHECK" from our Southwest Ranches Volunteer Fire Department please call Town Hall (954) 434-0008 and give us your name, and or loved one's name, address, phone number and email address so we may add you to our list.

While we hope we don't have a disaster, we need to be prepared. If you or a loved one live alone in Southwest Ranches, please consider signing up for this service. If resources are needed, they will be able to refer residents accordingly.

A MESSAGE FROM



Council Member David S. Kuczenski, ESQ.

HOWDY SOUTHWEST RANCHERS,

Happy August. Did you know

that August is significant for the end of World War II, marked by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945, respectively, and Japan's subsequent surrender on August 15, 1945? August has also witnessed pivotal moments in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, including the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on August 28, 1963, where Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech.

Recently, I became another victim of fraud; this time it was on my business bank account. This miscreant called me late in the day claiming to be calling from my bank's fraud department. I experienced losses on my business bank account; my bank closed the account and required me to open a new account. This also required me to reestablish the automatic payments to certain payees.

> In routine conversations, I mentioned my experience to a few neighbors. One

neighbor reported she was a victim of a \$65,000 theft, while another resident reported to me that fraudsters stole over \$100,000 from his business account. This type of crime is not going away any time soon.

These perfidious persons often pose as bank employees to mislead providina personal you into information or transferring money. In my case, the miscreant called claiming to be from the bank's fraud department and reported that they have a dubious charge and wanted to help resolve it. They choose words to create a sense of urgency, deceptively saving phrases like "we need to get this blocked right away so you do not have to pay for it." This was not an altruistic act but an intentional deceptive tactic to convince victims to act quickly. It is part of the scam. These miscreants will next say they are sending a code to your cell phone and ask you to read back the numbers. This is one way how they gain access to your account. In my situation, he did not ask for my user name nor my password, vet repeating the code sent to my cell phone allowed the criminal to gain access to my bank account.

If you receive a suspicious call, text, or email, hang up or close the email message and call your bank directly using the number on your statement, from the Bank's website or the back of your debit/credit card. From a personal perspective, it is insufficient to look up the number they are calling from on

> Google search а during the call. I did that, and the number I entered on Google came up as a number from my bank. In my instance, the caller even deceived me by "introducing" new options and even went so far as to ask if I would be interested in including these on my account.

HERE ARE A FEW WAYS TO FIGHT FRAUD AND PROTECT YOUR ASSETS:

• Most banking institutions recommend that you set a strong password including using special characters. My bank advised that the most widely used special character is the exclamation point, so l'd probably recommend against that one.

• Most banks provide an option for consumers to receive push alerts, otherwise known as text messages. These provide a secondary check on access to your bank account and/or withdraws.

• Additionally, most banks will never ask you to move or withdraw money and this point is very important, they will not share codes to resolve fraud.

• Report suspicious activity: If you see any unusual transactions or suspectfraud, report it immediately to your Bank. Similarly, if you've been the victim of a scam, report it immediately to your Bank.

• Next, file a police report with Davie Police. You will need the police report number to supplement your claim with your bank. Report fraud to the Federal Trade Commission.

• Finally, with the advent of artificial intelligence, scammers will try even more novel ways to steal from you. We have to be even more vigilant to protect our assets.

As Council Member for District 4, 1 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, Esq. Council Member District 4



UPCOMING EVENTS

The Town of Southwest Ranches Rural Public Arts & Design Advisory Board presents...

13th Annual Photo Contest



GET YOUR CAMERAS READY!

Residents, please submit your photos no later than September 9th with entry form and caption.

Photos must be at least 300 DPI - resolution.
One photo per person in household.
Provide a caption for your photo (limit 74 characters).
Photos must be at least 8 x 10 (landscape).
To be considered, all entries must be submitted with Town Entry Form.
No previous photos will be accepted.

Email your favorite photo to: Skutz@southwestranches.org





"DOUBLE, DOUBLE TO'L AND TROUBLE; FIRE BURN AND COULDRON BUBBLE" - WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE SOUTHWEST RANCHES RESIDENTS... YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TOWN'S HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR YARD DECORATING CONTEST. DEADLINE TO REGISTER YOUR HOME:

~ OCTOBER 17TH. ~

JUDGING:

~ OCTOBER 20TH. ~ AWARDS WILL BE GIVEN TO 1ST, 2ND & 3RD PLACE WINNERS: ~ OCTOBER 24TH. ~

EMAIL YOUR ENTRY FORM TO :SKUTZ@SOUTHWESTRANCHES.ORG



FINANCE ACADEMY

by Emil Lopez

"BUDGET WORKSHOPS AND BUDGET HEARINGS"

The following publicly held Budget workshop/meetings will be in Council Chambers:

Tuesday August 12, 2025, at 7PM

- Budget Workshop on Proposed FY 2025-2026 Budget

Monday September 15, 2025, at 6PM

- First Public Hearing for Tentative Milage (via resolution) and
- Budget Adoption for FY 2025-2026 (via ordinance – First Reading)
- Final Fire Protection and Solid Waste special assessment adoption (via resolution)

Thursday September 25, 2025, at 6PM

- Second Public Hearing for Final Milage (via resolution) and
- Budget Adoption for FY 2025-2026 (via ordinance – Second Reading)

"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.

The Town of Southwest Ranches extends its deepest appreciation to our generous sponsors, whose support made our 25th Anniversary Celebration on June 7, 2025, truly memorable.



"UNCLE ASTER'S" BOARD WANTS YOU!

Aster Knight was one of Southwest Ranches' inaugural 5 Council members. Stepping into public service following the Town's first election in 2000, Aster continued his work on the Town Council for nearly a decade.

Through his own love of nature and the urge to preserve and protect Southwest Ranches' natural areas, Aster formed the Aster Knight Parks Foundation, an independent, Internal Revenue Service-designated 501(c)(3) charitable organization devoted to creating a funding source for the Town's recreational spaces.

Aster's dearest wish was that his Foundation would become an endowment fund that would continue the mission of enhancing, preserving, and creating Southwest Ranches' parks, trails, and green spaces for residents and visitors now and into the future.

After returning to life as a private citizen, Aster worked continuously to keep the Town's focus on the impact parks have on residents and visitors. Until his passing in February 2025, Aster's work for the Foundation remained constant.



A Board of Directors comprised of dedicated community and business leaders provide guidance and management of the Foundation.

"Aster worked continuously to keep the Town's focus on the impact parks have on residents and visitors."

Membership on the Board is a satisfying and challenging experience. Members attend monthly meetings and are responsible for consistently working as part of a team on the Foundation's fundraising events such as the **SOFLO Chili Fest, the Southwest Ranches Country Fair, Bingo at the Barn** and other important community events. Now, the Board is seeking new members to bring vision and community spirit to join us in our mission! We hope you will consider joining us to serve in this important community service role. To learn more, contact us at: AKPF@southwestranches.org, or call Staff Liaison: December Lauretano Haines at 954-3437452.

FORESTRY & NATURAL RESOURCES



If You're Thirsty, They're Thirsty: Make a Simple Water Source To Support Pollinators



Water sources are crucial for every habitat

By Deborah Seiler on 23. June 2025

Everyone needs water! This includes our favorite animals. Bumble bees (Bombus spp.) are familiar visitors to bird baths during warm weather, but they're far from the only bugs that require access to a safe water source. Adding a water feature to your yard, garden, or balcony can be an easy way to create much-needed habitat for many fascinating animals. All sorts of bees and beetles will stop by for a sip. And birds, of course, will cool off with a bath.

Some insects and amphibians will even spend most or all of their lives in a pond! For example, while dragonflies and damselflies fly around as adults, they need water to reproduce. Adults lay their eggs in or near water, and most of their life is spent underwater in the aquatic immature stage, called a nymph or larva. Some bugs, like diving beetles, will happily stay in the water even as adults. Any water feature, large or small, can make a big impact. Even a humble puddle can be an important habitat, especially to butterflies, who flock to the minerals and salts left on the surface of wet mud. These aquatic microhabitats form part of a larger network that supports biodiversity and provides refuges in urban landscapes.



In the wild, muddy puddles can draw in many butterflies, like these monarchs. You can achieve a similar effect without getting mud on your shoes by providing a shallow bowl of water. (Photo: Carly Voight / Xerces Society).

How to build a water source for wildlife

First, scan your yard for places that bugs are already using as nests or shelter. These might include hollow stems, bare dirt, or brush piles of leaves or old wood. Or if you are working with a deck or balcony, simply alongside your plant pots. Then, choose a sunny place nearby to provide a shallow source of water. This might be a bird bath, or a bowl with stones on which bees and wasps can perch safely without slipping. To try attracting butterflies, you can add dirt to your basin and maintain a tasty mud puddle. If you want to install a bigger water feature, like a pond, try to provide a sloping, or graduated, bank. Ponds or containers with vertical sides



Bees of all sorts, including bumble bees, and this very convincing, bumble-bee-mimic digger bee (Anthophora bomboides) need to visit water sources to drink. (Photo: Sean McCann).



A gently sloping stone shoreline and aquatic plants for perching, roosting, and laying their eggs, makes this backyard pond wonderful for dragonflies. (Photo: Jennifer Hopwood / Xerces Society).

and no escape route run the risk of trapping and drowning wildlife like beetles, small mammals, and songbirds. With the right mix of features, your pond can become habitat for dragonflies and damselflies, who provide a dazzling aerial display.

Changing the water is enough to keep mosquitoes at bay

There's one visitor you probably don't want at your water source: mosquitoes. Pesticide sprays are not effective here. While they might kill a few adult mosquitoes, they also harm beneficial insects in your garden. Meanwhile, adult mosquitoes will fly in from elsewhere and new larvae will hatch. Instead, for something like a bird bath, simply dump and refill the water every few days to keep it free of mosquito larvae. For permanent water bodies like ponds, add a fountain, waterfall, or small pump to keep the water moving, since mosquitoes can only reproduce in still water. If you use an open water pump, be sure to add protective screening. Otherwise, the pumps will pull dragonfly and damselfly nymphs in

and kill them. These solutions are more effective and safer for wildlife than mosquito pesticides.

Watching wildlife at your water source

Once your water feature is installed, keep your eyes out for these tiny visitors:

• Mason bees (Osmia spp.) need mud to create their nests. In drier weather when mud is not available, they will frequently collect water in their crops and then carry it to the dirt in order to make their own mud.

• Paper wasps (Polistes spp.) are social nesters that also collect water to make paper and cool their colonies in hot weather.

• Digger bees (Anthophora spp.) also collect water in their crops, using it to soften the ground where they dig their nests. Some digger bee species make up to 80 water-collecting trips a day when excavating their nests.

Since many native bees and wasps will resort to collecting water from puddles and ditches when other sources are unavailable, they can run the risk of exposure to harmful pollutants and pesticides. Providing a shallow source of unpolluted water for bees and wasps can improve their overall chances of nesting successfully by reducing the time they need to forage, as well as their risk of exposure to pesticides.

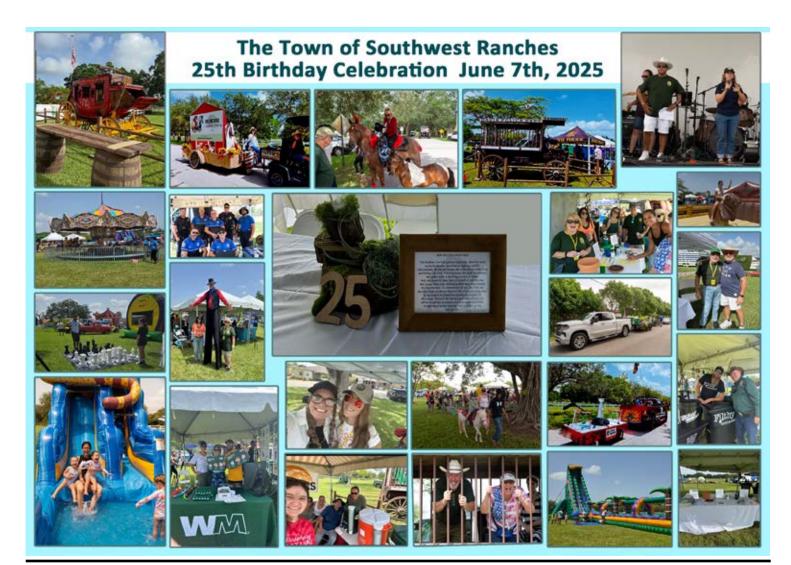






Without water to make mud, mason bees would struggle to build their nests. Placing your water source near nesting habitat, in this case cut plant stems, will make it easier for bees to begin reproducing in your yard (Photo: Mace Vaughan / Xerces Society)





GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY FOR THE SOUTHWEST MEADOWS PARK PAVILION AND RESTROOM BUILDING.

Recently the Town held a groundbreaking ceremony for a facility that will allow the Town to provide a much-needed amenity for events held at the adjacent Southwest Meadows Preserve.

The restroom is a required improvement for the park as part of a grant the Town received to acquire the property. The construction of this project was made possible by a \$200,000 Florida Recreation and Development Assistance Program Grant and proceeds from the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA).

AND RECEIPTION OF THE DESIGN OF THE OWNER.





PROPERTY TAXES AND THE STATE BUDGET

The 2025 legislative session finally adjourned on June 16, as state legislators returned to Tallahassee to finalize the State budget. That night the Legislature passed a \$115.1 billion budget. On the final day of the fiscal year, June 30, the Governor vetoed approximately \$600 million in projects that the Legislature had approved in the budget.

TAX RELIEF

This budget's tax package provides over \$1.3 billion in various forms of relief.

• Repeals the 2% business rent tax - a long-awaited cut that helps small businesses grow.

• A permanent back-to-school sales tax holiday for the entire month of August, lowering costs for families.

• There is no longer a hurricane sales tax holiday, but there are permanent sales tax exemptions for batteries, ground anchors, gas cans, tarps, power generators, sun screen, life jackets, insect repellent, fire extinguishers, bike helmets, and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

• From September 8 – December 31, there is a hunting and fishing sales tax holiday for camping and fishing gear.

• Precious metal coins and bars are now tax-free

NASCAR Sales Tax Exemption on admission tickets

STANDING UP FOR STUDENTS

One of the more concerning proposals in this year's budget process involved potential cuts to Florida's accelerated learning programs. I fought hard to protect Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) programs, which help high school students earn college credit and get a head start on their postsecondary education. These programs are now fully funded for the coming year. This is a substantial win for Florida for students who are working hard to get ahead and families working to fund further education.

MY SAFE FLORIDA HOME

This program was funded again at \$280 million for free wind-storm inspections for your home and grants up to \$10,000 for storm upgrades involving roofs, shutters, and hurricane windows. You can apply for the inspection and grant at mysafeflhome.com.

FUNDED DISTRICT 103 PROJECTS

The following District 103 projects were funded in the year's budget after surviving the governor's veto pen.

Children's Harbor Roof Replacement - \$300,000

Children's Harbor is a nationally accredited child welfare organization with a mission to provide safe housing and for abused and neglected children. These appropriated funds will replace leaking roofs at this residential facility, ensuring a safe, stable environment.

Southwest Ranches Fire Station Construction - \$900,000

The town's only fire station will move from a trailer into a permanent, storm-hardened building.

• Dykes Road Turn Lane Improvements - \$405,990

New lanes will reduce crashes and ease congestion along this busy stretch.

We will continue to have local DMV mobile units each month. Please check our social media for the most up-to-date information. As always, it's an honor to serve you. If you have questions, ideas, or need help navigating state programs or want to provide input about state legislation, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can contact me at Robin.Bartleman@flhouse.gov or on my personal cell at (954) 668-3662. You may contact my aides in our district office in Weston at (954) 872-1757.





The Town of Southwest Ranches' official Resident Survey is LIVE and we are ready for your input. Whether you are new to the Town or have called Southwest Ranches home for a lifetime, please take a few minutes to let us know how we are doing. Your input will help shape the future of our great Town! Use the link provided below (or scan the QR code) to take you directly to the survey. The survey is anonymous, and it is open until the end of August.



Paper Newsletter: https://op2.us/SWR-News *No access to a PC or phone? Come into Town Hall and we will assist you in accessing the survey!

TURN WASTE INTO Cold

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BECOMING A PART OF OUR RESIDENTIAL COMPOST PILOT PROGRAM?

Sign up on the Town's website at https://www.southwestranches.org/ under Hot Topics.

START YOUR HOME COMPOSTING JOURNEY WITH SOUTHWEST RANCHES.







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



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

Send your email address to: druesga@southwestranches.org





AARP HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF FROM FRAUD

Have you ever been approached with a fraudulent offer or been a victim of identity theft? These days, scammers are sophisticated. And separating the real from the phony can be tough-especially when emotions are running high. Join us for a free event where we'll take a look into the latest scams, how to avoid them and what to do if you've been targeted.

We'll explore:

- · Common scams, and how to spot and avoid them
- Tactics scammers use to target individuals
- What to do if you're asked for personal information
- Resources to help protect yourself and your family

Spotting Scams & Staying Safe

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

September 17, 2025 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM ET

REGISTER ONLINE VIA: https://events.aarp.org/event/ef8d32d5e124-42af-9aaf-0265ffcb04eb/summary

Phone: 1-866-591-8105



BRIEF LEGISLATION FROM THE JUNE 12, 2025 TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING:

 Adopted Resolution 2025-058 approving the First Amendment to the i9 Sports Agreement.

 Adopted Resolution 2025-059 approving an agreement with the State of Florida Department of Management Services -Cybersecurity Grant.

 Adopted Resolution 2025-060 approving an agreement with Bergeron Emergency Services Inc as the Primary Disaster and Debris Management Contractor.

 Adopted Resolution 2025-061 approving an agreement with DRC Emergency Services LLC as the Secondary Disaster and Debris Management Contractor.

 Adopted Resolution 2025-062 approving the Amended and Restated Surtax ILA -Third Amendment.

 Adopted Resolution 2025-063 adopting a Records Retention Policy.

 Adopted Resolution 2025-064 adopting a Public Records Policy.

BRIEF LEGISLATION FROM THE JUNE 26. 2025 TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING: Adopted Ordinance 2025-008 amending The Town of South-west Ranches Unified Land Development Code ("ULDC"), Article 95. - "OUTDOOR LIGHTING STANDARDS".

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.



MARTY KIA BROWARD COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISE

2025 TRIM Notices

The Broward County Property Appraiser's Office mails the TRIM (proposed tax) Notices in August of each year. This is NOT a tax bill but shows your property's 2025 Just/Market Value, exemptions, and proposed taxes as set by the taxing authorities listed on the notice. The TRIM Notice is your opportunity to review your 2025 Just/Market Value and ensure you are receiving all the tax-saving exemptions you are eligible for.

Florida Statutes require our office to use January 1 as the date of assessment each year. Our office must consider changes in market conditions - up or down - when developing the Just/Market Values each year. The 2025 Just/Market Values are based on the market data from 2024 with January 1, 2025 as the date of assessment.

The Property Appraiser's Office does not set or collect property taxes. If you have questions about the proposed tax rates listed on your TRIM Notice, you must contact the taxing authorities or attend their public hearings. The contact information and public hearing dates for the individual taxing authorities are listed to the right of each agency's name on the TRIM Notice.

I Recently Applied for Homestead Exemption - Why Is It Not Showing on my TRIM?

Florida Statutes require our office use January 1 to determine exemption eligibility each year. If you purchased your home after January 1, 2025, you are eligible for 2026 Homestead Exemption. The 2026 exemptions will show online at web.bcpa.net in December and be included on your TRIM Notice for the 2026 tax year.

I Had Homestead Exemption Last Year - Where Did My Exemptions Go?

If you purchased your home in 2024, you may have "inherited" the previous owner's exemptions last year. These 2024 exemptions were removed at the end of 2024 and therefore are not reflected on your 2025 TRIM Notice. You can still late file for 2025 Homestead and any other exemptions you may qualify for until September 17, 2025. To apply online, please visit our website at https://web.bcpa.net/bcpaclient/#/Homestead or scan the QR code below.

I Am a Senior Citizen - Why Isn't the Senior Exemption Showing?

The Senior Exemption is both an age and income-based exemption which must be applied for by the property owner because of the income requirement. To be eligible for this exemption, an applicant must be age 65 or older as of January 1, 2025 and have a 2024 adjusted household gross income not exceeding \$37,694. If you believe you qualify for this

additional exemption, you can still late file for this year until September 17, 2025. To review the Senior Exemption requirements and to apply for this exemption online, please visit our website at https:// web.bcpa.net/bcpaclient/#/SeniorExemption.





Homestead

Exemption

MartyKiarBCPA

@MartyKiarBCPA

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



artes

Marty Kiar, JD, CFA



August $2025 \cdot$

T	PHOTO BY: Lisa Koscs "Hong Kong Orchid"		101 4	cuz.		
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2 • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10am - 3:00pm
3	Country Estates 4 HOA Meeting - Grace Baptist Church <u>19200 Griffin Rd. 7pm</u> SWR Parks Foundation Meeting-Town Hall 7pm	Magistrate Hearing <u>Town Hall 9am</u> • Broward County Property Appraiser Offic <u>Town Hall 10:30 - 12:30pm</u> • Zero Waste Advisory Board- Town Hall 7pm		7	BULK ZONE 11	• Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10am - 3:00pm
10	BULK ZONE 1	BULK ZONE 2	BULK ZONE 3	BULK ZONE 4	BULK ZONE 5	BULK ZONE 6
10	• Schools & Education Advisory Board - Town Hall 7pm	12 • Parks, Recreation Forestry & Natural Resources Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7 pm	• Zero Waste Broward Task Force Meeting - Town Hall 7pm	14 • TOWN COUNCIL MEETING • Town Hall 7pm		16 • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10am - 3:00pm
17	BULK ZONE 7	BULK ZONE 8	BULK ZONE 9	BULK ZONE 10	BULK ZONE 11	BULK ZONE 12
17	• Rural Public Arts & Design Advisory Board Meeting • Town Hall 7pm BULK ZONE 1	• Drainage & Infrastructure Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7pm BULK ZONE 2	• Fire Advisory Board Meeting • Town Hall 7pm BULK ZONE 3	Comprehensive Plan Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7pm BULK ZONE 4	BULK ZONE 5	• Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10am - 3:00pm BULK ZONE 6
24 31	25	26 • Rolling Oaks Civic Association Meeting - Rolling Oaks Barn 17630 SW 56th St. 7pm	• FLOW MOBILE DMV EVENT - Tentative - Town Hall 10 - 2:00pm • Sunshine Ranches HOA ZOOM 7 - 9pm		29	30
	BULK ZONE 7	BULK ZONE 8	BULK ZONE 9	BULK ZONE 10	BULK ZONE 11	BULK ZONE 12
A M T 4 5 11 12 18 19 25 26 Monday, A Employ (no sch	20 21 22		COMED Corner WHY DID THE SCARECROW W AN AWARD? BECAUSE HE W OUTSTANDING IN HIS FIELD	H th IN Nai Add City Pho MO Ver Hol CO Ma Sou	IIGHLY VISIBLE Order to is could help save your l F WE CAN'T WE CAN'T H me:	ife or someone you love. FIND YOU HELP YOU. te letters e letters \$20.00 escue

