

# SOUTHWEST RANCHER

*The Official Town Newsletter*

# 2020



# 2026



HAPPY NEW YEAR

*Southwest Ranches*  
COUNTRY FAIR & CARNIVAL  
JANUARY 15TH -19TH  
*see page 9*

JANUARY 2026

# 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](http://www.southwestranches.org)  
**YOUTUBE:** Town of Southwest Ranches Official Channel • **FACEBOOK:** [facebook@SWRGOV](https://facebook.com/SWRGOV)

## ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mayor Steve Breitkreuz	(954) 343-7462
Vice Mayor Gary Jablonski	(954) 343-7456
Council Member Jim Allbritton	(954) 343-7461
Council Member Bob Hartmann	(954) 343-7447
Council Member David S. Kuczenski, Esq.	(954) 343-7472

## TOWN STAFF

Russell Muñiz, <i>Town Administrator</i>	(954) 434-0008
Kathryn Sims, <i>Deputy Town Administrator</i>	(954) 343-7454
Danielle Caban, <i>Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator</i>	(954) 343-7474
Anjali Seupaul, <i>Communications Coordinator</i>	(954) 343-7475
Debra M. Ruesga, <i>Town Clerk</i>	(954) 343-7451
Dan Stewart, <i>Deputy Town Clerk</i>	(954) 343-7443
Jennifer McCarty, <i>Records and Administrative Coordinator</i>	(954) 343-7469
Tom Holste, <i>General Services Manager</i>	(954) 343-7476
Hector Rodriguez, <i>Administrative Assistant</i>	(954) 434-0008
Emil C. Lopez, <i>Town Financial Administrator</i>	(954) 343-7473
Christina Semeraro, <i>Town Procurement Officer</i>	(954) 343-7467
Rich Strum, <i>Deputy Financial Administrator</i>	(954) 343-7442
Arianna Durbeej, <i>Senior Accountant</i>	(954) 343-7477
Keith Poliakoff, <i>Town Attorney</i>	(954) 909-0580
Rod Ley, <i>Public Works Director</i>	(954) 343-7444
Emily McCord Aceti, <i>Community Services Manager</i>	(954) 343-7453
Susan Kutz, <i>Public Works Project Coordinator, Newsletter Editor</i>	(954) 343-7460
Joyce Marques, <i>Engineering Inspector</i>	(954) 343-7441
December Lauretano-Haines, <i>Parks, Recreation &amp; Forestry Director</i>	(954) 343-7452
Gilbert Ceballos, <i>Parks and Recreation Program Facilitator</i>	(954) 343-7468
Mayuli Betancourt, <i>Administrative Assistant</i>	(954) 343-7465

## TOWN SERVICES / BUILDING DEPARTMENT PERMITTING - (CAP GOVERNMENT)

Simo Mansor, <i>Building Official</i>	(954) 343-7448
Jeremie Bennett, <i>Assistant Building Official</i>	(954) 343-7448
Derlin Guevara, <i>Permit Technician</i>	(954) 343-7446
Maria Perez, <i>Permit Technician</i>	(954) 343-7445

## PLANNING

Jeff Katims	(954) 554-8894
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## ZONING/PERMITTING

Julio Medina, <i>Community Development/Code Compliance Director</i>	(954) 343-7458
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## CODE COMPLIANCE

Julio Medina, <i>Community Development/Code Compliance Director</i>	(954) 343-7458
Manfred Velette, <i>Assistant Code Compliance Director</i>	(954) 343-7440
Code Compliance Hotline	(954) 343-7449
Concepcion Campos, <i>Code Compliance Officer</i>	(954) 343-7457
Yirglhis Hernandez, <i>Code Compliance Officer</i>	(954) 343-7459
Ismail Rashid, <i>Code Compliance Officer</i>	(954) 358-2540

## WASTE/BULK/RECYCLING SERVICES

WM (Waste Management)	(954) 974-7500
REFLECTIVE ADDRESS MARKERS - Chief Bennett	(954) 868-2057
MOSQUITO CONTROL	(954) 765-4062
LOST AND FOUND ANIMALS	(754) 224-0877

## PUBLIC SAFETY

EMERGENCY	<b>911</b>
Non-Emergency	(954) 764-4357 (HELP)
Davie Police Department	(954) 693-8200
Eddy Velazquez, Detective	(954) 693-8290
Carlos Grave de Peralta, Police Civilian Coordinator	(954) 693-8352
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
Illicit Discharge - Environmental Response Line:	(954) 519-1499

## OTHER

<b>WATER DISTRICTS - CANALS</b>	
Central Broward Water Control District	(954) 432-5110
<i>East of SW 148 Avenue (Volunteer)</i>	
South Broward Drainage District	(954) 680-3337
<i>West of SW 148 Avenue (Volunteer)</i>	

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[publicworks@southwestranches.org](mailto:publicworks@southwestranches.org)  
online complaint form at:  
<http://www.broward.org/Environment/Resources/Pages/EnviroComplaint.aspx>

[www.centralbrowardwcd.org](http://www.centralbrowardwcd.org)

[www.sbdd.org](http://www.sbdd.org)

## A MESSAGE FROM

Mayor  
Steve Breitkreuz



***First and foremost, I want to wish all Ranchers the very best for 2026 – a very happy and prosperous New Year!***

I hope the year ahead is filled with family, friends, wonderful experiences, and many memorable moments together.

As we move into the new year, we have some exciting projects that we will be working on in 2026. I believe that it will be a year where we either make significant progress or close out some very important projects.

- Specifically, we should be closing on the public-private partnership (P3) that is associated with the parcel of land out west, just east of US 27, between Stirling and Sheridan, which is not adjacent to other Southwest Ranches properties, but is under contract to be developed as a distribution center. When this project closes, it will be it will provide funding for a number of other important projects here in Town.
- One of those projects is the proposed Fire Station, and when needed, Public Safety Building that our fire personnel will use on a daily basis. But should a serious storm head out way, it will also function as a storm rated building where both our fire and police personnel can ride out the storm and be ready to respond just as soon the worst of the storm passes. This is a critical and important part of our Town infrastructure that we hope to be funded through excess reserves, grant funding, as well as the proceeds from the P3 project described above.
- I am also looking forward to our third edition of the Ranchers Academy. This is a program designed for current residents, potential residents, and any realtors that sell property here in the Ranches to come and better understand our community. It provides information on how we support and promote the rural lifestyle, as well as assistance regarding which department to contact to resolve any issue that you might be having here in Town.
- Finally, we are also looking forward to seeing significant progress in the establishment of the South Florida Wildlife Center here in the Ranches. They are required to vacate their current location, but it is exciting for us here in the Ranches, because they are so aligned with our goals and values. We have the perfect location for them here in Town and the support of the Broward School Board as well as Broward County. It will be an exciting year to see this project really begin to take shape.

*So, this will be an exciting year here in the Ranches. But through all of these changes, our goal has never wavered. The goal is to preserve and promote our Rural Lifestyle for our families and the next generation. I am fully committed to that and I believe that is also reflected by the full Council.*

*It is an honor to serve as your Mayor.*

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

If I can ever be of service, please note my contact information below.

Mayor Steve Breitkreuz – 954-296-6018; [sbreitkreuz@southwestranches.org](mailto:sbreitkreuz@southwestranches.org); X@SteveBreitkreuz

# A MESSAGE FROM Vice Mayor Gary Jablonski



## Happy New Year, Everyone!

I hope you all had a safe and fun holiday. With the new year here, I want to write a little about an important part of our Ranches lifestyle: **SAFETY**.

Many of us enjoy jogging,

walking, horseback riding, and cycling for exercise. However, the traffic behavior of some drivers often makes these outdoor activities unsafe. I live in Rolling Oaks, where SW 178th Ave serves as both a main exercise route and a major traffic thoroughfare.

When I walk that street, I often pick up sharp objects – nails, screws, and other tire poppers before a car finds them. (I've collected about 25 pounds of old nails and screws off SW 178th Ave in the last year!), not to mention the other Town streets I walk. While some traffic speeds by, ignoring the 35 MPH limit, it appears to be a small minority.

*“Fortunately, I have noticed many more courteous drivers who pull into the other lane (when traffic permits) or slow to a crawl when passing a runner, walker, cyclist, or horse rider with oncoming traffic. From me, a huge THANK YOU for these safety-first actions! I always wave when someone makes that effort and enjoy getting a wave back. This spirit of respectfully helping one another in small ways is what our Town is all about.”*

I continue to walk various roads looking for hazards, but for truly safe exercise, I recommend our Parks—especially the lesser-known **Linear Park**. Located on the north side of the C-11 between Weston Road and Bonaventure Blvd., it is hard-packed, has no traffic, and is a genuinely enjoyable walk in the park. The round trip is approximately four miles (two miles end-to-end), but it is worth it. For a shorter trip, turn around at the pump station, which is the halfway point. I usually park in the Commons parking lot to access it.

To the minority of drivers who treat our town like a speedway: **PLEASE SLOW DOWN**. Gaining one minute is never worth risking someone's safety. Pedestrians, cyclists, and riders also have responsibilities: when it is dark (morning or evening), please wear reflective gear or carry a flashlight so drivers can see you. Together, we can make our streets safer for everyone.

As always, it is a privilege and honor to serve you. **GARY**

**Front Cover** Happy New Year

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**Page 15** January Town Calendar, January School Calendar, Happy Birthday, Comedy Corner

**Back Cover** Council and Districts, Household Hazardous Waste Event, Follow us on Social Media



## A MESSAGE FROM



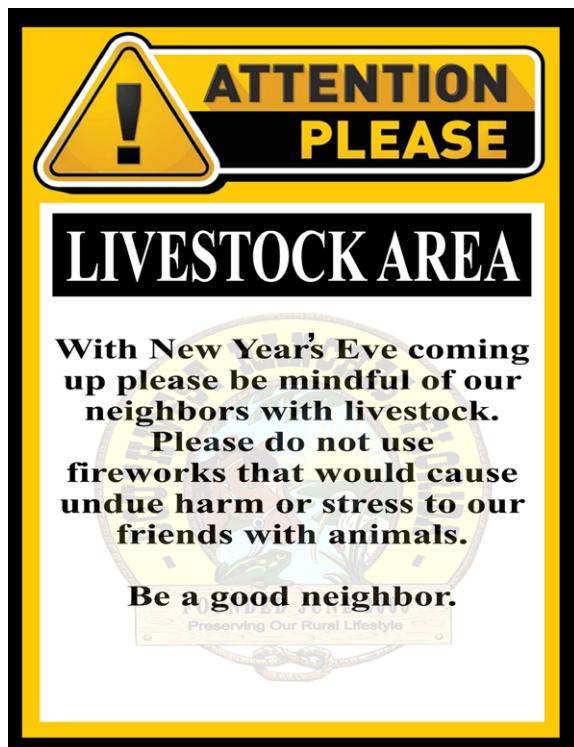
Council Member  
David S. Kuczenski, ESQ.

Howdy Southwest Ranchers,

*I would like to wish all our residents Happy New Year.*

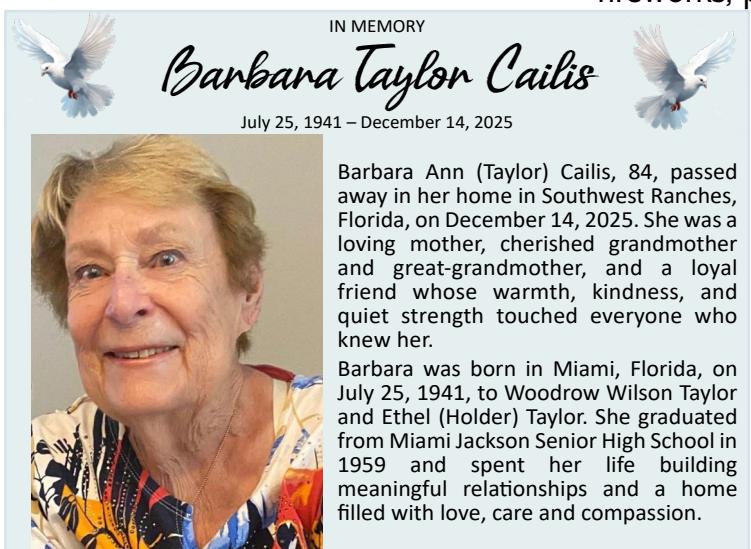
The name January comes from Old English word Ianuarie (dative), from Latin Januarius (mensis) '(month) of Janus', the Roman god who presided over doors and beginnings. There were many gateways in Rome where ceremonial entrances and exits were made, especially for the departure of the army on an expedition. As the god of transitions, Janus is often depicted with two bearded heads that face in opposite directions, looking to both the future and the past. After 153 BCE, January (mensis Januarius in Latin) became the first month of the Roman calendar (which we adopted), the figure of Janus a perfect symbol for new beginnings.

As we plan for the new year, I want to remind folks that besides the Fourth of July, the only other days that fireworks are allowed per Florida Statues, are New Year's Eve and New Year's day.



In addition, our Town Code prohibits fireworks on every other day of the year simply because we are a designated Equestrian Area, and it takes many hours of preparation of our horses with medications to calm them for the loud explosions. In the years past, a resident sent me photographs of a horse who was so scared from fireworks that he ran into the side of its paddock causing his neck to fracture. Sadly, that horse's companion stood nearby for many days in emotional distress from losing his horse companion.

Fireworks also cause startled birds to fly erratically in panic, colliding with buildings, power lines, and other birds, leading to mass deaths. Animals abandon nests, dens, and feeding grounds, potentially leaving young vulnerable to predators or starvation, flashes and sounds disrupt natural behaviors like foraging, resting, and migration, birds can strike obstacles, and animals may ingest toxic debris, and finally, fireworks cause Honey bees disorientation from fireworks. While you have the right to set off fireworks, please be mindful of not only our horses, but all our other wildlife and domestic animals.



As your Council Member from District 4, 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, Esq.**  
**Council Member District 4**

## A MESSAGE FROM Council Member Bob Hartmann



## KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY SAFE: CRIME TRENDS IN SOUTHWEST RANCHES

Southwest Ranches has always been a place where neighbors look out for one another, and our shared commitment to safety is reflected in the crime trends we've seen over the past six years.

The numbers tell a story of progress in many areas, while also reminding us of challenges that require our continued attention.

### PROGRESS WORTH CELEBRATING

- Aggravated assault has dropped dramatically, from 14 cases in 2020 to just 3 so far in 2025.

- Motor vehicle theft has fallen by two-thirds, from 21 incidents in 2020 to only 7 this year.
- Fraud and general theft, once among the most common crimes, have steadily declined since their peaks in 2020–2021.
- Burglary from motor vehicles, which reached 67 cases in 2020, has stabilized in the low 30s.

These improvements show that prevention efforts, law enforcement vigilance, and community awareness are making a real difference.

### AREAS THAT NEED OUR ATTENTION

- Residential burglary has risen compared to earlier years, with 5 cases already reported in 2025.
- Robbery, once rare, has increased steadily since 2023, reaching 3 cases this year.
- Commercial burglary fluctuates year to year, with 4 cases so far in 2025.

While broad property crimes are declining, these more targeted offenses remind us that we must remain vigilant.

### STEADY PATTERNS

Some categories remain relatively unchanged:

- Sexual assault has held steady at one case per year.
- Homicide, attempted homicide, and arson remain near zero.
- Sexual offenses (other) fluctuate but stay low overall.
- Assault – Other has gradually decreased from 26 in 2020 to 19 in 2025.

### COUNTYWIDE POPULATION GROWTH

Crime trends do not exist in isolation. Broward County's population has grown steadily over the same period, according to the American Community Survey. In 2020, the county counted just under 1.95 million residents. By 2021, the figure dipped slightly, but growth resumed in 2022 and 2023, pushing the population to nearly 1.96 million. By 2024, Broward County had surpassed 2 million residents, marking an increase of almost 100,000 people in just four years. While figures for 2025 are not yet available, the trajectory points to continued growth.

This expansion reflects new development, migration, and demographic shifts across the county. And while we cannot say with certainty that neighboring cities directly drive crime in Southwest Ranches, it is reasonable to consider that the larger county population brings more movement, more opportunity, and potentially more criminal activity into our area.

### WHAT THIS MEANS FOR US

The big picture is encouraging everyday property crimes and assaults are down, but we must continue working together to safeguard homes and prevent more serious targeted incidents. Our town's strength lies in its people—neighbors who care, families who stay engaged, and a community that invests in what matters.

By staying informed, reporting suspicious activity, and supporting one another, we can keep Southwest Ranches the safe, welcoming place we all cherish, even as the county around us continues to grow.

Together, we make the difference. Let's keep Southwest Ranches strong.

*I would like to wish you a joyful and prosperous New Year. Bob 954-801-1758*



## A MESSAGE FROM Council Member Jim Allbritton



## GOOD DAY SOUTHWEST RANCHES

As we say goodbye to 2025, I hope everyone enjoyed a wonderful Holiday Season, and I wish each of you a very Happy and Prosperous New Year.



As 2026 begins, several exciting projects will be underway.

- New drainage improvements are starting.
- The restroom facility at the Meadow's Sanctuary will be opened for use.
- Plans for a new Fire Station will be submitted.
- Much-needed repaving of our streets will begin.
- The Town will be installing new electronic messaging boards to help keep our residents informed.
- The Safety and Traffic committee will resume its meetings.

*I would also like to sincerely thank all our Town Advisory Board volunteers for their continued service.*

I am planning our first Town Veterans Group meeting in January. I will be meeting with Ms. December to finalize the date and location. If you are a Veteran, or if you know a Veteran who has not yet shared their contact information, please send it to us. Please include your name, address, phone number, and email so we can be sure to include you.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at:  
**305-903-7043 or [jallbritton@southwestranches.org](mailto:jallbritton@southwestranches.org).**

**TURN WASTE  
INTO Gold**

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.**



**REFLECTIVE ADDRESS MARKERS**

HIGHLY VISIBLE DAY OR NIGHT  
Order today...  
*this could help save your life or someone you love.*

**IF WE CAN'T FIND YOU... WE CAN'T HELP YOU.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

MOUNTING PREFERENCE:  
vertical (up/down) \_\_\_\_\_ horizontal (left/right) \_\_\_\_\_

COLOR PREFERENCE:  
\_\_\_\_\_ green w/white letters \_\_\_\_\_ blue w/white letters

Make Checks payable to:  
Southwest Ranches Fire Rescue , 17220 Griffin Road , Southwest Ranches, FL 33331  
For additional information contact Chief Bennett at 954.868.2057

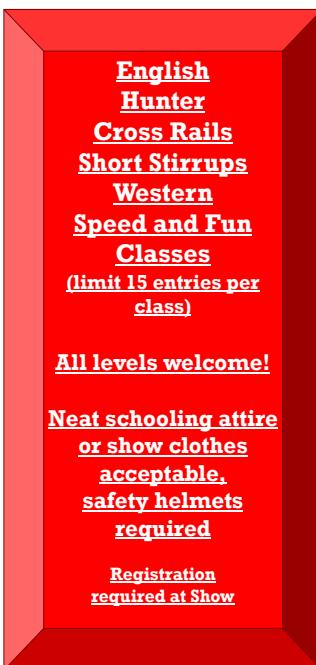
Make Checks payable to:  
Southwest Ranches Fire Rescue  
17220 Griffin Rd,  
Southwest Ranches, Fl. 33331

For additional information contact  
Chief Bennett at 954.868.2057

# UPCOMING EVENTS



**Southwest Ranches Presents**  
16th Annual  
**Love My Pony**  
**Fun Horse Show**  
**Saturday, February 14, 2026**



**FREE Horse show for youth up to Age 18**

**Sunshine Ranches Equestrian Park**

**5840 SW 148 Avenue  
Southwest Ranches, FL 33330**

**8:00 am Registration**

**Classes Begin at 9:00 am**



Contact: December Lauretano-Haines  
954-343-7452  
diauretano@southwestranches.org



**MARTY KIAR**  
**BROWARD**  
**COUNTY**  
**PROPERTY APPRAISER**

**MOBILE EXEMPTION EDUCATION TEAM**  
**SOUTHWEST RANCHES TOWN HALL**  
13400 GRIFFIN ROAD, SOUTHWEST RANCHES, FL 33330

#### FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS:

For All Applicants:

- A Valid Florida Drivers License OR Florida I.D. Card; AND
- Broward Voter Registration OR a Declaration of Domicile; Utility Bill AND Social Security Numbers of ALL owners.

For Resident Aliens:

- Permanent Resident "Green Card," OR proof of asylum, OR your INS I-485 letter showing that application to convert to permanent resident status is complete.

#### ADDITIONAL TAX EXEMPTIONS ALSO AVAILABLE

Widow/Widower Exemption: Bring a copy of your spouse's death certificate, newspaper obituary, or memorial card.

Disability/Veteran's Disability Exemption: Ask us about the filing requirements for these exemptions.

Senior/Low-Income Exemption: Requires at least one owner be 65 as of January 1, 2026. Note: Husband or wife may file on behalf of both. (call for info on required documents)

See more exemptions listed at [web.bcpa.net](http://web.bcpa.net).

**January 6, 2026  
February 3, 2026  
March 3, 2026  
April 7, 2026  
May 5, 2026  
June 2, 2026**

**10:30 AM – 12:00PM**

**July 7, 2026  
August 4, 2026  
September 1, 2026  
October 6, 2026  
November 3, 2026  
December 1, 2026**

Meet with our specialists to assist with tax saving exemptions, sign up for Owner Alert, or to answer questions regarding your property.

**BCPA STAFF WILL BE ON SITE TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE FOR YOUR PROPERTY NEEDS.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:  
WEB.BCPA.NET  
OR CALL: (954) 357-5579**



**@MARTYKIARBCPA**

## WINGS OVER THE RANCHES

### *Wings Over the Ranches: Birding Tours "Where Nature Takes Flight—Right in Your Backyard"*

Southwest Ranches sits on the edge of the Everglades, one of the most biodiverse ecosystems in North America. Our Town is a part of the seasonal corridor used by migratory birds and is a year-round home for native species.

Join Vice Mayor Bob Hartmann for tours designed to highlight the ecological richness of our parks and provide a first-hand look at the multiple species visiting or calling Southwest Ranches Home

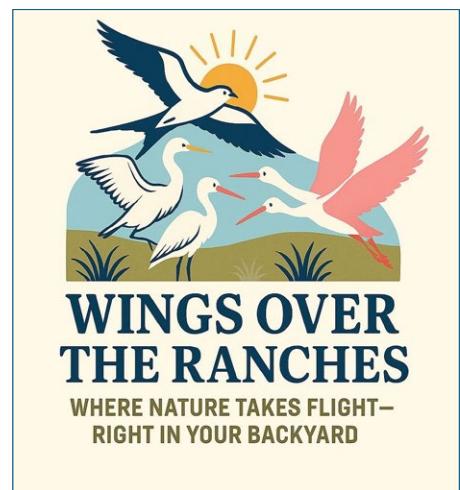
Bob is a seasoned Audubon birding expert with decades of experience leading tours across Florida's wetlands. Bob blends storytelling, science, and humor to make every walk memorable.

Each tour spans a variety of park terrains — from walkways to marsh trails — so be sure to wear sturdy footwear and don't forget the bug spray!

For details, please visit <https://www.southwestranches.org/departments/parks-recreation-and-open-space/birding/>

**When: Saturdays, 8:00 AM – 10:30 AM**

- o Jan 10, 2026 Rolling Oaks Park
- o Mar 14, 2026 Country Estates Park
- o Aug 15, 2026 Southwest Meadows Sanctuary & Calusa Corners (Park here)
- Cost: Free with registration. Use this link to sign up: [www.southwestranches.org/wings-overthe-ranches-application](http://www.southwestranches.org/wings-overthe-ranches-application)
- Group Size: Limited to 15 participants, 18 years and up, per tour
- What to Bring: Binoculars, water, sun protection, and curiosity!



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## SOUTHWEST RANCHES COUNTRY FAIR AND CARNIVAL



**WHEN:**

**JAN 15th -19th**

**WHERE:**

**Southwest Ranches Sanctuary Park  
16290 Griffin Road,  
Southwest Ranches**

**BENEFITING:**

**Southwest Ranches Parks Foundation**

**SOUTHWEST RANCHES COUNTRY FAIR & CARNIVAL**

**FOOD & CRAFT VENDORS WANTED  
SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE**

**CONTACT: SWRCOUNTRYFAIR.COM**



# FLOOD SAFETY:

## Know Your Risk

- **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 <https://swranches.sirc.com/public>.

### 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 [Disaster-assistance.gov](http://Disaster-assistance.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](http://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](http://Floodsmart.gov) and [FEMA.gov/national-flood-insurance-program](http://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 floodplain 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/floodinsurance-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.

The Town provides mapping information about how deep flood waters can be anticipated in given areas of the community. Maps illustrating building and ground elevations are also available. These maps are available on the Town's website.

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@swranches.org](mailto:rley@swranches.org).

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



## HB 303 & Human Trafficking Prevention Month

January marks Human Trafficking Prevention Month, a time to raise awareness of this crime that exploits millions of individuals. Sex and labor trafficking are prevalent in Florida and often occur behind closed doors and out of public view. Human trafficking continues to impact communities across Florida, and the state currently ranks

third in the nation for reported cases. Victims are often tough to identify and reach, making education and prevention critical. During this month, we pause to recognize warning signs, promote prevention efforts, and support victims.

In an effort to help identify human trafficking victims, this session I filed **HB 303 – Human Trafficking Training for Nursing Students**, with Senator Gayle Harrell (R-Stuart). Frontline healthcare workers, especially nurses, play a key role in identifying trafficking and helping victims access safety and services. Nurses are often the first and sometimes the only healthcare professionals to encounter victims of human trafficking. They see patients in emergency rooms, hospitals, and clinics, and are uniquely positioned to recognize warning signs and connect individuals with help. However, under current law, nurses are not required to complete human trafficking training until license renewal, which can occur up to two years after entering the workforce. This creates an unnecessary gap where newly licensed nurses, many with no prior training, may encounter vulnerable human trafficking victims without the knowledge needed to identify or assist them. The bill requires schools to incorporate the state's existing two-hour human trafficking prevention course into their programs and requires that the training be completed within 6 months prior to graduation. Moving up the timeline will strengthen clinical readiness and ensure

newly licensed nurses enter the workforce prepared to identify and respond to trafficking from day one. Not only do health care professionals need to be trained and vigilant, but parents must also stay informed in order to protect their children from online predators seeking their next victim. Stay involved in your child's online world by monitoring their social media activity and maintaining open communication about the risks posed by online predators. Encourage children to keep their accounts private, avoid accepting messages or friend requests from people they do not know in real life, and never share personal information such as their school, location, or phone number online. Set clear rules around screen time and social media use, regularly review privacy settings together, and remind children to trust their instincts if an interaction feels uncomfortable. Teach them to recognize warning signs such as excessive flattery, pressure to keep secrets, requests for photos, offers of gifts, or "opportunities" that seem too good to be true, and remind them never to meet anyone in person whom they have only met online. Make sure they know they can always turn to a trusted adult for help without fear of punishment.

If you or someone you know may be at risk, these confidential resources are available 24/7:

- National Human Trafficking Hotline: Call or text **1-888-373-7888**
- Text: "**HELP**" to **233733 (BEFREE)**
- Florida Human Trafficking Resource Line: **1-855-FLA-SAFE**

I want to wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year. The 2026 Regular Session begins January 13th, and I look forward to continuing my work on behalf of our community in the months ahead. It is an honor to serve you, and my office is here to assist with any issues or concerns.

Please feel free to contact me anytime at [Robin.Bartleman@flhouse.gov](mailto:Robin.Bartleman@flhouse.gov), our office at (954) 872-1770, or on my personal cell at (954) 668-3662.



**Recycling  
Right  
Makes a  
Difference.**  
[browardrecycles.org](http://browardrecycles.org)

 SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY  
OF BROWARD COUNTY  
Plan smart. Recycle more. Waste less.



**YES! Recycle:**

- Aluminum cans
- Cardboard boxes
- Paper
- Plastic bottles

**NO! Don't recycle:**

- Plastic bags
- Wires and cords
- Foam containers
- Diapers



## TRASH TALK: ZERO WASTE ADVISORY BOARD EDITION

- Watch out for a Podcast featuring Sneaker Impact and the Town's Zero Waste Advisory Board and Council Members.
- Keep an eye out for information on how to compost or recycle Christmas trees.
- More recycling tours to be scheduled in coordination with WM for interested residents and planning a weekend date.
- Limited number of spots left to sign up for the Town's residential compost program at no cost - please contact Town Hall to add your name to the program.
- Look out for the Town's Recycling Contest coming in early 2026 - Which Town district will have the most recycled material with the lowest contamination rate?



# FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES



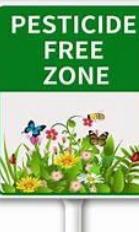
## 5 NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR YOUR GARDEN

The new year is a fantastic time for making meaningful resolutions and doing some garden planning. This year, we're sharing five great New Year's resolutions for your very own wildlife garden.

(<https://blog.nwf.org/2024/12/5-new-years-resolutions-for-your-garden/>) Credit: Tammi Elbert

### Turn an Area of Turf Grass into a Native Garden Bed

Turf grass provides very little, if any, habitat for local wildlife. Plus, its shallow roots are not very effective at managing rainwater that comes your way. This year, resolve to find a spot in your garden where you can remove the turf grass and turn it into a native plant garden bed. This spot can be as small or as big as you want it to be. Remember, you can always expand your garden bed in future years.



### Resolve to Minimize Pesticide Use

One simple New Year's resolution that can have a huge impact on local wildlife (and your own health) is aiming to minimize your pesticide use in your garden. Whether you're using these chemicals to kill other plants, insects, or fungus in your garden, they can seriously harm beneficial species as well. Plus, these chemicals often wash away into local waterways where they can do even more damage. Choosing to minimize the use of pesticides and instead focusing on tried-and-true natural gardening practices can be a great New Year's resolution for your garden.



### Make the Switch to Electric or Hand-Powered Tools

Did you know that running a gas-powered lawn mower for just one hour can create the same amount of pollution as a 100-mile car trip? If your garden tools are starting to wear out, this may be the year to make a resolution to switch to electric or hand-powered alternatives. These electric tools have massively improved over the years and can make a huge difference in minimizing air and sound pollution.



### Provide a Water Source

When gardening, it's easy to get caught up in thinking about the plants, but water is another habitat-essential that your garden can provide! Make a resolution this year to add a water source to your garden and create a plan to maintain it to ensure it stays healthy and clean for wildlife. A water source can be as small and simple as a bird bath, or you can aim to provide something larger like a pond.



10 NATIVE PLANTS FOR FLORIDA FLOWERS, SHRUBS, AND TREES

### Aim for 70% Native Plants

Are you feeling ambitious this year? Or maybe you're a seasoned wildlife gardener and you're looking for the next garden goalpost? Take time this winter and spring to walk through your garden and figure out what percentage of your plants are native species. Aiming for a wildlife garden that is at least 70% native plant species is a great goal with scientific backing. If you're feeling extra ambitious, you can even aim for a higher percentage.



## BRIEF LEGISLATION FROM THE NOVEMBER 20, 2025 LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA)

- Adopted LPA Resolution 2026-001 approving the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan - FY 2026-2030.

## BRIEF LEGISLATION FROM THE NOVEMBER 20, 2025 TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING:

- Adopted Resolution 2026-004 appointment of Council Member Jablonski as Vice Mayor.
- Adopted Resolution 2026-005 approving an Agreement with Kailas Contractors for Construction of Country Estates Drainage Improvement Project.
- Adopted Resolution 2026-006 approving an Agreement with the City of Sunrise for Water Services for 14000 Luray Road.
- Adopted Resolution 2026-007 approving a Service Order Between the Town and SHI International Corporation for Edmunds GovTech Financial Management Software.
- Adopted Resolution 2026-008 approving a Year End Budget Adjustment for FY 2024-2025 Budget.
- Adopted Resolution 2026-009 approving the Town Council Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2026.
- Adopted Resolution 2026-010 approving the Town Holiday Schedule for Calendar Year 2026.

*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.*



After your initial application for Homestead Exemption has been approved, this exemption automatically renews each year unless there is a change of ownership or eligible use of your homesteaded property. Each January, our office mails a Homestead Exemption Renewal Receipt and "Change Order" card to all Homesteaded properties. Florida law requires the property owner to notify the Property Appraiser of any change which may affect homestead eligibility. This "Change Order" card provides an easy way to communicate any important changes to our office.

If there are NO changes to the use and/or ownership of your property, simply keep the card as your receipt that your Homestead Exemption has automatically renewed for another year. However, if there are changes, please mark the Change Order accordingly and return it to our office.

If your name is not printed in the "HOMESTEADED OWNERS" section on this card, it means you are not protected by Homestead Exemption at this property. You may be on title to your property, but you are not receiving Homestead Exemption. If you are eligible for Homestead Exemption on this property, but your name is not listed in the Homesteaded Owners section of the renewal you must complete your own Homestead Exemption application. Please visit our website at [web.bcpa.net](http://web.bcpa.net) to apply for the 2026 Homestead Exemption.

If you are a co-owner, surviving spouse, trust beneficiary or otherwise believe you are eligible for this exemption, you must file your own Homestead Exemption application to receive the benefit. If you have any questions relating to the death of the owner, the Change Order card or need assistance with filing for Homestead or other tax-saving exemptions, please visit our website at [web.bcpa.net](http://web.bcpa.net) or contact our Customer Service Department at 954-357-6830.

### WHERE DID MY PORTABILITY SAVINGS GO?

A portability deduction is only posted to your property record page in the first year you receive your new Homestead Exemption. The portability savings from the first year form the basis of your new Save Our Homes (SOH) Value on a going forward basis and -- in subsequent years -- will rise or fall based upon market value changes and the SOH cap, as your new Save Our Homes value has incorporated your portability savings. When our website is updated to display subsequent year property values, your portability deduction is no longer shown independently because it is already factored into your new Assessed/Save Our Homes Value.

If you have any questions about Homestead Exemption or any other exemptions, please call 954.357\_6830 or email me at [martykiar@bcpa.net](mailto:martykiar@bcpa.net).

Take care,

Marty Kiar, JD, CFA



MartyKiarBCPA



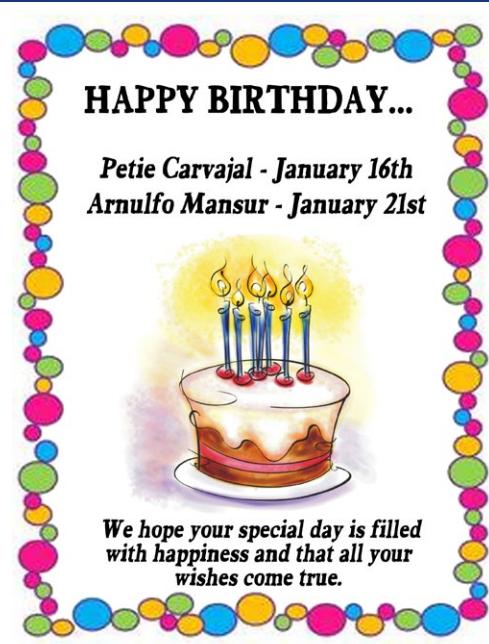
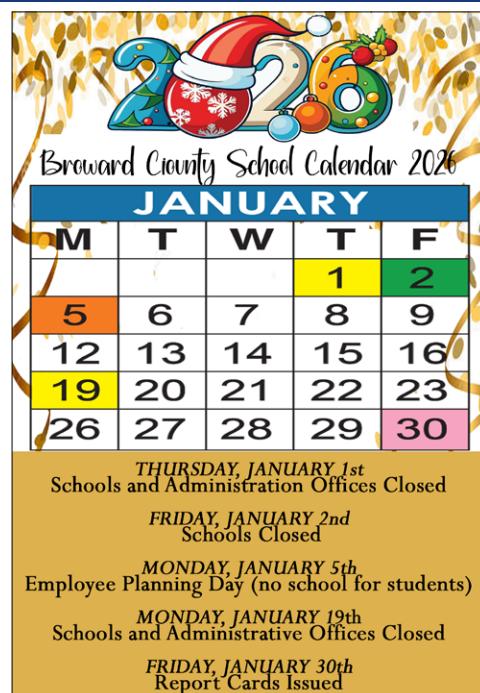
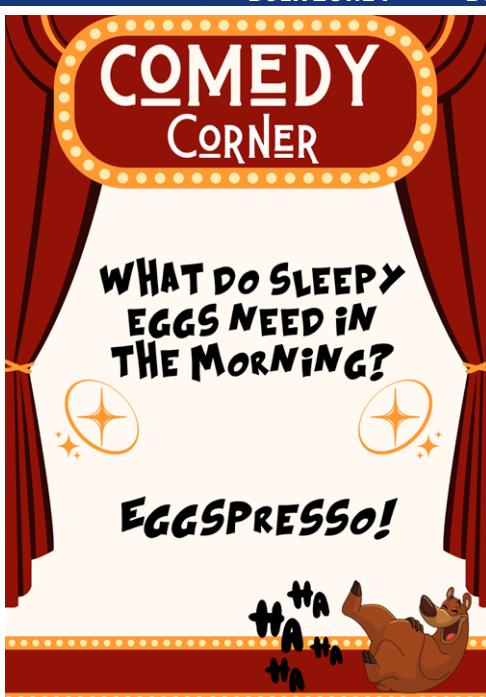
@MartyKiarBCPA



PHOTO BY: Drew Balboa  
"Let's go for a ride!"

January  
2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				 TOWN HALL CLOSED	1	2
						• Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10 - 3pm
4 • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 11 - 4pm	5 • Country Estates HOA Meeting - Grace Baptist Church 19200 Griffin Rd. 7pm • SWR Parks Foundation Meeting Town Hall 7pm	6 • Broward County Property Appraiser's Office Town Hall 10:30 - 12:30pm • Zero Waste Advisory Board- Town Hall 7pm	7 • Rural Public Arts & Design Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7pm	8	9	10 HHW Event 8 - 2 Shred-a-thon 8 - 2 Drug Drop Off 10 - 2 Rolling Oaks Barn -17630 SW 56th St. • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10 - 3pm • Wings over the Ranches Rolling Oaks Park 8-10am
						<b>BULK ZONE 10</b> <b>BULK ZONE 11</b> <b>BULK ZONE 12</b>
11 • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 11 - 4pm	12 • Schools & Education Advisory Board - Town Hall 7pm	13 • Parks, Recreation Forestry & Natural Resources Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7pm	14 • Zero Waste Broward Task Force Meeting - Town Hall 7pm	15 • Comprehensive Plan Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7pm County Fair Carnival SW Meadows Sanctuary 16290 Griffin Rd. 5 - 10pm	16 County Fair and Carnival SW Meadows Sanctuary 16290 Griffin Rd. 5 - 10:30pm	17 County Fair and Carnival SW Meadows Sanctuary 16290 Griffin Rd. 1 - 10:30pm
						<b>BULK ZONE 6</b>
18 County Fair and Carnival SW Meadows Sanctuary 16290 Griffin Rd. 1 - 10:30pm	19  TOWN HALL CLOSED County Fair and Carnival SW Meadows Sanctuary 16290 Griffin Rd. 12-6pm	20 • Drainage & Infrastructure Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7pm	21 • Fire Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7pm	22 • TOWN COUNCIL MEETING - Town Hall 7pm	23	24 • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10 - 3pm
						<b>BULK ZONE 12</b>
25 • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 11 - 4pm	26	27 • Rolling Oaks Civic Association Meeting - Rolling Oaks Barn 17630 SW 56th St. 7pm	28 • FLOW DMV EVENT - Town Hall 10 - 2:00pm <u>appointment only</u> • Sunshine Ranches HOA ZOOM 7 - 9pm	29	30	31 • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10 - 3pm
						<b>BULK ZONE 7</b> <b>BULK ZONE 8</b> <b>BULK ZONE 9</b> <b>BULK ZONE 10</b> <b>BULK ZONE 11</b> <b>BULK ZONE 12</b>



We hope your special day is filled  
with happiness and that all your  
wishes come true.

Have a birthday you would like to share with us in a future  
Town newsletter? Send your name and birthday to:  
Skutz@southwestranches.org



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

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## TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL!!!



**YouTube:**  
Town of Southwest Ranches  
Official Channel

CLICK ON QR CODE  
TO VISIT US AT  
[WWW.SOUTHWESTRANCHES.ORG](http://WWW.SOUTHWESTRANCHES.ORG)



**SOUTHWEST RANCHES**  
*Food Festival*



**EVERY FIRST  
TUESDAY OF  
THE MONTH**  
4pm - 9pm

*Come join us Tuesday,  
January 06, 2026*

**THE BEST GOURMET  
FOOD TRUCKS**

16290 Griffin Road  
Southwest Ranches FL 33331

Proceeds benefit the Aster Knight  
Southwest Ranches Parks Foundation

**HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE,  
ELECTRONICS & BULK DROP OFF**

**JANUARY 10, 2026 . 8:00 - 2:00PM**

Location: Rolling Oaks Barn - 17630 SW 56th St., Southwest Ranches, 33331  
Document shredding from 8-2pm . Prescription drug drop off 10-2pm

This service is provided for Town residents only. Proof of residency is required.  
NOTE: Event may be canceled 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 Cleavers Fluorescent Tubes/Bulbs Garden Chemicals Latex/Oil-Based Paint Pesticides Pool Chlorine Tires (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

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Media**



Let's Get Connected for Our Latest News & Updates

 [@townofswr](https://www.instagram.com/townofswr) 

 [YouTube](https://tinyurl.com/SWRYouTube) 

 [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/swrgov) 

 [on our Website](https://www.southwestranches.org/) 





**COUNCIL MEMBER  
BOB HARTMANN**



**VICE MAYOR  
GARY JABLONSKI**



**MAYOR  
STEVE BREITKREUZ**



**COUNCIL MEMBER  
JIM ALLBRITTON**



**COUNCIL MEMBER  
DAVID S. KUCZENSKI**



**Town  
Council**

**Legend**

Council Districts

- District 1
- District 2
- District 3
- District 4
- Town Boundary



Map is Not to Scale  
Date: 12/22/2022

© Florida Technical Consultants

The Town of Southwest Ranches does not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of the data, and the data are available for limited purposes. The Town of Southwest Ranches seeks to provide full accessibility to our services, records, and facilities. If you are not able to access any of the content of this website please contact Russell Morris at [rrm@swr.org](mailto:rrm@swr.org) or call 305-424-0300 so that we can provide a solution or provide the information in an accessible format. If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader, etc.) and have difficulty accessing any information, please identify the specific information or material you seek access to, the website address of the material with which you request access or assistance, the problem you experienced, and your contact information so that the Town may provide you with the necessary assistance. Please contact our office if there is any additional information that we can provide.