SOUTHWEST RANCHER

The Official Town Newsletter

Thanksgiving Wishes to You and Your Family.

SECRET GARDENS TOUR
see page 8

BRING ON THE HOLIDAY MAGIC!
December Holiday Lights Contest
see page 8

SOUTHWEST RANCHES COUNTRY FAIR AND CARNIVAL
see page 9

NOVEMBER 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 - Thursday / 8:00 am - 5:30 pm • Friday 8:00 am - 4:00 pm • **TOWN WEBSITE:** www.southwestranches.org
YOUTUBE: Town of Southwest Ranches Official Channel • **FACEBOOK:** facebook@SWRGOV • **INSTAGRAM:** @townofswr

ELECTED OFFICIALS		
Mayor Steve Breitkreuz	(954) 343-7462	**sbreitkreuz@southwestranches.org**
Vice Mayor Gary Jablonski	(954) 343-7456	**gjablonski@southwestranches.org**
Council Member Jim Allbritton	(954) 343-7461	**jallbritton@southwestranches.org**
Council Member Bob Hartmann	(954) 343-7447	**bhartmann@southwestranches.org**
Council Member David S. Kuczenski, Esq.	(954) 343-7472	**dkuczenski@southwestranches.org**
TOWN STAFF		
Russell Muñiz, *Town Administrator*	(954) 434-0008	**rmuniz@southwestranches.org**
Kathryn Sims, *Deputy Town Administrator*	(954) 343-7454	**ksims@southwestranches.org**
Danielle Caban, *Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator*	(954) 343-7474	**dcaban@southwestranches.org**
Anjali Seupaul, *Communications Coordinator*	(954) 343-7475	**aseupaul@southwestranches.org**
Debra M. Ruesga, *Town Clerk*	(954) 343-7451	**druesga@southwestranches.org**
Jennifer McCarty, *Deputy Town Clerk*	(954) 343-7469	**jmccarty@southwestranches.org**
Tom Holste, *General Services Manager*	(954) 343-7476	**tholste@southwestranches.org**
Hector Rodriguez, *Administrative Assistant*	(954) 434-0008	**hrodriguez@southwestranches.org**
Lina Logreira, *Administrative Assistant*	(954) 343-2535	**linal@southwestranches.org**
Emil C. Lopez, *Town Financial Administrator*	(954) 343-7473	**elopez@southwestranches.org**
Christina Semeraro, *Town Procurement Officer*	(954) 343-7467	**csemeraro@southwestranches.org**
Rich Strum, *Deputy Financial Administrator*	(954) 343-7442	**rstrum@southwestranches.org**
Arianna Durbeej, *Senior Accountant*	(954) 343-7477	**adurbeej@southwestranches.org**
Keith Poliakoff, *Town Attorney*	(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, *Public Works Project Coordinator, Newsletter Editor*	(954) 343-7460	**skutz@southwestranches.org**
Joyce Marques, *Engineering Inspector*	(954) 343-7441	**jmarques@southwestranches.org**
December Lauretano-Haines, *Parks, Recreation & Forestry Director*	(954) 343-7452	**dlauretano@southwestranches.org**
Gilbert Ceballos, *Parks and Recreation Program Facilitator*	(954) 343-7468	**gceballos@southwestranches.org**
Mayuli Betancourt, *Administrative Assistant*	(954) 343-7465	**mbetancourt@southwestranches.org**
Isabel McNulty, *Agricultural Liaison*	(954) 358-2550	**imcnulty@southwestranches.org**
TOWN SERVICES / BUILDING DEPARTMENT PERMITTING – (CAP GOVERNMENT)		**M-F 8:30 am - 4:00 pm CLOSED 12 pm - 1 pm**
Luis Hernandez, *Building Official*	(954) 343-7448	**Luis.Hernandez2@BureauVeritas.com**
Marisol Tammero, *Permit Technician*	(954) 343-7446	**swrinspections@southwestranches.org**
Maria Perez, *Permit Technician*	(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**
Concepcion Campos, *Code Compliance Supervisor*	(954) 343-7457	**ccampos@southwestranches.org**
Yirglhis Hernandez, *Code Compliance Officer*	(954) 343-7459	**yhernandez@southwestranches.org**
Ismail Rashid, *Code Compliance Officer*	(954) 358-2540	**irashid@southwestranches.org**
Marlon Gonzalez, *Code Compliance Officer*	(954) 343-7440	**mgonzalez@southwestranches.org**
Code Compliance Hotline	(954) 343-7449	
WASTE/BULK/RECYCLING SERVICES		
WM (Waste Management)	(954) 974-7500	
REFLECTIVE ADDRESS MARKERS – Chief Bennett	(954) 868-2057	**lbennett@southwestranches.org**
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**
Carlos Grave de Peralta, *Police Civilian Coordinator*	(954) 693-8352	**cgravedeperalta@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		
MOSQUITO CONTROL	(954) 765-4062	
LOST AND FOUND ANIMALS	(754) 224-0877	**Facebook@SWRLostandFoundAnimals**
WATER DISTRICTS - CANALS		
Central Broward Water Control District	(954) 432-5110	**www.centralbrowardwcd.org**
East of SW 148 Avenue (Volunteer)		
South Broward Drainage District	(954) 680-3337	**www.sbdd.org**
West of SW 148 Avenue (Volunteer)		

Happy Thanksgiving

The newsletter is mailed to approximately 2,800 residences, with additional copies available at Town Hall.

A MESSAGE FROM

Mayor
Steve Breitkreuz



Happy Thanksgiving

This is the season for Thanksgiving. And I want to pass along several items that I am thankful for.

I AM THANKFUL FOR THIS TOWN THAT WE CALL HOME, THE TOWN OF SOUTHWEST RANCHES, where I raised my family. I could not imagine a better place to call home, which provides the variety of cultures and backgrounds that we all share. Also, it provides open space where a child can be child and run and explore, as well as the interaction with animals. Animals have a way of teaching the next generation the appreciation of all creatures and responsibility for caring for others. We live in the gem of South Florida and that is something that we can all be thankful for.

I AM THANKFUL THAT I HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE AS YOUR MAYOR. I never take it for granted and I do my best to represent you every day. But, of course, we are all different with unique views that at times conflict, but we are all looking for what is best for our community and our families and that is what I always strive to use as my guiding north star when making decisions.

BEING MAYOR, I AM ALSO THANKFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY THAT IT AFFORDS ME TO MEET SO MANY WONDERFUL people here in the Ranches. At meetings or working on projects, I am always thankful for the opportunity to meet someone new or to renew a conversation from the past. We are independent people and each has a unique story and I never get tired of hearing those stories, sharing in the journey.

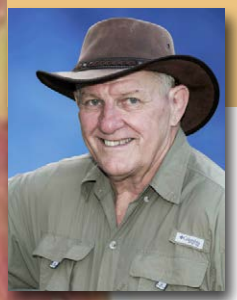
AND OF COURSE, I AM THANKFUL FOR THE COUNTRY THAT WE LIVE IN. While we often fight amongst ourselves like siblings in a family, but we are all Americans and are all part of the greatest light of freedom that this world has ever known. And we can only be that light due to the sacrifice of those that gave their lives over the centuries past all the way up to today. So, I am especially thankful for our veterans, not only on November 11th, but on every day. We owe them a debt of gratitude that we literally can never repay. So, I am especially thankful for our veterans as well as our first responders who also put their lives on the line each and every day.

It is easy to get caught up in the challenges that each day brings. But during this month of Thanksgiving, I urge you to think of something new each day that you are thankful for. I promise that there are a lot more than 30 of them out there!

I wish you and your family a very Happy Thanksgiving and pray for health and peace during this season.

Mayor Steve Breitkreuz – 954-296-6018
sbreitkreuz@southwestranches.org;
X@SteveBreitkreuz

A MESSAGE FROM Council Member Jim Allbritton



As Thanksgiving approaches, I would like to wish all of our wonderful residents and their families a warm and heartfelt Thanksgiving.

NEW PARK PAVILION AT SOUTHWEST MEADOWS SANCTUARY

We are excited to announce the completion of a new park pavilion at Southwest Meadows Sanctuary! The ribbon-cutting ceremony took place on September 14th. The pavilion's design fits beautifully with the rural character of our Town and provides a wonderful new space for residents to enjoy.

NEW FIRE STATION COMING TO SOUTHWEST RANCHES

The Town is moving forward with plans for our new Fire Station and will soon be closing on the property. The Town has decided to solicit a Design-Build Firm for the project, which should help move the construction process along at a quicker pace. We look forward to sharing updates as this exciting project progresses!

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

On September 11th, the Town held a special memorial ceremony commemorating the 25th Anniversary of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against the United States.

A heartfelt thank-you goes to everyone who helped make this meaningful ceremony possible, including the Town of Southwest Ranches, the Davie Police Color Guard, Davie Fire Rescue, Louis Gregory, who served as our MC, Howard Listig for his beautiful rendition of the National Anthem, and especially Ms. December for all her hard work organizing the ceremony. We are grateful to everyone who came together to remember and honor those who lost their lives and the many heroes who answered the call that day.

VETERANS SOCIAL CAFÉ – ICE CREAM SOCIAL

On September 18th, the Veterans Social Café held an Ice Cream Social at Town Hall, and a great time was had by all! There was plenty of ice cream, board games, laughter, and, most importantly, a wonderful sense of camaraderie among our Veterans. It was a wonderful afternoon of friendship and fellowship.

We are looking forward to having another social gathering in recognition of **Veterans Day on November 11th.** Please be on the lookout for an announcement with more information about this special event.

GOOD DAY, SOUTHWEST RANCHES!



Veterans enjoying the Ice Cream Social at Town Hall





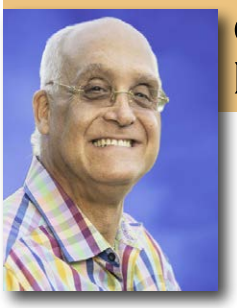
ARE YOU A SOUTHWEST RANCHES VETERAN?

If you are a Veteran and have not yet provided us with your information, we would be HONORED to add you to our ever-growing list of Southwest Ranches Veterans. Send us your name, address, phone number and email address.

Contact us at **jallbritton@southwestranches.org** OR **dlauretano@southwestranches.org** or call **305-903-7043 or 954-343-7452.**

We are proud to recognize and honor the Veterans who call Southwest Ranches home. .

A MESSAGE FROM



Council Member
David S. Kuczenski, ESQ.

Howdy Ranchers,

Happy November.

I wish you and your family a HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Happy November. I am writing this month to bring you up to date on a few happenings in our Town. One rather important issue that we need to address is reducing the solid waste we send to the landfill. We are under a state directive to increase our recycling to seventy-five (75) percent. Unfortunately, the Town is presently recycling less than twenty-five (25) percent of our solid waste.

Among many reasons for increasing recycling is, first, we do not want one more incinerator near us. Many concerned residents fought this issue alongside the leadership of our Mayor. Just because we defeated the incinerator does not mean that we can forget about it and continue to simply throw away as we have for many decades. A secondary issue is the capacity of the landfill. Not too long ago the Broward County Commission voted to allow the height of the Monarch Hill landfill to parallel the height of the Statue of Liberty.

One focus of the Solid Waste Authority's management plan will be centered on managing our bulk waste. Southwest Ranches' bulk waste constitutes nearly sixty (60) percent of the total solid waste collected. One proposed idea includes separating the vegetative (e.g. organics – plants, trees, palm fronds) from white goods (such as household appliances and furniture). Once separated, the organic waste can be composted into highly enriched soil.

In summary, we are running out of space to dispose of our solid waste. The Zero Waste Advisory Board is taking the lead along with our consultants in crafting a zero waste management plan. This issue is far from over, but with the highly committed volunteers and our experienced consultants, we will increase the amount of recycling.

As Council Member for District 4, my goal is to preserve Southwest Ranches' unique rural lifestyle and minimize changes to it. Together, let's protect and support what makes our community special. I 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
Cell 305-815-0990

TOWN TALK

a way to stay in touch with the Town

Would you like to receive emails about what is happening in the Town?
Send your email address to:
Druesga@southwestranches.org

TOWN OF SOUTHWEST RANCHES PARKS



FOUNDERS' TRAILSIDE PARK

12498 Griffin Road, Southwest Ranches, FL 33330

Enjoy a peaceful 4-acre escape connecting the C-11 and Flamingo Road trails to the Southwest Ranches trail system. With native wetlands, wildlife, open-space views, a picnic pavilion, and colorful murals by artist Laura Warren, it's a great place to relax and explore.



SUNSHINE RANCHES EQUESTRIAN PARK

5840 SW 148th Avenue, Southwest Ranches, FL 33330

A beautiful 20-acre destination for horses, nature, and community. Enjoy scenic horse and nature trails, equestrian rings, wetlands, a farm-themed playground, restrooms, picnic areas, and the spectaculer Equestrian Oasis. A wonderful place to ride, walk, relax, and enjoy Southwest Ranches!



CALUSA CORNERS

4701 Hawke's Bluff Avenue at Griffin and Dykes Road, Southwest Ranches

This 11-acre gem south of Griffin Road, nestled in the I-75 entrance corridor, will remain a passive green space preserving our Town's rural character amid surrounding development. Calusa Corners offers open space for nature observation, picnicking, play, and outdoor recreation.



SOUTHWEST MEADOWS SANCTUARY AND PRESERVE

16200 and 16290 Griffin Road at Dykes Road, Southwest Ranches, FL 33331

Located at Dykes and Griffin Roads, the Sanctuary is a beautiful 26-acre property featuring the 5-acre "Preserve," home to Town events such as the Community Farmers' Market and Southwest Ranches Country Fair. The Town has restored natural areas by removing invasive plants and adding native trees and shrubs. Future plans include trails, wetlands, open spaces, events and educational areas.



ROLLING OAKS PARK

17630 SW 56 Street, Southwest Ranches, FL 33331

Welcome to Rolling Oaks Passive Open Space Park, a beautiful 46-acre property purchased by the Town in 2001. Enjoy peaceful open space, equestrian and multi-use trails, dog walking, freshwater fishing, a butterfly garden, fitness trail, enhanced wetlands, and archeaological features. The restored barn is also available as a community facility for rental.



COUNTRY ESTATES FISHING HOLE PARK

18900 Griffin Road, Southwest Ranches, FL 33332

The Town of Southwest Ranches purchased the property in 2004 to preserve open space and provide outdoor recreational opportunities. Amenities include parking, a playground, restroom, picnic shelter, basketball goal, and a multi-use field for occasional sports use. The Town also offers organized youth soccer and flag football programs on Saturdays through i9 Sports.



FRONTIER TRAILS

19300 SW 51st Manor, Southwest Ranches, FL 33332

Frontier Trails is a 30-acre property dedicated to conservation and passive recreation. The park will feature restored wetlands, native plantings, nature observation areas, multi-use trails, and preservation of an archaeological site. Once developed, approximately 26 acres of restored wetlande will provide valuable habitat for native and migratory wildlife.



CONTENTS

Front Cover: Happy Thanksgiving, Secret Gardens Tour, December Holiday Lights Contest, Southwest Ranches Country Fair and Carnival, Thanksgiving Wishes

Page 2: In-Touch

Page 3: Mayor's Message

Page 4: Council Member Allbritton

Page 5: Council Member Kuczenski, Town Talk

Page 6: Southwest Ranches Parks

Page 7: Contents, Ranches Roundup "Cultivating Our Agricultural Community", Reflective Address Markers, SWR Stickers

Page 8: Special Events: Secret Gardens Tour, December Holiday Lights Contest, Save the Date Fun Horse Show

Page 9: Special Events: Southwest Ranches Country Fair and Carnival, Mayors' Chess, Register Now for i9 Sports

Page 10-11: Flood Safety: Know Your Risks, Aden Perry Life Ring, 2026 Photo Contest Calendars

Page 12: Representative Robin Bartleman, Turn Waste into Gold, Trash Talk

Page 13: Forestry and Natural Resources: Opossums: Misunderstood Marvels

Page 14: Marty Kiar, Clerk's Corner, November School Calendar, Don't Leave Your Key Fob in Your Car, Happy Birthday,

Page 15: Council and Districts, Lyft Transportation Program, November Town Calendar

Back Cover: Stay in Touch with Engineering, Household Hazardous Waste Event, Follow Us on Social Media, Know the Plastic Recycle Codes, Emergency Alert System

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/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

MOUNTING PREFERENCE:

Vertical (up/down) _____

Horizontal (left/right) _____

COLOR PREFERENCE:

_____**green w/white letters**

_____**blue w/white letters**

$20.00

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

For information call Chief Bennett: 954-868-2057



RANCHES ROUNDUP

"Cultivating Our Agricultural Community"

by Isabel McNulty, Agriculture Liaison

Equestrian Trail Safety

Trails in Southwest Ranches offer a wonderful place for horseback riders, walkers, and cyclists to enjoy the outdoors together. These pathways connect people with nature, encourage recreation, and create peaceful spaces for residents to explore at their own pace.

The Town is working to find ways to improve and keep these routes flourishing, making them a treasured part of life in Southwest Ranches.

When everyone uses the trails thoughtfully and respects the shared environment, they remain inviting and enjoyable for all.

Keeping Chickens

Interested in raising chickens? Backyard flocks can make a fun addition to your property and be a rewarding way to enjoy fresh eggs. Find more poultry resources at: https://tinyurl.com/SWRpoultry **or scan here:**

Agricultural Classification

Agricultural Classification is a property tax assessment category that values land based on its agricultural use value instead of full market value.

For land to be granted Agricultural Classification, the use of the land must be primarily for bona fide commercial agriculture as of January 1st of the application year. To apply for Agricultural Classification, visit: https://web.bcpa.net/bcpaclient/#/Agricultural or **scan here:**

It's a joy and privilege to serve as your Agricultural Liaison! As always, please feel free to contact me at imcnulty@southwestranches.org or 954-358-2550.

SWR

SOUTHWEST RANCHES, FLORIDA

SHOW YOUR TOWN SPIRIT

SWR stickers are available at Town Hall 13400 Griffin Road for $1.00





DECEMBER HOLIDAY LIGHTS CONTEST ENTRY FORM

Town of Southwest Ranches

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

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ CELL: _____

EMAIL: _____

I UNDERSTAND, ACKNOWLEDGE, AND AGREE THAT ENTERING THIS CONTEST WILL ALLOW THE TOWN TO USE ANY PHOTOS TAKEN OF MY DECORATED HOME FOR THIS CONTEST AND WILL REMAIN THE PROPERTY OF THE TOWN AND MAY BE USE, REPRODUCED OR MODIFIED BY THE TOWN IN THE TOWN'S SOLE DISCRETION.

SIGNATURE: _____ _____
(Date)

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



12th Annual Mayor's Chess Challenge

October - November - December Dates:

City of Lighthouse Point
October 24, 2026 - 9 am to 11 am
John Trudel Community Center
4521 NE 22nd Avenue
954-784-3439

City of Delray Beach
November 8, 2026 - 10 am to noon
Delray Beach Community Center
50 NW 1st Avenue
561-243-7250 option 3

City of Tamarac
October 31, 2026 - 10 am to noon
Tamarac Community Center
8601 West Commercial Blvd.
954-597-3461

City of Deerfield Beach
December 12, 2026 - 10 am to noon
Hillsboro Community Center
50 Hillsboro Technology Drive
954-250-4069

12th annual MAYORS' CHESS CHALLENGE

Players of all ages and skill levels are welcome.
Join families, elected officials and community leaders for a free and friendly meetup.
IN SUPPORT OF SCHOLASTIC CHESS!

Visit sunrisefl.gov/chess for the full schedule and event details.

SOUTHWEST RANCHES COUNTRY FAIR AND CARNIVAL



Southwest Ranches Country Fair & Carnival

(nonprofit established in 2009 by Aster Knight)
is proud to present the 4th annual Country Fair
Thursday, January 14th, 5-10pm
Friday, January 15th, 5-10:30pm
Saturday, January 16th, 1-10:30pm
Sunday, January 17th, 12-6pm

a four-day community event benefitting the improvement of Southwest Ranches' seven public parks.
The exciting fair will take place at:

Southwest Meadows Sanctuary Park
16290 Griffin Road

and will have a diverse assortment of games, contests and attractions for all ages to enjoy.



REGISTER NOW

$30 DISCOUNT FOR SOUTHWEST RANCHES RESIDENTS
PROMO CODE: SWR

- Organized programs for boys and girls ages 3-15
- Age appropriate instruction for each division.
- Coaches background checked and certified.
- All skill levels welcome. No tryouts!
- One day per week! Practice held before game.

SIGN UP TODAY
TO RESERVE YOUR CHILD'S SPOT

The Way Youth Sports Should Be®

FALL SEASON BEGINS OCTOBER 2026

i9sports.com
954-437-0089
@i9sportsis143
@i9sports143

SCAN TO LEARN MORE

FLOOD SAFETY:
Know Your Risks

• ***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.sircom.org/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 *Disasterassistance.gov.*



National Flood Insurance Program Changes

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



Get a Flood Insurance Policy

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

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

If you would like to know if your property is in a SFHA you can use the interactive map viewer. Visit *http://southwestranches.org/departments/town-engineering/flood- insuranceinformation/* 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. Youcan 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.

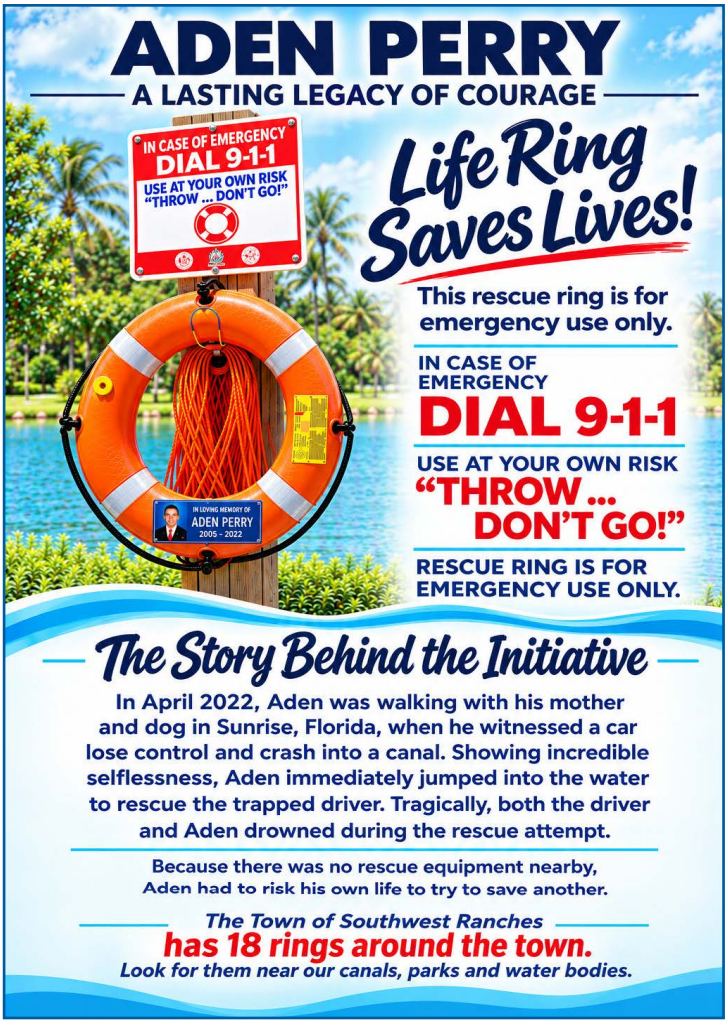
The Town has mapped local drainage problem areas within the Town. In addition, the Town has a map providing information about past floods that have occurred. If you live in one of these areas, we would like to have a discussion with you regarding potential remedies.

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.*

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







International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

November 25 is International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, a day to raise awareness about violence against women and support survivors of domestic violence.

This past session, I was proud to cosponsor important legislation that strengthens protections for victims of domestic violence and holds abusers accountable. **HB 277, sponsored by domestic abuse survivor Rep. Tendrich (D-Lake Worth)**, includes a portion of language from my domestic violence bill, **HB 729**, which increases penalties for repeat violations of domestic violence injunctions. These injunctions are court orders that protect the victim by mandating that the perpetrator stays away. Data shows that many perpetrators violate these orders. In fact, perpetrators do not have their charges elevated until after the third violation of the injunction. Under the new law, there are no second or third chances. A second violation is elevated to a third-degree felony. It's our duty to protect domestic violence victims and ensure these court orders deters abusers.

HB 277 also establishes an electronic monitoring pilot program in Pinellas County for perpetrators guilty of misdemeanor and felony domestic violence offenses or violations of a domestic violence injunction. Additionally, the bill requires that sexual and dating violence injunctions are entered into a statewide database, and adds "threatening to kill or injure a family pet" to the list of factors a judge may consider when determining whether to grant a domestic violence injunction.

On International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, we must raise awareness and work towards creating safer communities. If you or someone you know is in need of assistance, resources are available.

- **National Domestic Violence Hotline** – (1-800) 799-7233
  - o This is a free 24/7 confidential hotline for survivors, victims, and those affected by domestic violence.
- **Women in Distress** – (954) 761-1133
  - o Women in Distress offers a 24-hour crisis hotline that provides crisis intervention, advocacy services, and counseling in Broward County.
- **211 Broward –** (211)
  - o This 24/7 comprehensive helpline provides crisis assistance, including support for domestic violence and abuse.

It is an honor to serve you, and we are here to assist with any issues or concerns.

Feel free to contact me anytime at **Robin.Bartleman@flhouse.gov,** our office at **(954) 872-1770**, or on my persona cell at **(954) 668-3662.**





TRASH TALK:

ZERO WASTE ADVISORY BOARD EDITION

- **Zero Waste Ambassador Program to begin in January (awesome opportunity for students to earn service hours)**
- **WM Recycling Center Tours have been a success. We are looking to schedule monthly tours during the week at 5PM**
- **Sneaker Impact - Drop off your old sneakers at Town Hall to be re-used or recycled. In September we received 12 good sneakers, 25 casual/mixed, and 7 end of life. We helped divert the sneakers and an estimated 463 Kg of CO2e from going to the landfill!**
- **Our zero waste plan has a name - Town of Southwest Ranches - The Rural Roots Resource Plan**
- **District Recycling Contest - Congrats to District 3 as the Q2 winner. - Let's all keep up the good work!**
- **Broward Solid Waste Authority education tile link for valuable information of the do's and don'ts - https://browardswa.org/broward-recycles/**
- **Make sure to check out our Zero Waste Advisory Board Tile on the Town's Website.**

OPOSSUMS: MISUNDERSTOOD MARVELS

(https://naturecollectivesl.com/2025/02/04/the-wonderful-world-of-opossums/)



Opossums, often unfairly labeled as "dirty" or "scary," are actually fascinating, gentle creatures. They are North America's only marsupials, meaning they carry and nurse their young in a pouch, much like kangaroos or koalas. With their grayish fur, prehensile tails, and charmingly snaggle-toothed grins, opossums are uniquely adapted to life in a variety of environments, from forests to urban backyards. Despite their reputation, opossums are clean animals that groom themselves meticulously, much like cats. They're also incredibly shy and non-aggressive. When threatened, their famous "playing dead" act (called thanatosis) is a survival mechanism—not a choice, but an involuntary response.



A LITTLE OPOSSUM HISTORY

The Virginia opossum (Didelphis virginiana) is a living relic, dating back to the time of the dinosaurs. Fossil records show that their ancient relatives existed over 70 million years ago, making them one of the oldest surviving mammals in North America. They have remained relatively unchanged over the millennia, proving that they are expert survivors. Indigenous peoples of North America recognized the value of opossums long before European settlers arrived. Many Native American tribes included opossums in their folklore, often portraying them as clever and resourceful animals. The word "opossum" itself comes from the Powhatan language, derived from "aposoum," meaning "white dog" or "white beast." Early European settlers, however, misunderstood and feared opossums, leading to the myths that persist today. Despite this, they have thrived in human-altered landscapes, adapting to suburban and urban environments with impressive resilience.



NATURAL PEST CONTROL EXPERTS

One of the coolest things about opossums is their superpower: pest control. They are omnivores with a diet that includes insects, snails, slugs, rodents, and even ticks. In fact, a single opossum can consume thousands of ticks in a season, significantly reducing the spread of Lyme disease. They also help keep gardens healthy by feasting on overripe fruits and unwanted pests. Beyond their appetite for pests, opossums are nature's cleanup crew. They scavenge for carrion, helping to recycle nutrients and keep ecosystems clean.



MYTHS VS. REALITY

One of the most damaging myths about opossums is that they are rabies carriers. In truth, their low body temperature (usually around 94-97°F) makes it nearly impossible for the rabies virus to survive in their system. Opossums are far more likely to hiss and scurry away than bite, making them one of the safest wild animals to encounter. Another myth is that they are aggressive or dangerous. In reality, opossums are non-confrontational animals. Their main defense is bluffing—hissing, showing their 50 tiny teeth (the most of any North American land mammal), and, if all else fails, collapsing into a catatonic state as a last resort.



HELPING OUR WILD NEIGHBORS

If you're lucky enough to have opossums visit your yard, there are simple ways to support them:

- Provide food and water: Place a small dish of fresh water and healthy snacks like fruit or cat kibble in a safe, quiet spot.
- Create shelter: Opossums will appreciate a cozy hideaway, like a brush pile or a small pet shelter filled with straw.
- Avoid poisons: Rodenticides and pesticides can harm opossums and other wildlife. Opt for humane pest control alternatives.
- Be mindful of pets: Keep dogs and outdoor cats supervised or indoors at night to avoid stress for wildlife.

Clerk's Corner

by Debra Ruesga

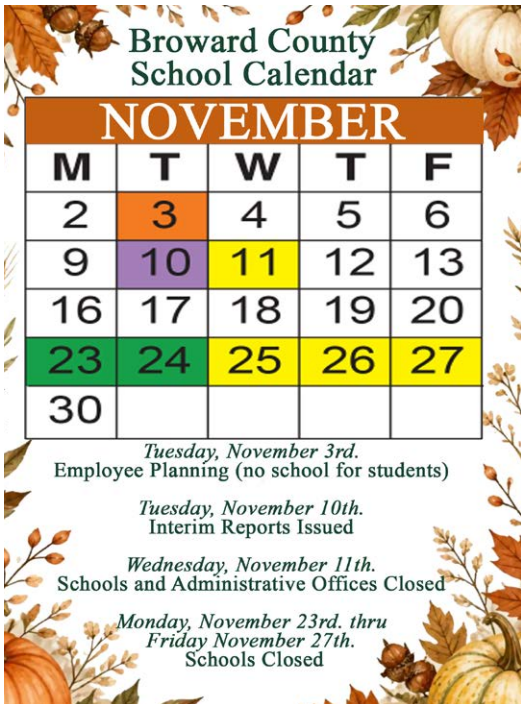
BRIEF LEGISLATION FROM THE SEPTEMBER 14, 2026 TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

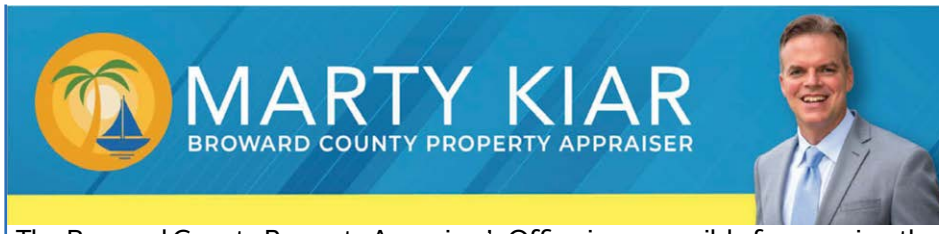
- Adopted Resolution 2026-065 Approving FY 2026 - 2027 Final Fire Services Assessment
- Adopted Resolution 2026-066 Approving FY 2026 – 2027 Final Solid Waste Services Assessment
- Adopted Resolution 2026-067 Approving the Tentative Millage Rate

SEPTEMBER 24, 2026 – TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

- Adopted Resolution 2026-068 Approving FY 26-27 Final Millage Rate
- Adopted Resolution 2026-069 Agreement with GeoCivix, LLC. to provide Engineering Permitting Software
- Adopted Resolution 2026-070 Approving a Piggybank Agreement with Shaw Integrated & Turf Solutions, Inc. for Phase 1 of Town Hall Flooring Replacement Project
- Adopted Ordinance 2026-010 FY 26-27 Final Budget Approval

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.





The Broward County Property Appraiser's Office is responsible for ensuring the fair assessment (value) of all properties and applying all exemptions. We make it our #1 priority to assist all Broward residents in obtaining every tax-saving exemption for which they are eligible.

The Property Appraiser's Office does not set your tax rates, collect property taxes, or determine how the tax revenue is allocated by local government. The property tax bills are sent by the Broward County Tax Collector's Office. If you have questions regarding the payment of your tax bill, the Tax Collector's Office can be reached at 954-357-4829 or you can visit their website at https://browardtax.org/.

WHERE IS MY 2027 HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION?

The tax bill you received this month from the Broward County Tax Collector is for the 2026 tax year. If you acquired your home in 2026 and the previous owners of your new home lawfully received Homestead Exemption or any other exemption on January 1, 2026, you may have inherited their exemptions on your 2026 property tax bill. Florida Statutes require these 2026 exemptions to be removed, and the property be reassessed at the full Just/Market Value for 2027. This may result in an increase in your 2027 property taxes. It is important that you apply for your own Homestead Exemption in your name if you believe you are eligible for 2027. Your new 2027 Homestead Exemption will be reflected next year on all 2027 property records, notices, and tax bills. You can apply for Homestead Exemption and any other exemptions you may qualify for online at https://web.bcpa.net/bcpaclient/#/HomesteadExemption.

If you have questions regarding your Homestead or other tax-saving exemptions, please contact our Exemptions Department at 954-357-6830.

THE PROPERTY APPRAISER'S OFFICE HAS MOVED TO A NEW LOCATION

The Broward County Property Appraiser's Office has moved to 1801 NW 49 Street, Suite PA1, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309. Our staff will continue to assist property owners at events throughout our community as well as through virtual visits. To find out where we will be in the community or to schedule a virtual appointment, please visit https://web.bcpa.net/ExemptionExpress.

If my office can be of assistance to you, please feel free to contact me directly at martykiar@bcpa.net.

Take care,

Marty Kiar

Marty Kiar, JD, CFA

MartyKiarBCPA
@MartyKiarBCPA



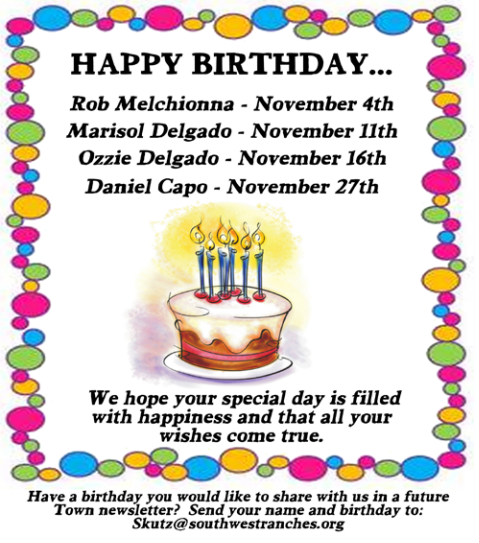
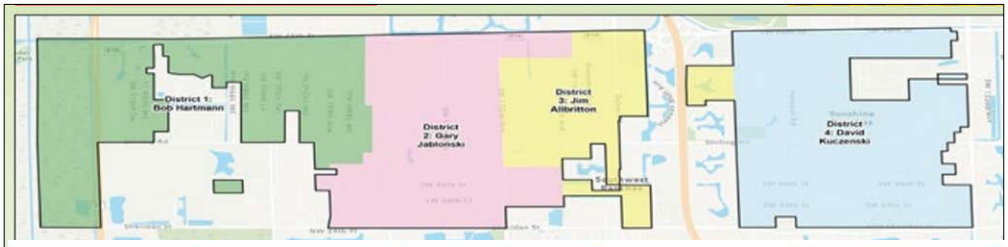




PHOTO BY: Gregg Ditzian
"Mounted Patrol celebrating the Towns 25th."

November '26

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 • I9 Sports - Country Estates Park 18900 Griffin Rd. 8 - 1pm • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 11 - 3pm	2 • Country Estates Homeowners Association Meeting Grace Baptist Church - 19200 Griffin Rd. 7-9pm	3 • BCPA Office - Town Hall 10:30 - 12:30pm • Zero Waste Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7pm	4 • Comprehensive Plan Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7pm	5	6	7 • I9 Sports - Country Estates Park 18900 Griffin Rd. 8 - 1pm • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10 - 3pm
	BULK ZONE 7	BULK ZONE 8	BULK ZONE 9	BULK ZONE 10	BULK ZONE 11	BULK ZONE 12
8 • I9 Sports - Country Estates Park 18900 Griffin Rd. 8 - 1pm • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 11 - 3pm	9 • Schools and Education Advisory Board - Town Hall 7pm	10 • CODE Hearing Town Hall 9am • Parks, Recreation Forestry & Natural Resources Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7pm	11 VETERAN'S DAY TOWN HALL CLOSED	12	13	14 • I9 Sports - Country Estates Park 18900 Griffin Rd. 8 - 1pm • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10 - 3pm
	BULK ZONE 1	BULK ZONE 2	BULK ZONE 3	BULK ZONE 4	BULK ZONE 5	BULK ZONE 6
15 • I9 Sports - Country Estates Park 18900 Griffin Rd. 8 - 1pm • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 11 - 3pm	16 • Rural Public Arts & Design Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7pm	17 • Drainage & Infrastructure Advisory Board Meeting - Town Hall 7pm	18 Fire Advisory Board Meeting -Town Hall 7pm	19 • TOWN COUNCIL MEETING - Town Hall 7-8pm	20	21 • I9 Sports - Country Estates Park 18900 Griffin Rd. 8 - 1pm • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10 - 3pm
	BULK ZONE 7	BULK ZONE 8	BULK ZONE 9	BULK ZONE 10	BULK ZONE 11	BULK ZONE 12
22 • I9 Sports - Country Estates Park 18900 Griffin Rd. 8 - 1pm • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 11 - 3pm	23 • SWR Parks Foundation Meeting - Town Hall 7pm	24 • Rolling Oaks Civic Association Meeting - Rolling Oaks Barn 17630 SW 56th St 7pm	25 • Sunshine Ranches HOA ZOOM 7 - 9pm	26 THANKSGIVING DAY TOWN HALL CLOSED	27	28 • I9 Sports - Country Estates Park 18900 Griffin Rd. 8 - 1pm • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 10 - 3pm
	BULK ZONE 1	BULK ZONE 2	BULK ZONE 3	BULK ZONE 4	BULK ZONE 5	BULK ZONE 6
29 • I9 Sports - Country Estates Park 18900 Griffin Rd. 8 - 1pm • Farmers' Market 16290 Griffin Rd. 11 - 3pm	30 • DMV FLOW EVENT Town Hall 10-2 appointment only call 954-434-0008					
	BULK ZONE 7					




COUNCIL MEMBER
BOB HARTMANN
District 1

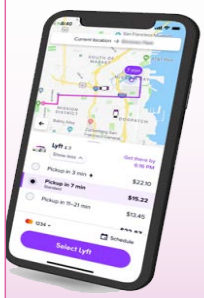

VICE MAYOR
GARY JABLONSKI
District 2


MAYOR
STEVE BREITKREUZ
At large


COUNCIL MEMBER
JIM ALLBRITTON
District 3


COUNCIL MEMBER
DAVID S. KUCZENSKI
District 4

Empowered Partners
lyft Transportation Program



Through our partnership with United Way in the Empowered Partners program, eligible older adults can be connected to transportation services through Lyft at no cost to them, for rides up to $50 roundtrip. Older adults can attend medical appointments, social activities, and other essential engagements.

As an agency, we can schedule rides for older adults in advance (concierge) or provide them with a unique code for rides to use on their own Lyft app.

To be eligible, the older adult must be 60 years of age and older, resident of Broward County, and experiencing a transportation barrier that limits their ability to travel freely in their own vehicle.

For more information call **954.745.9779** or go to **www.adrcbroward.org/transportation-resources**

United Way

Area Agency on Aging of Broward County

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

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
MIAMI, FL
PERMIT
#622

Printed on Recycled Paper

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL!!!

facebook
Facebook:
facebook@SWRGOV

Instagram
Instagram:
@townofswr

YouTube
YouTube:
Town of Southwest Ranches
Official Channel

SCAN QR CODE
TO VISIT US AT
WWW.SOUTHWESTRANCHES.ORG



STAY IN TOUCH WITH ENGINEERING

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

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

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE, ELECTRONICS & BULK DROP OFF EVENT

Saturday, January 9, 2027
8:00am - 2:00pm

Rolling Oaks Barn
17630 SW 56 Street, Southwest Ranches, FL 33331

Document shredding from 8am-2pm
Prescription drug drop off 10am-2pm

This service is provided for Town residents only. Proof of residency is required.

NOTE: Event may be cancelled due to rain, excessive winds, or other hazardous conditions as determined by the Town.

Acceptable HHW Items
Aerosol Cans,
Antifreeze/Coolant/Paint
Batteries: Home and Vehicle Batteries
BBQ & Camp Size Propane Cleaners
Fluorescent Tubes/Bulbs
Garden Chemicals
Paint: Latex and Oil Based
Pesticides
Pool Chlorine
Tires (Up to 4 per household, no rims)
Used Oil and Filters

Electronics Recycling
Computers, Cables, DVD Players, Keyboards, Mice, Adapters, Monitors, Printers/Scanners, Radios, Stereo Components, TV's, Tape Players, VCRs

Unacceptable HHW Items
Appliances
Asbestos
Explosives or Ammunition
Medical/Infectious Waste
Non-Residential Waste

For more information, please contact Town Hall (954) 434-0008

Follow Us On Social Media

Let's Get Connected for Our Latest News & Updates

Instagram
@townofswr

YouTube
https://tinyurl.com/SWRYouTube

Facebook
@swrgov

on our Website
https://www.southwestranches.org/

KNOW THE PLASTIC RECYCLE CODES

1 PET
Polyethylene Terephthalate
COMMON ITEMS:
Water bottles, soda bottles, juice containers, salad dressing bottles

2 HDPE
High-Density Polyethylene
COMMON ITEMS:
Milk jugs, detergent bottles, shampoo bottles, household cleaner containers

5 PP
Polypropylene
COMMON ITEMS:
Yogurt containers, food storage containers, medicine bottles

ALWAYS RECYCLE
Rinse containers before recycling.

To learn more visit: wm.com/recycleright



Are you getting emergency notifications and other critical information about what is going on in our town?

Sign up for HQE Systems to be certain that you are among the first to know about an:
evacuation order, weather warning, hazardous road conditions and other notices requiring your immediate attention and/or action.

Register for HQE Systems online at:
swranches.sircom.org/public
Get notified immediately via telephone, text message or email.

If you need additional information please call 954-434-0008 or email: Tholste@southwestranches.org