



A Message from the President

Sadly, The Sands suffered the worst fire since its development. It started on the south end as a result of a new home foundation and cutting rebar, thus creating a spark and the fire spread quickly to the north by a stiff wind damaging approximately 220 acres. Although no homes were lost, many were damaged to as much as \$80,000 and possibly higher. A few residents were forced to move out while their homes were being repaired. The owners worked through their insurance companies who in turn will work to recover funds from the builders insurance.

Although the builder is MVM Custom Homes, their subcontractor, responsible for the fire is insured by Liberty Mutual, who is using the services of Robert Dawson, an independent adjuster, PO Box 20874 Bradenton, FL 34204. His cell number is 239-313-0278. His email is rdclaims904@hotmail.com

We on the board have a lot of work ahead of us before this is finished. It has been brought to our attention that our old growth pine trees which have been turned mostly to completely brown by fire and heat will eventually die and could well become infested by termites once they get water logged and begin to rot. This rotting will likely begin in 6-8 months. Furthermore, termites swarm every spring. This next spring, (2021), won't have much of an impact but the spring of 2022 could very well see a mass swarming and spread to nearby homes. We can't allow this to happen. There is also the risk of a hurricane snapping off dead trees and projecting them into homes.

We are in the process of getting a feel for what it will cost to remove and haul away any pine trees with less than an 80% chance of survival. So far, costs are ranging between \$120,000 and \$140,000 for "all" affected trees, on "all" lots depending on the time required to complete the process. The HOA does not have this kind of money available in our budget.

The board attempted to get blanket permission from Charlotte County to issue one permit to cover all necessary clearing. Unfortunately, they declined our request. Therefore, either the lot owner or the contractor chosen to remove the trees can apply for the necessary permits.

Our attorneys are actively involved in assisting and advising us. We are in the process of identifying every affected lot in order to notify the owner in the event they aren't aware of the fire. We will keep you informed as we progress.

Mark H. Clabaugh, President
Rotonda Sands Conservation Association, Inc.



New Board of Directors

President	Mark Clabaugh
Vice President	Bill Lomax
Vice President	Kevin Cote
Secretary	Cinta Basso
Treasurer	Sharon Gaiser

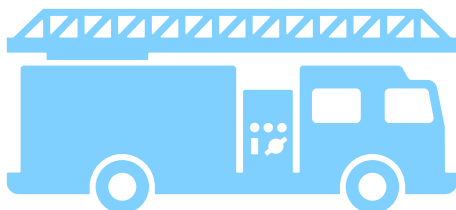
The Board of Directors' meetings are open to the membership. Dates and times of meetings can be found on our website www.rotondasands.com.

Meetings are typically held the 3rd Wednesday of each month with Neighborhood watch starting at 10:00 am and the Board meeting promptly following at 10:30 am at the Association office. Summer schedules may change.

Fire Update

Fire Video 2/24, and two months later.

<https://youtu.be/vhGJsfQxBU8>



*** Utilize the Website***

Remember to utilize the website for important information (e.g., read the monthly meeting minutes once approved by the board). www.rotondasands.com

Stay Informed with Email Updates

The Association Board of Directors and Management are requesting the members please provide the Association with a current email address. Email may be used to communicate additional newsletters updates about the community, concerns in the area, and decisions being made or considered by the Board. Owners who do not provide an email address may miss out on important community updates. Your email address will only be used by Management to send you information about the Rotonda Sands community and will not be shared or distributed to anyone.

If you would like to add or update your email address on file, please contact the Management office, and email your information to info@rotondasands.com to ensure accuracy



Community Information (Q&A's)

Every month we'll try to feature area experts to share their perspective and answer any pertinent questions about our community.

Areas such as Real Estate Values/Market, Construction challenges, Facts versus Rumors, and specifically YOUR questions will be explored and answered as best as we can in this section. As we accumulate Q&A's, we'll put them on the website too.

This month we're focussed on construction. Peter Ibe of Vantage Homes, purchased a home in Rotonda Sands in 2009, has built over 60 homes throughout the Rotonda communities, and served a number of years on the HOA Board.

Question: What are the challenges of building in Sands (compared to other areas you've built).

Reply: The main issue is the size of lots and the many variations in sizes and elevations. It all adds to the cost of the build, when a stem wall is needed. Also the LPS mini sewer adds over \$5000. Customers just need to do some due diligence and work with a builder to ensure that they can get their dream home on the lot of their choice.

Question: Does the lower flood elevation or lack of utility buildout (therefore increase building cost) deter construction?

Reply: I think it deters spec building. Most of the new homes seem to be built for an end user rather than going on the open market.

Question: How does the building restrictions and HOA approval process compare to other areas.

Reply: All very similar and favorable. Pete Traverso who checks the plans does a great job and is very "user friendly" it's great to have a human touch.

Question: Do you see the newly revised square foot minimums (1500 sq ft, but pool required) for the smaller lots as positive, neutral, or negative ... and explain.

Reply: I think it will encourage more homes as it will make designing one to fit easier and of course most people want a pool.

Other thoughts: I see the growth in the area continuing. When we first moved here there were a lot fewer houses, now the amount increases at a much quicker rate. I feel that this is somewhat because "the circle" is getting built out, and people can buy nice lake lots for a reasonable price. We have recently had the tragic fire, where, thanks to the amazing emergency services, no lives were lost. The area surely looks a little sad now, but will come back to life. We also face the imminent challenges being caused by the Corona virus, but being that Rotonda generally is populated by, or the new arrivals are, snowbirds and retirees with a good income, I feel that the future is very positive.

*** Utilize the Website***

Remember to utilize the website for important information (e.g., Community News, and special events). Read/download the monthly Newsletter here <http://rotondasands.com/news>



Sands



Sun



**Community
Information &
Neighborhood Watch**

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF ROTONDA SANDS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION, INC.



Rotonda Sands History - Part One

by Charles Magoffin

A resident recently wrote ... ***"Why are we associating ourselves with Rotonda? We've lived in the area for 30 years, previously lived in Rotonda West, and are proud of the differences of living in the Sands."***

You know the old saying, ... can pick your friends, but can't pick your family! You may not like our ancestors; however, they are who they are. Rotonda's communities were one big family, maybe not the happiest, nonetheless, a family.

While celebrating our differences in the Sands why not appreciate where we came from? We are (and always will be) inextricably linked to Rotonda, and the grand vision of tricky Joe Klein, a shyster of sales person! With that, let's get started.



For me history is an archeological dig ... fascinating and full of surprises! For the history buffs out there you might have seen (https://youtu.be/Bz7_JITpzmo) and/or read (**Rotonda - The Vision and the Reality by Jack Alexander**) about this unique place we call home. The video is a fine primer before delving into the book, which is available for purchase at Rotonda West management offices (Broadmoor Park). If you want to really understand the history of the area generally and Rotonda communities specifically, this is a must read book, and well worth the modest price of \$10. Sadly Jack died in 2016, but what a wonderful written legacy he leaves behind.

Aside from a few mentions about the outlying Rotonda communities, little is documented about specifically the Rotonda Sands North development and evolution ... from first house at 18 Stern Place to the 130+ residents now.

This will be my attempt to fill in the missing pieces and entice some of the current residents to share their own pieces of the Rotonda Sands History.

But first, Background ...

By 1985, fifteen years after Cavanagh's Cape Cave Corp picked up his 'round' Rotonda East plans and moved to Charlotte County's Vanderbilt ranch, the mortgage holder Citicorp, was bleeding money on the Rotonda development. To stabilize (avoid foreclosure), and try to turn around this unwieldy mess they turned to one of their own consultant, James Penzell, the fifth developer.

By 1990, a myriad of things had been either fixed or improved greatly. One of his team members he brought down from Charlotte, North Carolina was Robert Underwood. He became president of the Waterway Maintenance Association (456 acres of common property and canals in Rotonda West). This was quickly given to the POA (Property

Owners Association), which evolved into the Rotonda West Association.

John Brandenberger who I thought was the first resident but found instead he was the first HOA Manager. Lets start with some Q&A's. Red highlighted quotes are my additions based on Alexander's book.

Question: Describe the original HOA? Was it modeled off another Rotonda? How did Management company happen?

Reply: The Association was established with the State of Florida in the early 70's. The community was developed with roads and water lines in the mid 70's by the original developer Cavanaugh Communities Corporation. The subdivision was taken over by Citibank who held the mortgage on the property. In the early 90's, a new investor group named 41/75 Group (named after the highways near the property, and Rotonda's SIXTH developer) bought all the Rotonda assets from Citibank.

The new developer started to go about the business of bringing Rotonda back to life. In 1993 my company was awarded the contract to reorganize the Association and get the community cleaned up and fixed up. I was the first Association Manager (Professional Property Services of Charlotte County, Inc.). I managed the Sands Association until 2016 when I sold my management company to Tim Freeman, the current Manager.

All the Rotonda subdivisions located outside the circle were set up the same (Lakes, Sands Heights, Meadows, and Villas). The Association was registered as a corporation with the State and although it had been asleep for 20 years, it was still an active corporation with the State.

Question: What did the landscape look like?



Reply: The community lay untouched for 20 years. It became a favorite dumping area, was badly overgrown with weeds and Pepper trees, and had several homeless camps.

Question: What were the challenges?

Reply: The biggest initial job was communicating with the lot owners and informing them that the Association was being activated and that as a lot owner, they were obligated to pay Association fees of \$40. per year.

You can imagine some of the comments I got back. Some of the people didn't even know they owned a lot in Rotonda. Often, a husband bought the lot 20 years earlier, had since passed away, and his widow had no idea she even owned the lot. There were many hurdles to overcome to get people on board and get them to start paying assessments.

Question: With so few residents, did lot owners support all the HOA's initiatives?

Reply: The first resident Ron Murray, built 18 Stern Place in 1994 and was a nice man, but he lived in the Sands for one reason and that was that he wanted to be left alone. He didn't like rules or neighbors and had definite opinions on how the community should move forward.

Over the years, there have been many projects completed that have brought the community to where it is today. Especially interesting is the establishment of the MSBU's (**Municipal Service Benefit Units**) with the County, the deepening of the lakes and the Pepper clearing project.

History - Part 2 Preview

The next article I'll be finishing my conversation with John and talking about how the 'maintenance organizations' evolved into the HOA as we know it

now. Eventually, I'll be reading/researching the meeting minutes that our management office retains. Also, I may pick relevant snippets from Alexander's book to fill in some of the very colorful past and believe me it's fascinating.

"Factionalism can be expected when major community issues are being resolved—longtime residents versus new arrivals, old residents versus young, progressives versus status goers, those willing to financially support what they see as progress versus those anxious to hoard their last dime. But in my view, to say "it's just the democratic process at work" doesn't excuse some of the rudeness and public personality clashes that have constantly engaged the RWA in recent years. Even lawsuits among directors, former directors and the board were not uncommon."

Exerts from Jack Alexander's book Rotonda - The Vision and the Reality.

Funny how the past can sometimes come back around to the present.



Burrowing Owls Report

by Charles Magoffin

While Rotonda Sands isn't home to any Burrowing Owls, they're close by in Rotonda Meadows. Currently there's two occupied homes, one on Quail Rd, and another on Mockingbird Dr. Two other marked burrows aren't occupied.



The burrowing owl is one of the smallest owls in Florida and averages nine inches in height with a wingspan of 21 inches. It spends most of its time on the ground, where its sandy brown plumage provides camouflage from potential predators. The owl lacks the ear tufts of the more familiar woodland owls. Bright yellow eyes and a white chin accent the face. Unusually long legs provide additional height for a better view from its typical ground-level perch.

I've been visiting the Meadows nests for the last two years, and in

2019 I first photographed the adult's March 10th. May 3rd was the first Juvenile pics, and I got all four of these cuties at the Quail Rd burrow.



The typical breeding season for the Florida burrowing owl is February 15 to July 10, though owls can breed earlier or later. Nesting occurs in burrows in the ground that they dig. These burrows will be maintained and used again the following year. Females lay up to eight eggs within a one-week period, and they will incubate the eggs for up to 28 days. Once the white-feathered juveniles are born, it takes two

weeks before they are ready and able to appear out of the burrow. Juveniles will begin learning how to fly at four weeks, but will not be able to fly well until they are six weeks old. Juveniles will stay with the parents until they are able to self-sustain at 12 weeks old.



At this posting, all four adults are hanging around outside the burrows in the early morning. I suspect that this means the eggs have hatched, but don't know this for certain. This year timing looks very similar to 2019, so start looking for the tiny Juvie's in a couple of weeks. Take binoculars and use telephoto camera lens as you don't want to get any closer to the burrow than the paved road allows. If you respect their space they'll be quite friendly, and always very cute!



Other Wildlife stuff (videos) and time wasters!

Actually, thought you'd enjoy my snorkeling adventures from a few years ago. All about our wonderful ocean wildlife, especially a reef preserve in Puerto Rico. Wonder if it survived the hurricane?

Manatees ... <https://youtu.be/UmYZk3NHY0c>

Manatee Scar ... <https://youtu.be/qVDfxo3xMwk>

Hawksbill Turtle ... <https://youtu.be/IR2xHf5X7Co>

Dory's Friends ... <https://youtu.be/z7A7-DZfUrM>

Rincon, PR ... https://youtu.be/dHO_9Nwevfw

*** Additional Wildlife Notice ***

Alligators are becoming more aggressive due to mating season. Courtship begins in early April, and mating occurs in May or June. Females build a mound nest of soil, vegetation, or debris and deposit approximately 32 to 46 eggs in late June or early July. Incubation requires approximately 60-65 days, and hatching occurs in late August or early September.

Be alert ... if you see this, YOU'RE TOO CLOSE :)



Urban Coyotes and Bobcats in Florida



Presentation By: Rhonda Douthett
Wildlife Assistance Biologist
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission



FWC Wildlife Presentation

Rotonda West Community Ctr - Broadmoor Park
646 Rotonda Centre, Rotonda West
Thursday, May 21, 2020 6-7:30pm

Rhonda graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a B.S. in Biology and has been working with native and exotic wildlife since 2007 in Pennsylvania, Texas, and Florida. In 2011 she worked with US Fish and Wildlife on a conservation project for the Attwater Prairie Chicken. In 2014, she traveled to the eastern base of the Andean mountains in Bolivia and spent 10 days in the field with biologists working for the Wildlife Conservation Society tracking and monitoring jaguars. Rhonda joined Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in 2017. In her spare time, she's an avid football fan and enjoy gardening.



This Wildlife presentation is the result of a joint effort of the Rotonda West Wildlife Committee and the newly formed Rotonda Sands Wildlife Committee. These groups share a common purpose to educate residents across the range of WILDLIFE & HABITAT (FAUNA, e.g., Bird, Fish, Reptile, Mammal), and FLORA (e.g. Grassland, Trees, Flowering & non-Flowering plants).

Sands  *Sun*  Residents Corner

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF ROTONDA SANDS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION, INC.

Pairs

by Charles Magoffin

Have you noticed that's something is in the air (land, water, too)? Yes, it's that time when our Wildlife has paired up to start or raise family's in that time honored springtime tradition.

As the above Burrowing Owls show, mates can be seen all over among the many Wildlife species we have in the Sands. What have you seen/photographed? Send us your special pics to share with our Sands community.



Sands  *Sun*  Residents Corner

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Ok, not every pair has to be Wildlife ...





Committee VOLUNTEERS Needed

ENVIRONMENTAL (proposed)

- Pollinator Gardens
- Healthy Ponds & Plants

NEWSLETTER

- Timely communications
- Time Sensitive Sharing
- Hot Topics
- Committee Updates

SOCIAL

- Giving Back To The Community
- Fun Gatherings & Projects

We have some fun ideas and projects in the works but **WE NEED YOUR HELP!** If you are interested in any of the above please contact the management office.

Committee Updates

NEWSLETTER: Need volunteers to help with content. Please contact Charles (cmagoffin@mac.com) or the Board.

WILDLIFE: As noted on above flyer, Coyote presentation has been postponed.

If you have questions, or more important, possible subjects of interest and pertinence for the committee, please contact any individual on the Wildlife committee.

SOCIAL: Kathy Green hasn't given up on her efforts to organize a Facebook Group page for Rotonda Sands. She just needs some help ... like all the committee's need!

Please contact Kathy at (kmgreentk@gmail.com) or the Board to help out.

