

FEBRUARY 2026

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T.P.H.O.A. Newsletter



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FLORIDA ANCHOR AND BARRIER COMPANY

Tropical Palms Homeowners Association
Notice Of Annual Meeting
Saturday, February 21, 2026 10:00 a.m.
Community Clubhouse

Agenda

- Remembrance of Deceased Residents
- Presentation of Annual Budget
- Election of Board of Directors

REMINDER: Only residents who have paid their 2026 Membership may attend this meeting.

Signed: Dee Harrison, Secretary
Dated this 31st day of January 2026

This notice is posted in accordance with the Bylaws of TPHOA Article IV (Membership in the Corporation), Article V, Section 2 (Annual Meeting), Article V, Section 5 (Notice of Meetings), and Article V, Section 9 (Proxies)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ELECTION PROCEDURES

- No proxies are allowed for the election per Florida Statute 723.
- Absentee ballots are allowed.
- Voting takes place by written ballot at the Annual Meeting. Voting options:
- Absentee Ballot: February 1 - 20. Deadline is 2/20/26 at 5 pm.
- In person: February 21 - 9:30-10:00 am at the Club House.
- Must be a 2026 dues paying member of the TPHOA to vote.
- One ballot/vote per household.
- Social Members/Renters cannot vote per Florida Statute 723.
- **In Person voting:** Check in at Registration Table first. Have your 2026 Membership Card available.
- **Absentee ballots** will be available from the Election Chair, Debbie Levesque, 31 Pine, and are to be used only for election of the Board of Directors.
- Upon request, absentee ballots may be mailed to members not in Tropical Palms. Contact Debbie: 31 Pine or phone/text 508-364-3886.
- Absentee ballots must be submitted to the Election Chair in the sealed envelope provided and must be received by 5 pm Friday, February 20.

PROXY FORMS

- Available in person from Elections Chair Debbie Levesque, 31 Pine, or Parliamentarian Pat Stowell, 24 Pine. Proxy Request can also be mailed to Debbie Levesque. (Please include Name, Address and Lot Number.)

ANNUAL MEETING

- Arrive early, check in and receive your voting credential
- Meeting starts at 10 am on February 21, 2026.
- A quorum of 30% of TPHOA members is required.
- Election of Board members takes place **at** the meeting.
- Doors will be closed at 10 am. Late arrivals cannot participate in the meeting. Anyone leaving the meeting after it is called to order will not be allowed to return until after all voting is completed.
- Only 2026 dues paying members of TPHOA are eligible to attend and vote.
- Proxies are okay for reaching the meeting quorum and voting on items of business such as the Annual Budget and any Bylaw changes (no Bylaws this year)
- Results of the Board of Directors election will be announced. In the event of a tie, members present at the Annual Meeting shall determine by secret ballot the vacancy(ies) in question. The person (people) receiving the plurality of the votes for the position(s) shall be elected (TPHOA Bylaws Article VII, Section 2(A)).

DEFINITIONS

ABSENTEE BALLOT: a ballot completed and typically mailed in advance of an election by a voter who is unable to be present for in person voting.

PROXY: the authority to represent someone else, especially for all other voting at Annual Meeting. Florida Statute 723 prohibits using a proxy for election of Board members.

FROM THE H.O.A. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Addressing Membership Decline

Membership Decline Concerns

Our membership committee has brought to our attention that  memberships are declining this year. This trend is causing concern among board members. While we can speculate about the causes, we believe it is essential to hear directly from our residents to understand the situation fully.

Seeking Resident Feedback-

We would like to know whether the decline is due to economic factors, such as affordability. Alternatively, we are open to learning if there is something - either real or perceived - that the board is doing that makes you feel unsupported. We also want to know if there is something we are not doing that would help us better support our community. If there is dissatisfaction within the community, we cannot address it unless we are made aware of it.

Ways to Share Your Concerns-

Our intention is to do everything we can to support you as a community, but we recognize that we may be missing the mark. We encourage you to share your concerns by emailing any board member or by sending us a private message. For those who prefer to remain anonymous, we will place a box in the clubhouse where you can submit your thoughts.

Our Commitment to the Community-

We serve on this board of directors because we genuinely care about our community and are committed to advocating for positive change. Please take the opportunity to respond so we can better address your concerns and work together to improve our community.

NEWSLETTER

The monthly Tropical Breeze newsletter endeavors to provide timely information on upcoming events and news or articles shared by several residents. Photos, tips, recipes, stories, are just examples of what can be included as space allows. If you have something you would like published in an upcoming edition, please forward it by email to patstowell13@gmail.com by the 11th of each month. Thanks!

2025-26 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Mike Washington	Lot 223
Vice-President	Pam Timmins	Lot 267
Secretary	Dee Harrison	Lot 99
Treasurer	Patsy Lund	Lot 40
Co-Treasurer	Roberta McEwen	Lot 48
Directors:	Kelly Ballard	Lot 18
	Lorraine Dufour	Lot 284
	Larry Dustin	Lot 89
Parliamentarian (without vote)	Pat Stowell	Lot 24

TPHOA LEGAL FUND

Thank you to the residents who have generously donated to the Legal Fund in anticipation of legal expenses.

The Board and the Homeowners' Committee continue our efforts to ensure homeowner's rights regarding our prospectus and our quality of life at Tropical Palms. We anticipate that such actions will result in legal fees and ask that you consider a contribution to the Legal Fund. Any amount is appreciated.



To ensure confidentiality, please give any donations directly to Treasurer Patsy Lund (40 Pine) or Co-Treasurer Roberta McEwen (48 Pine). (checks should be made to TPHOA with Legal Fund noted on the memo line).

"WHAT HAS THE HOA EVER DONE FOR ME?"

If you've ever asked that question, you're not alone. We hear it all the time:

"I have no reason to support the HOA."

"Parties, dances, ice cream socials - who cares?"

Here's the honest answer:

The HOA is quietly saving you real money - every single month - whether you realize it or not.

The Simple Financial Truth:

In 2025 alone, the work of the HOA is saving homeowners about \$25 per month - roughly \$300 this year - and those savings grow every year after that.

That's not a projection pulled from thin air. It comes from one very specific fight the HOA is leading right now:

Stopping a major change to your lease increases will save you over \$12,000 in the next eight years. And yes - that \$12,000 would come directly out of your pocket.

All of this protection costs you \$25 per year in HOA membership.

That's not an expense. That's an investment with an extraordinary return.

What's Really at Stake:

Under the current rules, annual lot lease increases are limited by inflation (CPI).

ELS wants to replace that protection with a system tied to the Prime Rate, a number set by banks and financial markets - not by the cost of living.

The result?

Faster rent increases

Larger monthly payments

Thousands of dollars more paid over time

Without HOA action, there is nothing stopping this change.

The HOA is the only legally recognized body that can fight it.

Why the HOA Actually Has Power:

Under Florida Statute 723, the HOA is not a social club. It is the official legal representative of the residents.

That means:

The HOA can negotiate on your behalf

The HOA can challenge unfair lease changes

The HOA can enter mediation and legal proceedings

But here's the key point most people miss:

Legal power only works when the community stands united.

The more homeowners who join, the stronger the HOA's position - and the harder it is for ELS to ignore or overpower residents.

"So What About Social Events?"

Those gatherings you brush off - the parties, dances, and socials - aren't fluff.

They build:

Participation

Communication

Unity

And unity is leverage.

Without a connected community, residents become isolated individuals - and isolated individuals are easy to dismiss, overcharge, and manipulate.

The HOA understands that community strength and legal strength go hand in hand.

Proven Results, Not Promises

This isn't theoretical.

The HOA has already:

Successfully negotiated changes that lowered pass-through taxes for every lot

Reduced costs that continue year after year

Taken on the legal work individual homeowners cannot do alone

These savings may seem small in a single month - but over time, they add up to thousands of dollars.

The One Question That Matters:

Would you pay \$25 per year to protect thousands of dollars of your own money?

That's the decision in front of you.

If you want lower costs, stronger protection, and a real voice in what happens to your home:

JOIN THE HOA

Because the HOA isn't just doing something for the community.

It's doing something **for you**.

Written by Gene Spence

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2026 HOA MEMBERSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE!

It's time to renew or join for another great year at Tropical Palms! **2026 HOA memberships are now available for purchase.**

Your HOA membership helps fund the many activities, events, and improvements that keep our community vibrant and welcoming.

Membership benefits include:

- Enjoy HOA-sponsored events and activities
- Support for clubhouse supplies, decorations, and community projects
- A stronger voice in keeping Tropical Palms beautiful and fun for everyone

You can purchase your 2026 membership from:

- **Pauline Gagne at Lot 84 Evergreen**
- Or pick one up at any upcoming community event!

Join or renew today and help make **2026** another fantastic year at Tropical Palms!

WELCOME NEW RESIDENTS

A Warm Welcome to Our New Residents at Tropical Palms!

We're delighted to welcome all the new residents who have recently joined our Tropical Palms community! Whether you've moved here for the sunshine, the lifestyle, or the wonderful neighbors, we're so glad you're here.

Get Involved and Meet Your Community

Tropical Palms is a vibrant place to live, with activities and events happening throughout the week. We encourage all newcomers to join in - whether you enjoy cards, crafts, exercise classes, dinners, or simply connecting with others, there's something for everyone.

Participating in activities is a great way to meet your neighbors, make new friends, and feel right at home.

Join Us for Coffee Chat and Stay Informed at HOA Board Meetings

We also invite all new residents to attend the Coffee Chat and HOA Board Meetings. These meetings are a helpful way to stay informed about community updates, upcoming projects, and ways to get involved. Your voice and participation are always appreciated.

Welcome Package is Waiting for You

Contact Lorraine Dufour to make arrangements to receive your Welcome Package. Stop by Lot 284 Evergreen Circle or call Lorraine at 978-580-1127 so she can visit you at a convenient time.

The package is filled with helpful information about the community, amenities, services, and activities - everything you need to settle in comfortably.

We're Glad You're Here

Welcome once again to all our new neighbors! We hope you find Tropical Palms to be a friendly, supportive, and enjoyable place to call home. We can't wait to see you around the community!



*Lorraine Dufour, Director
Welcome Committee Chair*

INNER PEACE

If you can start the day without caffeine

If you can always be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains

If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles

If you can If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it

If you can understand when your loved ones are too busy to give you any time

If you can take criticism and blame without resentment

If you can conquer tension without medical help

If you can relax without alcohol

If you can sleep without the aid of drugs

Then you are probably the Family Dog.

Handle every stressful situation like a dog.

If you can't eat it or play with it, pee on it and walk away!



FLORIDA ANCHOR AND BARRIER COMPANY



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SUNSHINE REPORT



Sympathy Cards were sent to Lori

Wiberg, 85 Evergreen, on the passing of Bill Wiberg; to Jean Branson, 231 Spruce, on the passing of Joe Branson; to the family of Bill Koran, 288 Evergreen Circle, on his passing; to Carol Donegan 152 Cedar, on the passing of Norb Donegan; and to Violet White, 217 Spruce, on the passing of her mother.

Get Well Cards were sent to Jane Carbone, 103 Evergreen; Larry Dustin, 89 Evergreen; Mickey McNeil, 130 Evergreen; and Ron Cohan, 251 Balsam.

Please contact me if you know of anyone who could use a note of encouragement or condolence from our community. Cards are typically sent for illnesses, hospitalizations, or deaths of community members or immediate family but only if the information is given to me.

Remember, if you **DO NOT WANT** your family's information posted in the newsletter, please contact me before the 10th of each month. If I do not hear anything from you, I will assume I have your consent to publish the information and continue to wish our best-wishes for recovery.

*Lorraine Dufour, Director and Sunshine Chair
284 Evergreen Circle
Phone: 978-580-1127
Email: lorrainebo59@gmail.com*

TPHOA EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY

The events listed below are planned. We will post any event announcements or changes on signage near the entrance to the park, on Facebook and on the Bulletin Board in Club House.

- 3 Soup Fest - 5:30 pm
- 8 Super Bowl - 5:30 pm
- 10 Taco Tuesday - 4 pm until sold out
- 14 Dance - 7-10 pm
- 16 Bus Trip - Hard Rock Casino
- 21 TPHOA Annual Meeting - 10 am
- 22 Birthday Celebration - 2 pm
- 22 Karaoke - 6:30 pm
- 24 Taste of Italy - 5:30 pm
- 28 Magic Show with hors d'oeuvres - 7 pm



Events scheduled for the Club House may need to be adjusted/rescheduled due to ongoing renovations. Watch for updates on Facebook and on signage.

CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Susan Duchesneau - 193 Cedar - full-time resident since 2025

I'm Susan Duchesneau, originally from PA. I met my husband, Gary, at college in D.C. Graduating with a BS in Speech Pathology. Post college, I worked as a therapist in Maryland's school system.



Later, wanting to stay at home with two young children, I opened a daycare for pre-schoolers of other teachers. In the evenings I operated a cake decorating business.

As our children grew, I answered a call to ministry, graduated seminary and served 24 years as pastor of Methodist Churches. I worked closely with many people; trained and supported numerous volunteers. After retiring, we moved to Florida and eventually found our home in Tropical Palms. I love the friendliness and "community" of Tropical Palms. My decades of experience leading, organizing, and supporting volunteers prepare me well to serve on the HOA board. I respectfully ask for your vote so I can help strengthen and support our community together.

Colleen Keller - 295 Evergreen Circle - full-time resident since 2025

I have lived in different locations in the US, including a couple years of High School in Florida. Working in the IT industry has provided me with working opportunities world-wide. Just in case you haven't guessed, I am a cat person.



Florida demands that new board members complete the FMO training program covering the applicable Florida statutes related to HOA board member responsibilities. I completed this training in January. I am a process type of person who questions how things are done and who is responsible for what. I like to work towards fairness in how things work instead of accepting answers like "this is how things have always been done."

Kerrie Kelley - 250 Balsam - full-time resident since 2025

My name is Kerrie Kelley, and I am proud to call Tropical Palms my home. I was born and raised in California, where I met my husband, Fred, and together we later moved to Massachusetts where we raised our three children. Now a new chapter of our lives & journey have brought us to Tropical Palms here in beautiful SW Florida.



I have always had a passion for animals, music, and helping others. I value kindness, communication, and community involvement. Since settling in Tropical Palms, I have enjoyed meeting new people and getting to know how our community works.

I am interested in serving on the board to hopefully give back, listen and help make our community even stronger. I would be honored to earn your support and your vote as I contribute where I can to the betterment of our home.

James (Jim) Lee - 185 Cedar, full-time resident since 2007

My name is James (Jim) Lee, I was born in Michigan but grew up in Fort Lauderdale. After high school, I moved back to Michigan where I met my wife Katie. We have spent many years in both Michigan and Florida and will celebrate our 50th anniversary in July. We have 2 grown sons, 5 grandchildren and 1 fur baby. We have been full time residents of Tropical Palms for 18 years.



I hold an Associate Degree in Business Management, graduating Summa Cum Laude with a 4.0 GPA. My career features extensive leadership experience, including roles as Operations Manager for Value City Furniture, General Manager for Big Lots, and District Manager for 7-Eleven. I retired in 2023 after 17 years as a Store Manager for Dollar Tree.

A member of the Punta Gorda Elks and the Phi Beta Kappa honor society, I also served on the Grace Brethren Christian School board.

I look forward to serving on the TPHOA Board and contributing to our community.

Lorraine Dufour - 284 Evergreen Circle - full-time resident since 2004

I am originally from Massachusetts, but I have been a resident of Tropical Palms since January 2004. I have chaired dances, volunteered serving food at our dinners, call Bingo on Monday mornings and host Karaoke on Sunday evenings.



In addition, for the last 3 years I have served on the Board of Directors and chaired both Sunshine and Welcome Committees.

I served on the board in 2007-2010 and again from 2023-2026. I enjoyed interacting with all the residents. If I am re-elected to the board, I will do the best of my ability for the residents of Tropical Palms.

HAPPY Valentine's Day

SCAM ! ALERT

Are you really the Lucky Winner?

Never PAY to get a PRIZE.

That's a scam.

Don't pay to get a prize. Real prizes are free. Anyone who asks you to pay a fee for "taxes," "shipping and handling charges," or "processing fees" to get your prize, is a scammer. Stop and walk away.

Don't give your financial information. There is absolutely no reason to ever give your bank account or credit card number to claim a prize. If anyone asks for it, it's a scam.

Don't give your personal information. Scammers hope you'll click on links that will take your personal information or download malware on your device. Delete the message without clicking on the links and don't respond.

Report Imposter Scams Online to the Federal Trade Commission



WEATHER HISTORY, PUNTA GORDA, 2000-2025

Punta Gorda, Florida, in February offers a classic "Goldilocks" climate - not too hot, rarely too cold and generally low humidity - though the last 25 years have seen some dramatic outliers, from "Ring of Fire" heatwaves to deep freezes.

Average Temperatures for February

	Typical High	Typical Low
Month of February	78°F	55°F
February 1	74°F	53°F
February 14	76°F	54°F
February 28	77°F	56°F

Feb Extremes (2000-2025)

While the all-time records were set further back, the last quarter-century has seen its own share of "near-record" volatility:

	Temp	Date / Year
Highest High	90 F	February 20, 2018
Lowest High	55 F	February 12, 2010 (A day it never warmed up!)
Highest Low	70 F	February 20, 2018 (A "tropical" winter night)
Lowest Low	30 F	February 20, 2015

Official February Extremes

Extreme High: 92 F (February 20, 1962)

Extreme Low: 27 F (February 5, 1996)

Fascinating Weather History (2000–2025)

While the averages look pleasant, February in Punta Gorda has a history of high-drama weather events over the last quarter-century:

The "Unprecedented" Heatwave (2023): February 2023 was record-shattering. Punta Gorda saw temperatures climb into the high 80s and even 90°F multiple times during the month.

The Big Chill (2010): One of the coldest Februaries in recent history occurred in 2010. During a persistent "El Niño" pattern, a series of cold fronts pushed lows into the low 30s.

The Tornado Outbreak (February 2, 2007): Known as the "Groundhog Day Tornado Outbreak," this was a significant severe weather event across Central and South Florida.

The Dry Spells: February is historically one of the driest months in Charlotte County. In several years over the last two decades (notably 2006 and 2018), Punta Gorda received less than 0.5 inches of rain for the entire month, leading to the "brown lawn" season and heightened wildfire risks.

Although not part of the "official record", **snowfall was recorded in Fort Myers** on Feb 13, 1899.



**Free Community Dance with
DJ Bob Raikes
February 14 Valentine's Day
7 pm
At the Club House**



TASTE OF ITALY & SILENT AUCTION

**February 24
5:30 pm**



**Tickets:
\$10 for members
\$13 for non-members**

**Variety of Italian sauces, salads,
breads, etc
Water, Ice and Soda provided**

SILENT AUCTION FEBRUARY 24

During the Taste of Italy
This event is the major fundraiser for the year.

Let's make this the best auction ever!!!

Enjoy the excitement of bidding on the fantastic baskets, gifts, handcrafted items, and other goodies donated by you and your neighbors. Winners will be announced at the event.

Now's the perfect moment to consider what you can donate to the silent auction!

We're on the lookout for finished baskets filled with new or handcrafted items. We're also open to accepting items that can help us build baskets. Here's a thought: did you receive a gift basket or item for Christmas that didn't quite hit the mark, but it might be just the thing for someone else? Consider donating it! We aim to have 30 baskets available for bidding.

Donations should be dropped off at 267 Balsam February 9th - 18th and will be on display at the Taste of Italy on February 24th. If you have any questions, please call me at 603-661-4488.

Pam Timmins

TRIVIA - FEBRUARY 2025

February may be the shortest month of the year, but it is packed with fascinating history and odd quirks. Here are some of the most interesting facts about the second month:

February Was Once the "Last" Month

In the original Roman calendar, there were only ten months, and winter was simply a "gap" without months. Around 713 BCE, King Numa Pompilius added January and February to the end of the year to align with the lunar cycle. It wasn't until around 450 BCE that February was moved to its current position as the second month.

Also known as the month of Purification

The name comes from the Latin word **februum**, which means "purification." This refers to the ancient Roman festival of **Februa** (held on February 15th), a time for ritual washing and cleansing to prepare for the coming of spring.

Symbols

- **The Flower:** February has two birth flowers—the **Violet** and the **Primrose**. Neither is a rose, despite Valentine's Day being the month's most famous holiday!
- **The Stone:** The birthstone is **Amethyst**. Ancient Greeks believed wearing it or drinking from cups carved from it would prevent them from getting drunk (the name comes from *amethystos*, meaning "not intoxicated").

POETRY BY PENNY

Where Are You?

*You might be around
the corner...*

*You might be down
the street...*

*You might even be
with me...*

Wouldn't that be sweet...

*No matter where you are...
I know right from
the start...*

*Just where you are...
Right here...*

In my Heart!!



SPECIAL DATES AND CELEBRATIONS IN FEBRUARY

Food & Flavors

- **Feb 3: National Carrot Cake Day** – A day dedicated to the dessert that successfully tricks us into thinking we're eating our vegetables.
- **Feb 5: World Nutella Day** – Established by a fan in 2007, this day is now a global celebration of the hazelnut cocoa spread.
- **Feb 7: Ice Cream for Breakfast Day** – Officially celebrated on the first Saturday of February. In 2026, you are encouraged to swap your oatmeal for a sundae the moment you wake up.
- **Feb 9: National Pizza Day** – One of the most popular "food holidays" on the calendar, where many pizzerias offer deals and unique toppings.
- **Feb 15: National Gumdrop Day** – A day to celebrate the colorful, chewy candies that have been a staple since the 19th century.
- **Feb 21: National Sticky Bun Day** – A sweet, gooey excuse to visit your local bakery.
- **Feb 24: National Tortilla Chip Day** – Perfect timing for any leftover salsa or guacamole from early-month gatherings.

Animals & Nature

- **Feb 2: Groundhog Day** – The famous weather-predicting ritual involving Punxsutawney Phil and his shadow.
- **Feb 2: National Hedgehog Day** – Often overshadowed by the groundhog, this day celebrates the prickly (and adorable) insectivores.
- **Feb 3: Feed the Birds Day** - A reminder to help our feathered friends during the coldest part of the winter when natural food is scarce.
- **Feb 15: World Hippo Day** - A day to raise awareness for the world's third-largest land mammal.
- **Feb 20: Love Your Pet Day** - An unofficial holiday encouraging pet owners to give their animals extra treats and attention.
- **Feb 27: International Polar Bear Day** - Focused on the conservation of the "King of the Arctic."

Quirks and Days of Interest

- **Feb 10: Chinese New Year** - based on the Lunar Calendar and marks the beginning of the Year of the Horse.

- **Feb 17: Random Acts of Kindness Day** - A day where people are encouraged to perform small, spontaneous gestures of goodwill for strangers or friends.
- **Feb 17: "Mardi Gras" Birthday for George Washington** - Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) falls on the observed federal holiday for George Washington's Birthday (Presidents' Day).
- **The "Perfect February"** - February 2026 begins on a **Sunday** and ends on a **Saturday**. This results in exactly four Sundays, four Mondays, and so on. This phenomenon happens only a few times a century.

ASTRONOMY - FEB 2026

For the amateur astronomers among us:

The "Great Parade" of Planets (Feb 28) -

The most exciting event happens on the final night of the month. On **February 28, 2026**, six planets—**Jupiter, Uranus, Saturn, Neptune, Venus, and Mercury**—will align in a diagonal line in the western sky shortly after sunset.

- **What to look for:** Four of these (Jupiter, Saturn, Venus, and Mercury) will be bright enough to see with the naked eye.
- **Bonus:** They will be joined by a beautiful waxing crescent Moon, making for an incredible photo opportunity.

Feb 17: Annular Solar Eclipse - (often called a "Ring of Fire" eclipse) will occur but sadly only visible in the Southern Indian Ocean.

Feb 1: The Full "Snow Moon" – In 2026, the month kicks off with a Full Moon, named for the heavy snows typically associated with the month in the Northern Hemisphere.

Feb 19: Mercury at its Greatest Elongation in 2026. Mercury is often difficult to see because it stays so close to the Sun, but due to its **Greatest Eastern Elongation**. This means it is at its farthest point from the Sun's glare and it can be found in the **western sky** just after the Sun sets. This is the best window of the entire year to spot the "Swift Planet" before it disappears back into the solar glow.



February 2026 Moon Phase Guide

Phase	Date
Full Moon	February 1
Last Quarter	February 9
New Moon	February 17
First Quarter	February 24



LIVING WITH OUR NEIGHBORS

COYOTE SAFETY

A Guide for Residents of Tropical Palms

Coyotes are a natural and permanent part of Southwest Florida's ecosystem.

Myths vs. Facts

MYTH: If I hear a lot of howling, it means coyotes just killed a pet or a deer.

FACT: Coyotes are usually very quiet when they hunt and eat. Making noise would attract competitors such as other coyotes, bobcats, or large birds of prey that could steal their food. Most of a coyote's meals—mice, rats, rabbits, and other small animals—are "single-serving" and not shared.

Howling is primarily a form of communication.

Coyotes howl to locate family members, reunite adults with pups, and warn other coyotes to stay out of their territory. It is best thought of as a "family roll call," not an announcement of a kill.

MYTH: There must be a pack of 10 or 15 coyotes nearby because of all the noise.

FACT: This is a well-known illusion sometimes called the ***Beau Geste*** effect. Just two or three coyotes can change pitch and direction so quickly that they sound like a large group. In reality, most local sightings involve a breeding pair and their offspring.

MYTH: Coyotes are stalking me when I walk my dog.

FACT: Coyotes are curious but cautious. If one follows a person at a distance, it is usually escorting them away from a den or out of its territory. The animal wants space, not a confrontation. This is the appropriate time to use **hazing** to reinforce that people and pets should be avoided.

MYTH: A coyote seen during the day must have rabies.

FACT: Daytime activity is normal in Florida, especially during spring and summer when adults are feeding pups. A healthy coyote may be active at any hour. Signs of possible rabies include severe disorientation, staggering, foaming at the mouth, or an unusual lack of fear of loud noises or people.

The Statistics (In Context) - Wildlife officials in Southwest Florida consistently report that aggressive encounters between coyotes and people are *extremely rare*. Statistically, people are far more likely to be hit by a golf ball.

When Do Rare Incidents Occur?

Feeding (most common): When coyotes are fed intentionally or find food left outdoors, they lose their natural fear of humans and may approach too closely.

Defending pets: Many incidents involving adults occur when someone intervenes during a coyote's attack on a small dog or cat.

Cornering or disease: A coyote may bite if cornered, injured, or—very rarely—rabid.

If a Child Sees a Coyote

Teach children to **stand tall, wave their arms, and shout**. Adults should immediately pick up small children and do not let them run away as this encourages the coyote..



Reducing Risk - Hazing

1. Know How to Haze

If you see a coyote, **do not run**. You want the animal to associate people with discomfort so it keeps its distance.

Be BIG and LOUD: Raise your arms or wave a jacket over your head. Yell firmly, "Go away!" or any other noise like air horns, whistles, etc.

Stand your ground: Maintain eye contact and continue until the coyote leaves the area completely.

2. Protect Your Pets

Always use a leash: Use a standard 6-foot leash, especially after dark.

No solo nighttime outings: Never let small dogs or cats outside alone at night, even in fenced yards.

Keep cats indoors: Free-roaming cats face the highest risk.

3. Remove the “Buffet”

Feed pets indoors: Do not leave pet food or water bowls outside overnight.

Clean up fallen fruit: Coyotes will eat palm berries, mangoes, and citrus and any rodents that are attracted to the fruit. Pick up fallen fruit regularly.

Secure trash: Store trash in a shed or garage until pickup day. Make sure the lids are tight.

Manage bird feeders: Clean up spilled seed, which attracts rodents which in turn attracts coyotes.

The Bottom Line for Tropical Palms Coyotes in and around our park are primarily looking for rodents, fallen fruit, and unsecured trash. With consistent hazing and good management of attractants, the risk to people remains **extremely low to non-existent**.

This guidance is consistent with recommendations from wildlife professionals and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

FWC Southwest Region Phone: (863) 648-3200

Local Field Office (Fort Myers): (239) 332-6966

Wildlife Alert/Emergency 24-Hour Hotline: 1-888-404-FWCC (3922)

ASK DEE

Dear Dee:

My sister in law is a nice person and I like her, but she is starting to get on my nerves. She just seems so boastful, she brags about everything. Sometimes it is her money, or how good she is at something. If she does something nice for someone, she makes sure everyone knows about it. She acts like she is smarter or better than me, and is always giving advice that I did not ask for. I do care about her and enjoy her company...when she is not bragging. Why is she like this?

Dear Neighbor:

Whew, that sounds frustrating!!! Boastful behavior can be difficult to overlook at times. There are two kinds of bragging: overt bragging and covert bragging. Overt bragging is when someone boasts openly about themselves or their achievements in an effort to make a good impression on people. Covert bragging is harder to detect. A humble brag is a thinly disguised effort to present yourself in a positive light. It may include a joke, complaint, or self-deprecating statement that's intended to win attention, praise, or validation from others. (example: "I got told today that I was gorgeous. I guess that guy was blind")

So why do people brag? There are several possible reasons, including: They feel insecure about themselves. A lot of people who seem too confident in themselves are actually deeply insecure. For them, bragging might be a way of masking their insecurities or getting help from others to build up self-esteem. Or maybe they are trying too hard to be liked, thinking that people will be drawn to them for their possessions or abilities. Maybe they don't even realize that they ARE bragging. They may feel that they are simply sharing good news. These folks sometimes lack the self-awareness that would alert them to the fact that they are presenting in a boastful way. They may have poor social skills, or be socially awkward and this is their attempt to open up to people. They may feel that they are superior to others, and want to make sure others realize that, OR they may in actuality feel inferior and are trying to appear more self-confident than they actually feel. It may be simple attention seeking behavior, or there is always the possibility that they are being boastful on purpose to make themselves look better than others.

So what is the best way to deal with a boastful person? One thing is to try not to automatically jump to the conclusion that the person is being arrogant. Acknowledge what they say briefly and positively, such as "great news on the promotion" and then move on to another subject. Be very careful to try not to let it turn into a competition with them. If they persist in contradicting everything you say, maybe just shrug and say "ok sure" and change the subject. Although you may be tempted to confront the person about their behavior, it is usually more effective to use more subtle cues, such as reducing eye contact, subject change or showing less interest. And of course, if all else fails, limit your contact with them. I wish you the best with this very challenging dilemma!!

Dee (Denise) Harrison resides in Tropical Palms and in Spruce Pine NC with her puppy Loki. Questions for this column are generated from within this community and from outside sources. Please send inquiries to dharrisoncounseling@gmail.com The identity of all contributors is kept confidential.



DID YOU KNOW



HISTORICAL EVENTS THAT OCCURRED IN FEBRUARY

Human Rights and Law

- **February 1, 1865:** President Abraham Lincoln signed the **13th Amendment** to the U.S. Constitution, officially abolishing slavery. This date is now celebrated as National Freedom Day.
- **February 3, 1870:** The **15th Amendment** was ratified, guaranteeing that the right of U.S. citizens to vote shall not be denied "on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."
- **February 11, 1990:** **Nelson Mandela** was released from Victor Verster Prison in South Africa after 27 years of captivity, a moment that signaled the beginning of the end for apartheid.

War and Geopolitics

- **February 2, 1848:** The **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo** was signed, ending the Mexican-American War and ceding massive territories (including modern-day California, Texas, and Arizona) to the U.S.
- **February 4–11, 1945:** The **Yalta Conference** took place. Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin met to discuss the post-war reorganization of Germany and Europe.
- **February 21, 1972:** President Richard Nixon arrived in Beijing for a historic week-long visit, marking the first time a U.S. President visited the **People's Republic of China**.

Science and Discovery

- **February 16, 1923:** Archeologist Howard Carter unsealed the **burial chamber of King Tutankhamun**, revealing the most intact royal Egyptian tomb ever found.
- **February 18, 1930:** Astronomer Clyde Tombaugh discovered **Pluto** while comparing photographic plates at the Lowell Observatory in Arizona.
- **February 28, 1953:** James Watson and Francis Crick announced their discovery of the double-helix structure of **DNA**, the "blueprint of life."

The Modern Digital Age

- **February 4, 2004:** **Facebook** (then "TheFacebook") was launched by Mark Zuckerberg and his roommates at Harvard University.
- **February 14, 2005:** The domain name **YouTube.com** was activated by three former PayPal employees, fundamentally changing how the world consumes video content.

The Shortest Reign

- **February 12, 1554:** **Lady Jane Grey**, known as the "Nine Days' Queen," was beheaded at the Tower of London at age 16. Her execution ended one of the shortest and most tragic reigns in British history.



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239-731-7200

Tropical Palms Off Hours Emergency
979-446-9436.

This is monitored 24 hours a day. Residents should call and if no one immediately answers, leave a message and someone will call you back shortly.



Clubhouse
239-731-5533



Charlotte County Fire (Non-Emergency)
941-833-5600

Charlotte County Sheriff (Non-Emergency)
941-639-2101

ShorePoint Health ER & Urgent Care
239-242-1357

Lee Health Convenient Care
239-424-1655

LCEC (light dept)
239-995-2121

To report non working street light
239-656-2300

Waste Management - Bulk pickup
941-629-1106

Animal Control
941-833-5690

Mosquito Control
941-764-4370

US Water (first contact Park Manager)
866-753-8292

Century Link (send text to)
888-320-3452

Comcast/Xfinity
877-229-5999

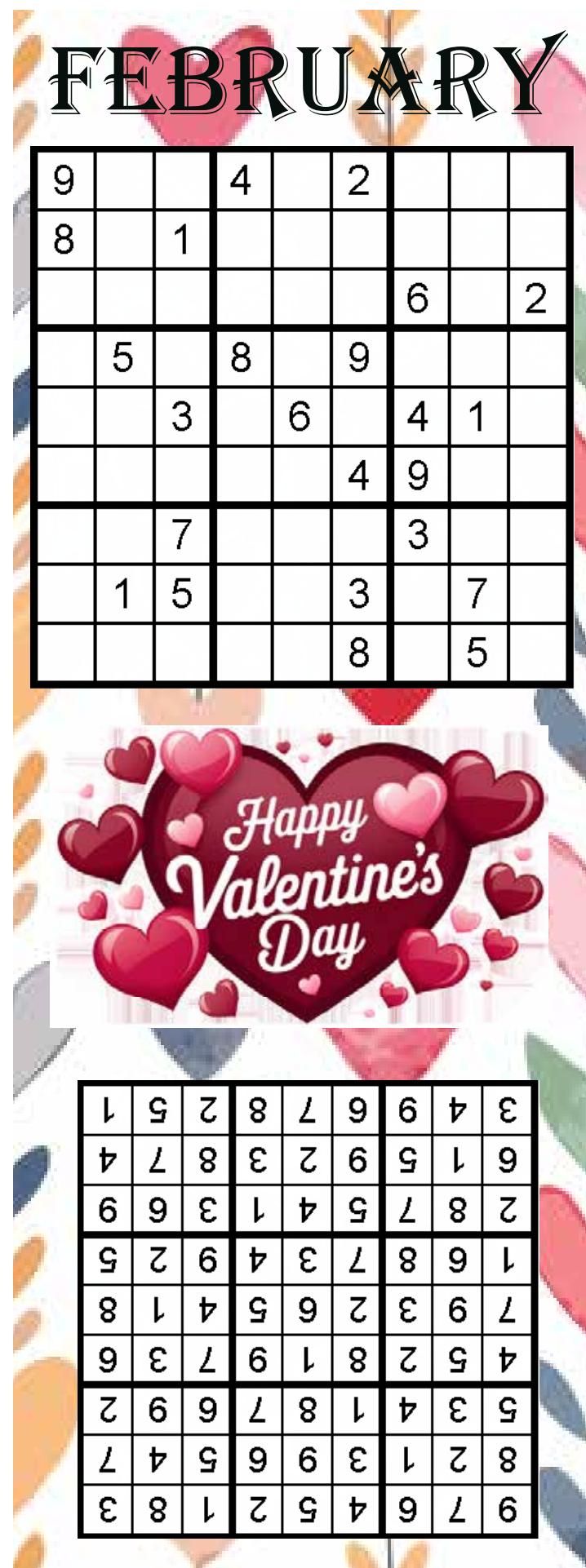
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sign up at alertcharlotte.com or call
941-833-4000

Aging Services: For rides, meals on wheels, etc
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211

Hope Coalition - They can direct people to places with resources for different things.
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		Groundhog Day				
8 Football Championship - 5:30 pm	9	10 Taco Tuesday - 4 pm (until sold out)	11	12	13	14 Dance - 7-10 pm
				Lincoln's Birthday		Valentine's Day
15	16 Bus Trip - Hard Rock Casino	17	18	19	20	21 TPHOA Annual Meeting - 10 am
22 Birthday Celebration - 2 pm Karaoke - 6:30 pm Washington's Birthday	23	24 Silent Auction & Taste of Italy - 5:30 pm	25	26	27	28 Magic Show with hors d'oeuvres - 7 pm



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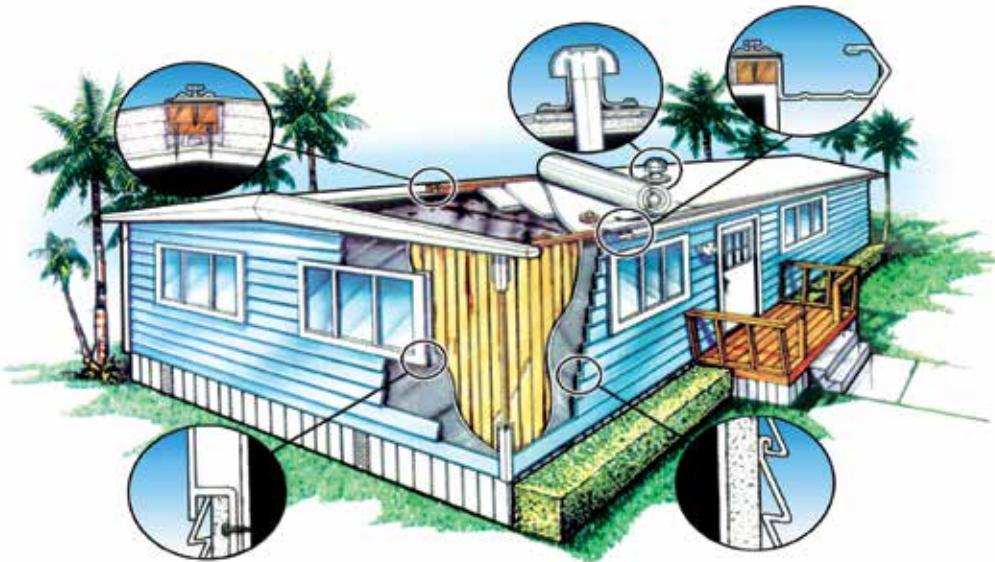




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