



1960

Wesley Girard Downing served as President to The Naples-on the-Gulf Board of REALTORS. Also in 1960 Wes Downing was the first Republican elected to serve on the Collier County Board of Commissioners. In 1962 he received The Citizen of the Year Award. In 1966 Mr. Downing was elected to serve on the Naples City Council. He was elected Mayor of the City of Naples in 1968 succeeding outgoing Mayor Archie Turner. The Mayor's salary was \$1,800. per year.

On April 18, 1960 Wes Dowling fires off telegrams to U.S. President, L.B. Johnson, Secretary of Labor, Willard Wirtz, Florida Governor, Claude Kirk, and Congressional representatives, requesting that they take immediate steps to end the Seaboard Coastline Railroad strike.

In 1967 he was appointed Secretary to the new Royal Poinciana Golf Club.

Wesley Downing was inducted into the NABOR Hall of fame in 2010.

Board membership totaled 146.

- Fifth Avenue became a shopping destination, financial center and home to 116 businesses.
- September 10, 1960. Hurricane Donna scored a direct hit with a nine and one-half foot storm surge on the Naples/Bonita Springs area, causing major devastation and leaving behind 4 feet of water in the Board office at the Cove. The Naples pier is destroyed. No one is killed.
- Surprisingly, this would become a major impetus for the real estate market. After the hurricane, millions of dollars in insurance money poured into the area for renovations, while the rest of the nation was experiencing the “Camelot” years.
- People were looking for great second home locations, and the Naples market began to prosper as lots in the newly created Coquina Sands subdivision and The Moorings subdivision began selling at a rapid pace.
- The area still had the small town feeling.
- The Rexall Drugstore on 5th Avenue South had the classic soda fountain and luncheonette, and the Swamp Buggy Parade in late October was the major event for 50 miles around.
- The Quonset Hut Theater on Third Street S. and the drive-in at the corner of 111th and US 41 were the only movie selections. The Quonset Hut Theater roof was metal so when it rained the patrons couldn't hear the movie.