

Plenty of things to do this spring and summer

By Breanna Benevenga

Charlotte County Community Services is committed to providing quality programs and facilities for residents and visitors to our county. We believe recreation and leisure activities, reading, music, art, and history are essential to personal growth, positive self-esteem, and relaxation. Whether you're a resident or visitor, Charlotte County Community Services will offer events and activities for everybody to enjoy this summer.

As we welcome the summer camp season, our recreation centers across the county will buzz with the vibrant energy, laughter, and joy of children. Renowned for providing both entertaining and cost-effective camp options, Charlotte County Community Services ensures an unforgettable summer for our young community members. Annually, our camps attract more than 300 attendees weekly, offering them an adventure through days at the pool, hands-on activities and exciting field trips planned for this year, including visits to Sky Zone, Mote Marine, Sun Splash, and Broadway Palms.

In addition to camp, the Recreation Division will continue to offer popular events and programs including REC2U, water aerobics, swimming lessons, pickleball, moonlight movies and more. The Recreation Division will host an event showcasing our commitment to safety around water at the World's Largest Swim Lesson on June 20. Ann & Chuck Dever Regional Park pool, Centennial Park pool, and South County Regional Park pool will participate in the event. Stay cool with us this summer and visit any one of our four pools. For more information on summer programming, visit CharlotteCountyFL.gov/recprograms.

Don't allow the sweltering Florida summer heat stop you from enjoying outdoor adventures. Get Up, Get Out, and Get Active within our parks and preserves. Charlotte County is a haven for nature lovers, offering serene hikes, diverse wildlife, and the Blueway Trails — a paradise for kayaking and paddleboarding enthusiasts. To explore the opportunities waiting in our environmental parks and preserves and to navigate the Blueway Trails, simply download the guide at CharlotteCountyFL.gov/parks.

Heading out to Englewood Beach? Please be mindful that sea turtle nesting season begins May 1 and runs through October. Each nesting season, Charlotte County staff installs temporary stakes, flagging and educational signs around nesting areas to provide a safe buffer zone for sea turtles. Please give nests space when setting up at the beach, fill in any holes created and knock down sandcastles. If on the beach at night, do not use flashlights or cell phone lights as they can deter nesting or confuse hatchlings returning to the water.

Charlotte County Libraries will participate in Suncoast Remake Learning Days April 20-May 4. Suncoast Remake Learning Days is a 15-day festival of free events for children and families. The fun kicks off on April 20 with Art for All Ages at the Port Charlotte Public Library and Earth Day Every Day at the Englewood Charlotte Library. Come out to Free Comic Book Day on May

4. For a full schedule of Suncoast Remake Learning Days activities, visit CharlotteCountyFL.gov/libraries.

Following Suncoast Remake Learning Days, Charlotte County Libraries & History will kick off the summer reading program beginning June 1. The theme for summer reading this year is Adventures Begin at the Library. Each branch will host a kickoff party with activities for the whole family on Saturday, June 1.

Want to learn how to landscape your yard in a Florida Friendly way? UF/IFAS Extension of Charlotte County will host the Florida Friendly Garden Fest on Saturday, April 27 at Centennial Park Recreation Center from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. You won't want to miss the Master Gardener plant sale or the educational opportunities. The last two Parks that Teach tours of the season are scheduled for May 4 and May 15 at the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library located at 401 Shreve St., in Punta Gorda. The Master Gardener guides will introduce native, non-native Florida Friendly and invasive plants and the difference between each. The tours begin at 9:30 a.m.

Stay connected with Community Services! Follow Charlotte County Parks & Recreation and Charlotte County Libraries & History on Facebook and @CharCoParks on Instagram.

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