

Administrator's Update for 10/16/09
By Roger Baltz

Our Utilities staff organized a ribbon cutting which was attended by Commissioner Loftus, Commissioner Starr, Assistant County Administrator Kelly Shoemaker and myself for the newly renovated Rotonda Water Reclamation Facility (WRF). With the improvements now made, this facility has expanded to handle 2 million gallons of wastewater each day. Officials from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) were in attendance at the opening as well.

This expansion will meet the growing needs for the future in areas which include Rotonda Sands, Meadows, Villas, and Springs subdivisions. Design work for this expansion began in 2006. Reclaimed water from this Rotonda WRF also provides irrigation to golf courses and a residential area.

I attended the Charlotte Rotary, Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce Governmental Affairs Committee, the Charlotte Economic Council meeting, and Charlotte Bar Association events and spoke about County operations and issues.

Our Radio Communications operations has been providing in-house radio repair services since May 2009 and has been able to provide a savings in repair costs of approximately \$8,100.00 to various user department and agencies. In addition to the savings, the turn-around time is much quicker than sending the units out for repairs and this has brought in additional revenue to the Radio Communications fund. We have received much positive feedback from the users on this in-house program.

Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources staff and our Historical Advisory Committee coordinated dedicating the 11th County historical marker on Oct. 7 at Indian Spring Cemetery south of Punta Gorda. Indian Spring is the second known cemetery established in Charlotte County. The first plat was recorded in 1886 and, in subsequent years, many of the County's prominent citizens including Virginia Taylor Trabue, wife of Col. Isaac Trabue, the founder of Punta Gorda, and Albert Waller Gilchrist, Governor of Florida from 1909 to 1913, were buried here. The marker was funded by private and business sponsors.

In Public Works we asphalted 14 open cut road repairs in South Gulf Cove. The open cuts were for pipe replacements in advance of road paving. The dredging portion of the Gulf Cove Maintenance Dredge has also been completed. Final restoration of temporary spoil off-load sites has been initiated. All remaining work associated with this project is scheduled to be completed by Nov. 15, 2009.

The Manchester North Maintenance Dredge is 70 percent complete. The contractor has dredged all of the Como Waterway, Christopher Waterway and Knox Waterway and is proceeding with Flamingo North Waterway. All remaining

work associated with this project is scheduled for completion by mid-November. Our Harbor Heights Maintenance Dredge is continuing. Completion is scheduled for January 2010. The Contractor is currently working in the Desoto Canal. The Desoto Canal work should be completed by the end of October.

We welcomed the Florida Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus Annual Meeting Sept. 30 through Oct. 2. Becky Bovell, Director of the Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau, served as Chairman for the past year. Held at the Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center, the conference was attended by county tourism leaders from across the state and provided an opportunity to showcase the destination and the County's recent revitalization.

Library use numbers for 2008-9 were up significantly from last year in all areas as libraries closed out their fiscal year on Sept. 30. Checkouts were up 6%, visits 3%, computer use 8%, program attendance 30%, new library cards 9%, and volunteer hours 8%.

Natural Resources staff has scheduled three Scrub-jay public forums for November. The forums will allow us to update our residents and the building industry on the status of the County-wide Habitat Conservation Plan along with educating those attending on the Florida Scrub-jay biology, Federal and State regulations. Details on times and locations are available by calling our offices at 764-4360.