

Administrator's Update for publication 11/20/09
By Roger Baltz

Our Veteran Services staff participated with the Vietnam Brotherhood and other Veteran organizations in coordinating the parade of the "Moving Vietnam Wall" on Nov. 9. Approximately 300 motorcycles and 40 vehicles drove through Punta Gorda in the parade, and nearly 600 children waved their flags as the Wall went by the schools. The Wall was erected in Laishley Park in Punta Gorda for the formal Veteran's Day ceremony on Wednesday, Nov. 11. The ceremony included numerous speeches from dignitaries, patriotic music, and special recognition of our Vietnam Veterans which included a missing man flyover formation, rescue helicopters and the re-enactment of the Last Patrol. Hundreds of Veteran supporters gathered for the ceremony.

Staff at our Charlotte County Fire/EMS Public Education Division has been working with our local schools with an NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) program called Risk Watch. Risk Watch is a community-oriented Injury Prevention Program that was developed with the input of many National Injury Prevention experts. The program covers topics such as burn prevention, bike safety, animal safety, choking, CPR, poisoning, guns, drugs, motor vehicle safety and water safety. This program benefits both the children and adults of our community.

The Aquia Esta Drive Improvements Project is 23 percent completed. The Venice Canal Bridge is scheduled for closure on Dec. 1, 2009, and will remain closed for approximately six months. The detour route will be confirmed with City and County Fire/EMS, the School Board, Post Office, Waste Management, and City Solid Waste.

Our Public Works Stormwater staff has designed and created an interactive stormwater map to provide information about the County's stormwater infrastructure. The map, created with ArcMap software, shows the locations of major drainage basins, drainage studies, major outfalls, stormwater ponds and systems, primary ditches, and drainage improvement projects. The maps also include links to plans, permits, pictures, and other useful information.

Economic Development Director Don Root spoke at a recent meeting of the League of Women Voters. His presentation covered the Economic Development Office's future goals, what Charlotte County can become, its commitment to solar and renewal energy, and he discussed the two new "green" companies that have selected Charlotte County as their new home. These new companies are DieselMist and Innovation Future Energy Corporation. DieselMist manufactures and installs propane extensions for diesel powered semi trucks, which is expected to cut trucking fuel costs.

This past week, Growth Management began the transmittal/adoption phase of the Smart Charlotte 2050 Comprehensive Plan, presenting petition #PA-09-09-15-LS to the Planning and Zoning Board. Most of the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the individual elements were displayed for the past few months on the award-winning Smart Charlotte 2050 website. Growth Management also conducted numerous public workshops covering a majority of the elements. The transmittal draft includes changes made in response to the online public comment period that terminated on Oct. 1. The Planning and Zoning Board sent the petition forward to the Board of County Commissioners with a recommendation of approval by a unanimous 5-0 vote.

The annual Co-ed Youth Basketball Jamboree was recently held at Harold Avenue Recreation Center. Over 230 participants registered, an increase of 13 percent from last year, and approximately 350 spectators watched the scrimmages.

Our County Emergency Vendor Registration is back online and is accepting applications for vendors in time of emergency. The information helps us set up and revise a disaster assistance program in the event of an emergency, which would require outside assistance. To be included in Charlotte County Disaster Assistance Program, visit our Web site at www.CharlotteCountyFL.com and select Purchasing from the Department list.

On Saturday, Nov. 7, the Charlotte Sports Park hosted the Second Annual Concert for the Cure. Organized by Clear Channel, this event featured country music recording artist Jamie O'Neal along with several local country bands. The event took place from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and the complimentary tickets for this charity event were distributed through various event sponsors within the community. A parking fee of \$10 was collected. Estimated attendance at this event was 750 people.