

Administrator's Update for 8/25/10
By Raymond J. Sandrock, Interim County Administrator

Recently we took steps towards developing a one-stop permitting center in the current Building Construction Services offices in Murdock. This one-stop permitting center will create a centralized location for citizens to complete the permitting process as quickly and efficiently as possible. These steps included the consolidation of two departments into one, now known as Building and Growth Management, and in the near future the Zoning division and Real Estate Services division will be relocating to the Building Construction Services building. We will also be utilizing Florida Gulf Coast University's Florida Institute of Government (IOG) to conduct a review and help us streamline the permitting process. The IOG will conduct an evaluation from an external perspective and identify specific improvements with the goal of shortening the total time of the permitting process.

Earlier this month the Board of County Commissioners voted to operate the Englewood Library in place through the upcoming construction. The library will be closed for 60-90 days at some point to ensure the safety of patrons. Negotiations with the first-ranked design firm will begin shortly. The planned expansion of the library will provide approximately 5,700 additional square feet of library space and includes expanded meeting room, computer room, and improved restrooms.

Our Community Services department held a public workshop last week at the Port Charlotte Beach Recreation Center to discuss upcoming improvements at Kiwanis Park. Staff presented the public with the results of a "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design" study conducted by the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office and the steps being taken by the County to address the study's recommendations. The planned improvements include thinning out of dense underbrush to improve visibility in the park and provide greater lines of sight, replacement of the boardwalks, improving ADA accessibility on the trails and restrooms. Work days will be established with assistance from the Kiwanis Clubs of Charlotte County and other volunteers. A survey was also distributed at the meeting to identify additional improvements desired at the park. The Community Services Department will continue to partner with the Kiwanis Clubs to identify potential grants and other funding sources as well as organize special events, programs, and work days at the park.

Our Family Services manager made a presentation to the Emergency Assistance Clearing House (EACH) group on the Charlotte County Human Services department and the transition from a crisis assistance provider to a case management model in our social programs. The presentation was well received and the department was commended on the programmatic shift in philosophy.

Becky Bovell, director of the Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau, recently participated in a tourism discussion with Collier and Lee County tourism officials live on WFCU's radio station. The discussion primarily focused on the impact of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill on Charlotte County and how each Bureau handled the negative media perception. Discussion included how the Bureau will spend the \$21,100 Charlotte County received from BP. The money was reimbursement of the Bureau's promotional campaign to encourage summer travel to Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands.

Charlotte County Extension Service will hold another Green Industries Best Management Practices (BMP) Training in regards to the Fertilizer Ordinance at the East Port Environmental Campus on September 14. Participants will increase their understanding of the local County Ordinance, as well as BMPs for Turf, Irrigation, Landscape and Pesticide. After taking an end-of-class exam and receiving a 75% or higher score, each participant receives a Certificate of Completion showing that they are in compliance to properly apply fertilizer in Charlotte County. This certification will be a prerequisite for a required State Fertilizer Applicator License as of 2014.