

Administrator's Update for 12/8/10
By Raymond J. Sandrock, County Administrator

Early this week the National Weather Service (NWS) issued a freeze warning which prompted our office of emergency management to announce the opening of a Port Charlotte Cold Weather Shelter. The shelter is located at The Salvation Army Charlotte County Corps at 2120 Loveland Blvd., Port Charlotte and is provided by the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army. As we move through these winter months and cold spells, the shelter will open when the NWS issues a freeze warning. For more information contact the Charlotte County office of emergency management at 941.833.4000, Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., or for 24-hour inquiries dial 211 or call the Charlotte County American Red Cross 941.629.4345.

Help for Food Pantries

This past weekend the Charlotte County community services department sponsored "AMCs and MOPARs in the Park," a car and truck show that featured Chrysler, Dodge, Plymouth and Jeep vehicles. The event was held at Oyster Creek Regional Park in Englewood on Sunday, Dec. 5. Admission to the show was free with a donation of non-perishable food items, which helped the Harry Chapin Food Bank and Charlotte County United Way assist over 20 food pantries in Charlotte County.

Recently human services staff and their families participated in the annual community Boy Scout food drive. Fifteen Charlotte County organizations that provide food through local food pantries participated in the event. Bags of food from county residents were picked up from local Boy Scout troops, then boxed by organizations and volunteers and distributed to the food pantries. The human services department received 21 boxes of non-perishable food. Last year the department provided food assistance to 421 needy families.

Nativities

The holiday exhibit at our Charlotte County Historical Center is open and will run through Jan. 29 2011. The exhibit "Nativities Around the World" features the international pieces of local nativity collector Ann Imler. The Charlotte County Historical Center is located at 22959 Bayshore Road in Charlotte Harbor.

Nature Festival

Last month several departments participated in the annual Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival at the Charlotte Sports Park. Through a Fish Florida grant, our natural resources division taught children how to properly cast, how to identify fish, and fish behavior. Children who completed the "training" received a fishing pole and tackle box. Staff also spoke with attendees about our county environmental lands and parks at an environmental education booth, and offered hayrides of the Tippecanoe Environmental Park area. Our solid waste division, along with Waste Management staff, hosted a booth to provide information about the single-stream recycling program and Keep Charlotte Beautiful program. Charlotte County Utilities also had an educational booth about water conservation.

EAR Report Adopted

In recent months, our building and growth management department has been preparing the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR). The EAR reviews the Comprehensive Plan to note

what has worked, what has not worked, and what unforeseen circumstances arose within the comprehensive plan. Included in the EAR are recommendations on how any major issues should be addressed to achieve the plan's vision. The EAR is required every seven years, with this next EAR due Dec. 2010. Last week the Board of County Commissioners adopted a resolution approving the EAR, which will now be sent to the Department of Community Affairs.

Around Town

Stump Pass dredging is scheduled to begin Dec. 8, with completion projected for March 2011.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will be updating the directional signage at the intersection of I-75 and Kings Highway. The new signage will provide direction to the Charlotte Sports Park and the gulf beaches. Our public works department will be working with FDOT to improve the landscaping and general appearance of the interchange, which is a major gateway into Charlotte County.

Sewing Event

Last Weekend the Charlotte County Event and Conference Center hosted "Sew Worth It," a three-day conference with workshops for sewing enthusiasts. The 180 attendees and 40 staff traveled from as far away as Australia for the conference. Event center staff did a great job staging the three workshop areas with 180 sewing machines and additional irons, as well as audio and visual equipment, all of which needed power.