

Administrator's Update for 4/27/11
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

Last week building and growth management department staff attended a Blueprint Working Group meeting held at the offices of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council in Fort Myers. The Cooperative Conservation Blueprint Regional Pilot Project is the most recent in a series of multi-partner collaborative initiatives by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The pilot project is designed to develop and build agreement on a compelling, incentive-based conservation blueprint for Florida. The goal is to couple sustained economic growth with the long term conservation of a connected system of working agricultural and natural lands that form the Florida landscape and that conserve fish and wildlife.

LDR Strike Force

The Land Development Regulations (LDR) Strike Force has been working for over a year as a team to update the county's regulations. The group is comprised of planners from current and long-range planning, the zoning official, and a representative from the county attorney's office. In an effort to speed up the project toward completion, the LDR Strike Force has been meeting several times per week. The group has reviewed the first five chapters, including a proposed re-design of subdivision regulations, and recently finished the section of the code concerned with barrier islands.

Veteran help

Recently our veteran services division assisted a veteran who had a VA claim denied in 2001. After researching and obtaining Doctor's reports and information, the claim was reopened. The veteran was awarded 100% disability back to 2001 with retro-active benefits. Veterans in the area and their dependents and survivors who need help can call our main office at 764.5579.

Golden Gloves

The Charlotte Harbor Visitor and Convention Bureau partnered with the Charlotte Harbor Boxing and Fitness Club to host the Florida Golden Gloves State Championships earlier this month at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center. The event, which generated an estimated \$772,200 in direct expenditures, saw nearly 200 boxers compete and attracted many of these athletes' friends and family members from all over the state. The bureau is optimistic that success and support for this event will carry over to the Women's National Golden Gloves Championship, scheduled to take place in Charlotte County July 5-9, 2011.

Library transformation

The Port Charlotte Library has been transformed thanks to a generous \$10,000 donation from the Friends of the Library. The computer room has been revitalized, and new task chairs and sleek workstations for the patrons were added. New wooden shelves were installed for the bestsellers. Comfortable chairs and a seating area is now arranged in the center. The furniture, purchased from Pride Enterprises, was made in Florida by inmate training that conducts a comprehensive workplace training program promoting rehabilitation and employability. We hope to continue this trend throughout the library as the Friends raise more donations. August 10 of this year marks the 50th

anniversary of the Port Charlotte Public Library (at Aaron Street since 1968). Some of the 1968 furniture is being refurbished and placed strategically throughout the building. Take a look when you have a chance!

Charlotte Harbor Gateway Harbor Walk Project

The Charlotte Harbor Gateway Harbor Walk Project commenced. Phase I design provides for pedestrian promenade improvements to provide continuous access from Bayshore Live Oak Park to Chester Roberts Park along Bayshore Road. The project will also improve boater access to the harbor. The design consultant is awaiting Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) permits, and our public works department is in the process of securing a Homeland Security Air Space Agreement and an FDOT land lease. Once these are obtained, a construction schedule will be established.

Safe navigation

The Northwest Port Charlotte Access Channels Project will facilitate safe navigation by providing new access channels connected to the Myakka River navigation channel. Final permit design is 80 percent complete. Public Works is working with West Coast Inland Navigational System's Regional Waterway Study to facilitate permitting.

Outreach for manufacturing companies

Our Economic Development Office and the Enterprise Charlotte Economic Council will be hosting a Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership (FL MEP) Mobile Outreach Program in May for manufacturing businesses. FL MEP's goal is to provide affordable, innovative solutions to the problems encountered by manufacturing companies by facilitating interaction between the industry, government and education business sectors. FL MEP travels the state in a tour bus to facilitate locally as needed.